
Meeting Under Secretary General Alison Smale



Victoria Bindrup (third from left) with Under Secretary General Alison Smale

On Friday, March 29, 2019, I was able to attend a panel at Utah Valley University (UVU), which featured the Under Secretary General for Global Communications, United Nations (UN), Alison Smale. Ms. Alison Smale was in Utah to discuss the upcoming UN Civil Society conference with members of the state legislature. During presentation, Ms. Smale shared with us her career experience and how she was able to get where she is now. She has a record of accomplishment as a reporter, editor, and senior leader, which adds up to almost 40 years of international journalism experience.

Ms. Smale joined the International Herald Tribune in 2004 as Managing editor from The New York Times, where she had the opportunity to be a Deputy Foreign Editor since 2002. Earlier in her career, she reported for United Press International and the Associated Press as

Bureau Chief for Central and Eastern Europe. Her education records are impeccable. Ms. Smale, studied in Bristol, Munich and at Stanford by gaining degrees in Bachelor of Arts in German and Politics as well as a Master of Arts in journalism. She also has an Honorary Doctorate in Law.

As a student at UVU, I was privileged to hear from Ms. Smale. I was impressed with her ability to know so many languages and one of them being Russian. When the panel began, Andrew Jensen and Lauren Johnson, who are both UVU students on the youth subcommittee of the upcoming UN Civil Society Conference, had the opportunity to ask questions as far as the youth engagement and creating lasting impact for the Conference. Ms. Smale noted that the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the UN 2030 agenda is crucial for the international community and it would be a great topic to discuss at the Civil Society Conference. I think that UVU promoting student engaged learning through the advocacy of the sustainable mountain development (SMD) agenda of the United Nations was highlighted for the first time during the sessions of several forums of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) during 2017-2018.

Knowing that such a high-level UN official as Alison Smale came to UVU to discuss such a powerful topic with the students and encouraged specifically the youth to participate really means something to me and makes me as a woman in this complicated world to want to speak up and take a stand. It was so exciting that at the end of the panel we were able to interact with Ms. Alison Smale and ask her questions as well as share our take on activities with SDGs implementations and in particular the example of youth promotion at UVU in general.

Overall, I would argue that the panel was a success, the information was delivered and the fact that the highest-ranking official in the United Nations took her time and came and gave us, students and faculty at UVU, advice, gives me a big hope as a student to be able to succeed in the near future.

Victoria Bindrup, UVU student
