

Helping Build a Strong Relationship Between Utah and Morocco



Utah-Morocco Presenters Panel at Utah Valley University

It was an amazing opportunity to help with this event here at Utah Valley University (UVU). The event organized by Jon Downs (a UVU student) and coordinated by the Center for Global Engagement at UVU, the Center for National Security Studies, and the Utah International Mountain Forum, took place on March 10, 2020. These presentations and the panel discussion were hosted at UVU, by UVU students, to inform the student population on a more direct level on what is happening around the world. The event was centered around the State Partnership Program between the Utah National Guard and Morocco, which helps promote both the sharing of sustainable mountain development and security practices around the world. Presenters included Hon. Consul Dr. Keith w. Martin, retired Maj. Gen. Jefferson Burton, Lieutenant-Colonel Dustin Carrol, and native Moroccan Ms. Fatima Taki. In their different presentations, each presenter explained the process, difficulties, and benefits of the program for both the Utah National guard

and Morocco as a whole. I am still new to the study of international relations, so this event was a great way to get involved with that field of study.

Each of the four speakers gave great insight about the program from their perspectives. Hon. Consul Dr. Martin talked about the diplomatic relations between the United States and Morocco, Lieutenant-Colonel Dustin Carrol and retired Maj. Gen. Burton talked about how the Utah National guard interacts with the Moroccan government and armed forces, and Ms. Fatima Taki talked about how Moroccans view the relationship. This allowed us to truly learn about this program inside and out because of the different perspectives they each gave. The presenters showed how different military branches work with the State Department and the Moroccan government on solving different issues within the country, both diplomatic and military.



UVU students – event hosts with panel presenters

Because there were four different speakers, it gave UVU students a larger role in this event such as overall organization, introducing the speakers, and organizing lunch afterwards. Helping with this event was valuable to me because of how new I am to the international relations scene

and UVU in general. This gave me the opportunity to network with more professors and students within UVU which adds to my academic experience in general. UVU strives to engage students within all on-campus events, and this is a great example of that. This was student lead and student organized, giving each of us unique experience that we can use in our future professional lives.

Being a national security studies student, this event showed how interconnected national security and diplomacy are. Overall, this event gave great insight onto how interconnected our world truly is and how us as students can help maintain those relationships.

Ethan Elzinga, UVU Student, National Security Studies and Russian Studies