

Advocating for Mountains during UVU Club Rush



Hagen Isaacson and Megan Davis during Club Rush at UVU

Utah Valley University (UVU) hosted its annual Club Rush event on September 18th and 19th, 2018. There are over 150 clubs at UVU and during this event, each club had the opportunity to set up a table and recruit new members to their clubs amongst the university's vast population of 39,000. The Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF) a coalition of different clubs at UVU (www.utahimf.org) including the Foreign Affairs Club, Model UN, Sustainable Development Club, National Security Studies Club, Eurasian Club, History Club and Rotaract had the opportunity to host our very own table in this event. By participating in the Club Rush, UIMF will be able to raise funds to help us promote our main goal to implement the United Nations' agenda of the sustainable mountain development (SMD). Club Rush provided us the opportunity not only to receive generous funding, but also, to conveniently recruit and meet new members.



On the morning of September 18th, 2018, Hagen Isaacson, UIMF Director of Service, and I, Director of Public Relations and Protocol Assistant, started off the Club Rush at the UIMF table. For the first few hours, we met with people from many different majors and backgrounds. The very first individual we recruited happened to be a biology major. As we explained to him what UIMF is, he seemed very intrigued with our main agenda and statement. For every conversation we had with students passing by our table, they began by asking who we were. Hagen and I then continued to give the general run down of what the Utah International Mountain Forum or UIMF actually is. The UIMF is a coalition of several student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU). Together all of these clubs work under the direction of UIMF to sponsor events that raise awareness of mountain sustainability topics, bring the public into contact with international guests and foreign dignitaries, and bring communities together to recognize their shared heritage. We explained to the interested students, that UIMF mission statement is: "To promote the sustainability of the world's Mountain Environments and livelihoods through youth efforts, and community-engaged

learning both locally and globally through advocacy, networking, knowledge sharing, and exchanges of best practices.” To really tie a potential member in, we would nonchalantly slip in that as our first event during the fall semester of 2018 we are hosting the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations, Ambassador Mahmamin Mahmadaminov, in a few weeks here at UVU. After sharing these opening statements, we could always see if a student was actually interested in the club or not. Multiple times, I would have a perceived bias that a student would not be interested when I asked their major, but many times, I was eagerly proven wrong. For example, student with a web design major stumbled upon our table and I had no doubt in my mind that he would politely leave after we explained our initiative and who/what we were. To my surprise, this student was very interested and asked for more information to get involved with UIMF. It’s so exciting to be a part of UIMF that encompasses so many different groups and students with various majors and backgrounds.

Overall, the Club Rush for the UIMF clubs was a huge success. I thoroughly enjoyed getting to interact with students, learning more about UIMF as I shared my collected information, working with and getting to know the current members of the groups on a personal level. As a new member myself, it was a good learning experience to see on a more broad spectrum how this year will potentially play out and how the Utah International Mountain Forum is going to function. We definitely succeeded in meeting our goals and expectations for UIMF’s participation at the annual UVU Club Rush. Through our joint collaboration and hard work, we promoted our mission statement, rose awareness to UIMF, and had a great learning experience.

Megan Davis, UVU Student, Political Science Major, UIMF Director of Public Relations and Protocol Assistant