

On the 3rd Annual Utah Diplomatic Conference on International Trade Relations

On November 4, 2019 Utah Valley University hosted the 3rd Annual Utah Diplomatic Conference on International Trade Relations. This conference is a collaboration with Utah's government and other international government officials in an attempt to bring greater international trade to the state. Utah has been growing rapidly over the years and has seen a great influx of international business already. Being that this was held at UVU, this event was open to students and allowed them to have a participatory voice and meet with the officials on a personal level.



President Tuminez speaks at the opening plenary session

The conference began with opening remarks by delegates representing Utah Valley University such as President Tuminez and Dr. Baldomero Lago, as well as local Utah government leaders such as Lt. Governor Spencer Cox. The opening session also had other international leaders present on topics of international trade, namely their country and its relation to Utah.

After a brief intermission, the international delegates went to their assigned rooms where they each presented on a topic of international trade. Room teams held a diverse range of international representatives with one room being shared by India, Japan, Mexico, The Netherlands, and Hungary. These sessions were also open to the public and offered students the chance to hear about specific countries and their international activity.



From left to right, Ms. Zsuzsa James (Trade Commissioner – Finland), H.E. Hynek Kmoniček (Ambassador – Czech Republic), Ms Kathryn Burkell (Senior Trade Commissioner - Canada), Mr. Stéphane Lessard (Consul General - Canada), Ms. Odette Hampton (Deputy Consul General - Australia)

As a student at UVU I was offered the great opportunity to volunteer at this event. My assignment was that of Diplomat Host. This meant that in between sessions I was to meet with the

diplomats and help them maintain the schedule of the event and direct them to the location of the next activity. This allowed me to meet with diplomats face to face and speak with them, this was something that I would otherwise missed had I not been studying at this university. This assignment brought me to the forefront of activity and truly enhanced my learning experience here at Utah Valley University. In addition to this assignment I was asked to direct attendees to event locations during the events in case there were late comers or those that were switching form one event room to another. This unfortunately did not allow me to attend many of the presentations but gave me a surprisingly different international experience. Being that I speak a number of languages during my service at the conference I was able to speak with individuals in English, Spanish, and Chinese thus making this conference a true international experience. I thank Utah Valley University and the government of Utah for being able to attend this conference.

Austin Meline, UIMF member