

Ninth celebration of International Mountain Day at UVU



Dr. Baldomero Lago speaks before the UVU audience during the International Mountain Day 2018

On December 5 2018, The Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU) hosted International Mountain Day. The ceremony was monumental because it reflected back on the work the Utah International Mountain Forum has done this past semester. There were 5 keynote speakers that spoke with accordance to their connection to mountain sustainability. The first speaker was Dr. Baldomero Lago, who emphasized his work at UVU with global and intercultural affairs and engaged learning for undergraduate students. The second speaker was Mayor of Orem City Richard Brunst, who emphasized the importance of mountains for local community. The lumber and

water from the mountains allow Utah Valley to be what it is today through sustainable development. Living in a mountainous region it is easy to forget about not only the picturesque beauty that the Wasatch Front brings to Utah, but the resources that are harvested from them and used in the everyday lives of the people of surrounding valleys.

The third speaker at the International Mountain Day was Dr. Ross Butler. Dr. Butler is the focal point of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, which is a Non-Governmental Organization in general consultative status under ECOSOC since 2002. His role was important in advocacy of mountain agenda when he was the vice president of international affairs and diplomacy at UVU. He orchestrated the opportunity that 3 Utah Valley University students had in 2017 to speak in front of the UN with regards to sustainable mountain development. The speakers were officials in the UIMF and executed concise statements within their three minute allotted time. The fourth speaker was Mrs. Wendy Jyang, president of Utah-China F.I.S.H. and D&C. Mrs. Jyang is the founder of organizations that strive to give opportunity to those in poverty. She provides service opportunities for youth to travel to third world countries and carry out humanitarian work. Her organization was granted NGO status at the UN in 2015 due to her diligent work.

I had the opportunity to present the final speaker, Ms. Rebecca Bindraban. Ms. Bindraban is the editor-in-chief of the Youth and the Mountains Journal, which discusses university students and their work with sustainable development. She is also one of the vice presidents of the UIMF, in which I take the leadership role as secretary as well. Megan Davis awarded Ms. Bindraban and me with certificates of contribution to the International Mountain Day 2018 campaign as well as the UIMF strive for raising awareness about mountains, mountain communities, and their sustainability for generations to come.

Kyle Williams, UIMF member