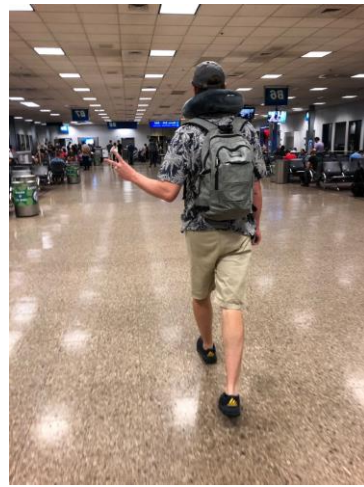
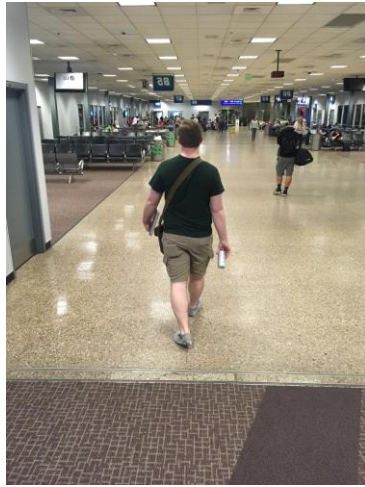


Day before the High Level Political Forum



Our first day in New York City for the High Level Political Forum on sustainable development was full of excitement, planning, and walking. Andrew Jensen and I left Salt Lake City at 11:55 PM Mountain Time on Saturday, July 14, 2018 and landed in Newark on Sunday morning at 6:00 AM Eastern Time. We decided to spend one weekend day in New York to get accommodated to local weather, environment etc, considering that it was the first our visit to New York ever. Andrew and I had to figure out getting public transportation from Newark to New York, which caused some small amounts of confusion. Navigating our way to New York City was a new challenge for both of us. Luckily, getting public transportation into the city was not insanely difficult. We decided to use a shuttle in comparison with taxi and metro, because it was cheap and the buses had their own lane, making it easy to get to our next destination.

We found ourselves at famous Grand Central Terminal and decided to look around there as our first tourist destination. It is one of the largest transportation hubs in New York because metro lines and railways pass through it from different directions. It was a truly cavernous building and was a great sight to see. After we explored the area around Grand Central Terminal, Andrew and I met up with Dr. Abdrisaev, our adviser to discuss our plans for the rest of the day.

This allowed us to leave our luggage at his hotel and then to do some sightseeing until noon, time to check in to our Airbnb and rest. After that, we would meet with Dr. Abdrisaev at 6:00 PM for dinner and a quick tour of the area around UN to be prepared for busy day next morning on July 16, 2018. We all agreed this plan and went on our way.

Andrew and I decided to head up towards Central Park to attend a closest for our place to stay LDS church service as well as get some sightseeing in along the way. We went up along Broadway by walk and saw the sights there. I particularly enjoyed this. We also saw Columbus Circle and Central Park. We then went to church at the LDS meeting house by Central Park, which was also on top of the Manhattan LDS Temple. It was a fun experience for Andrew and I, and we both really enjoyed walking around New York to see the sights.

After Andrew and I visited LDS church as well as finished up sightseeing, we headed back towards the hotel of our adviser, where we sat and talked strategy for the next few days. We were hoping to meet and interact with as many high-level diplomats and civil servants as possible these next few days, so coordination on our message about engaged learning and the UIMF is key. Most importantly, we wanted to leave a professional impact on every person we meet this week, so we discussed how to do that. We also discussed the situation with our oral statement presentation on July 19th and the logistics involved for that. There is a lot of coordination involved for the presentation, but we are still hopeful that the oral statement will be given during a time that will both work with our schedule as well as allow us to showcase everyone. If something does not work according to the plan for the oral statement, we established contingency plans to ensure our statement is still heard. Hopefully we will not have to use them, though.



(L to R): Andrew Jensen and Samuel Elzinga near the office of UN Passes

After we finished up our meeting, Andrew and I checked in to our Airbnb for a much-needed break. We then rested for a few hours, then met up again with Dr. Abdrisaev to walk around the routes and buildings associated with the HLPF and the agenda of our visit. We walked through routes to look at the building to pick up our ground passes next morning, and we walked by some Permanent Mission offices. We walked by the United States' Permanent Mission to the UN building as well and then walked around the outside of the UN Compound. Walking around the compound made me really excited for the events that will transpire this week. It is such a unique opportunity to participate at this high of a level, and I am confident

everyone in our delegation will represent the UIMF and UVU well. I cannot wait to see what this week holds.

Sam Elzinga, President, Foreign Affairs Club