

Presentation of Ms. Hawa Diallo about UN



Ms. Hawa Diallo presents before UVU students

Ms. Hawa Diallo is from Sierra Leone, Africa. She spoke before students at Utah Valley University (UVU) on Tuesday, April 3, 2018. Her father was an Ambassador to the US from Sierra Leone which is started her journey in America. She started at the United Nations in 1986 as a tour guide. She sees herself as multicultural and an advocate for others. She was a tour guide at the age of 21 for four years. She is still friends with many of the other tour guides, she has known them for over thirty years and has networked together with them.

She then attended the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations in Cambodia. At 26, she trained in communications and in one year she was in Cambodia she grew in a personal way but also professionally. After her year work in Cambodia, she then moved to Somalia. She stated she did not unpack her suitcase for six months out of fear. Machine guns and war were a constant way of life and she had to adjust to the changes. She worked with media members and also arranged trips for them to travel throughout the country. She stated how important it was to explain for people of Somalia let the UN to help, and when the people are not aware of why the UN is there they can become violent. An example she gave was driving in Somalia and having many people throw rocks, cans, and other items at their vehicles.

She believes the partnership between the UN and UVU is vital. By empowering and encouraging the rising generation of leaders, like UVU students to get involved with the UN and help can change the world. Then VIP guest discussed with us career opportunities at the UN and mentioned, that in order to work for the UN one must be over the age of 18 and have a high school diploma. In order to be considered a “Professional” one need to take an exam and have a college degree. For peacekeeping operations any candidate must have a high school diploma and also a degree.

Ms. Diallo also discussed a recruitment of candidates from under represented countries, and that the UN chooses candidates based on origin of country so all are represented. However the more money certain country contributes to the UN budget, the more people from that country are employed. Translation and interpretation is a field that is needed in the UN, as well as other support staff operations. However the UN is making big changes and are cutting the number of employed staff. As a result, the UN now focuses more on social media use to spread its message.

Ms. Diallo also mentioned from her work in Africa, that many of the young people in Kenya received certificates for training through her office. Many of them were able to get certificates that showed they had experience in urban settings. The certificates were provided by the UN and these trainings could also have been given by a technical institute which are credible in their country. Because of these certificates many young people were able to stand out and receive a job.

I appreciated the opportunity to hear from Hawa Diallo and learn about peacekeeping, Africa, and the role of the UN. By understanding the work of the UN, I was able to have a greater appreciation for what that intergovernmental institution does and the impact it has on cultures and

people. I was not aware of the opportunity to be an UN peacekeeper and how important knowing culture and ethics training was. They have different levels of security and if the threat is high they might not be able to attend. Utah is a level 0 low level threat so they were able to travel to our school and learn. They plan on having many meetings and activities in our state due to the partnership with UVU.

Ezra Pugliano, Utah Valley University student