

## Taking part at the roundtable Sustainable Development in Rural Utah


UTAH INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN FORUM  
PRESENTS:


AN EVENT TO EDUCATE STUDENTS IN URBAN  
UTAH ABOUT THE COMPLEXITIES AND  
IMPORTANCE OF RURAL UTAH'S ECONOMY,  
GROWTH, AND SUSTAINABILITY.

APRIL 19TH, 2019 | 11AM - 1PM

EVENT WILL BE HELD IN ROOM: FL120


SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
IN RURAL  
UTAH:  
ROUNDTABLE

 **CLUBS**  
UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY

 **UTAH VALLEY  
UNIVERSITY**

TONY MARTINEZ - CARBON COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
NICHOLINA WOMACK - CEO FUTUREINDESIGN  
MICHAEL KOURIANOS - MAYOR OF PRICE, UT  
CHRISTINE WATKINS - STATE REP. DISTRICT 69  
GERI GAMBER - EXEC. DIR. OF SEUALG/SUEDD  
JOSHUA EMFIELD - DISTRICT DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR  
CONGRESSMAN JOHN CURTIS

EVENT PLANNED BY LACEE MEYER, VP OF UIMF

  
UTAH INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN FORUM  
A COLLECTION OF EDUCATION CLUBS AT  
UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY  
WWW.UTAHIMF.ORG

On Friday the 19<sup>th</sup>, I had the opportunity to attend and engage in the roundtable hosted by the Utah International Mountain Forum and run by Ms. Lacey Meyer. Lacey Meyer played an instrumental role in creating this event and she executed it to perfection. She ensured that the discussions were civil, professional, and lively. Additionally, she led a team of several individuals who – under her instruction – ensured the event’s success.

The roundtable featured five speakers. The first speaker was Geri Gamber who discussed breaking out of poverty in rural Utah. I was shocked at the level of poverty in Utah and its disproportionate placement in rural communities across the state. Perhaps the biggest takeaway

from the words of Ms. Gamber was that these communities need to stop the outmigration of the younger population to ensure the economic and cultural success of these towns and counties.

The second speaker was Representative Christine Watkins who is a rural State Legislator. She offered a unique perspective on the differences between rural and urban living. Like Ms. Gamber, Representative Watkins is troubled by the issues facing these rural communities and specifically sees access to clean water and electricity as a primary challenge.

The third speaker was Mayor Michael Kourianos. He is the current mayor of Price Utah and had a unique perspective regarding the specific issues of Price and ways to combat these issues. One of these issues is sustainability and a shift from coal-based energy. The town's economy relies heavily on this energy. As a result, Mayor Kourianos is working to create a future for the town's economy and citizenry.

The fourth speaker was Ms. Nicholina Womack who is the CEO of FutureINDesign. This company focuses on lifting rural communities out of poverty by teaching the younger generation and older generations about the importance of digital literacy. Ms. Womack offers hands-on training on building social skills and offers an education for those who wouldn't otherwise be able to receive one. She believes that economic stimulation through STEM technology is the key to solving the economic problems in rural Utah.

The fifth speaker was Tony Martines, who is the Carbon County Commissioner. His speech focused on using the already-existing infrastructure to stimulate the economy and make Carbon County even more successful.

These five speakers offered invaluable information and helped us understand the dire circumstances of many rural towns in Utah. We need to work together and with local leaders to better these communities and to improve our state as a whole.

*Parker Dolton, UVU student*