

World Polio Day at Utah Valley University

Utah Valley University's (UVU) Rotaract club, in conjunction with the Office for Global Engagement held a World Polio Day event on October 21, 2020. This event was dedicated to the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations. It was sponsored by Orem Rotary and livestreamed to both them and UVU students in order to maintain CDC guidelines. However, all speakers except for Dr. Scott Leckman, attended in person as well as Jessica Hair, our latest Rotaract member, who helped with all videography of the event.

To help forward our engaged learning initiative, each member of Rotaract was involved in planning and coordinating the event. Yana AndersEn, Rotaract President, was the main coordinator between the Rotaract club, Office for Global Engagement, Orem Rotary, and District Rotary. She helped ensure that we had all presentation materials, such as the laptop, ready for the event. She also assisted with designing the event poster. I assisted with reaching out to our keynote speaker, Scott Leckman, to ask if he would be willing to present for our event. Jose Coreas, UVU Rotaract Secretary helped collect bios for each speaker and made the brochure for the event with all of them included. Sam Elzinga, the President of Utah International Mountain Forum, secured gifts for all the presenters who attended the event.

Four different speakers were able to present and share their thoughts. These speakers included Dr. Baldomero Lago, Yana AndersEn, Dr. Scott Leckman, and Dr. Dean Robinson. The event was also moderated by Yana AdnersEn.



Dr. Baldomero Lago, VP for Global Engagement at UVU

Dr. Lago was the first speaker. He organizes and manages UVU's global and intercultural academic initiative. During his presentation, he touched on the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Polio eradication closely coincides with the third goal which is, "ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages." Rotary International began their polio

eradication efforts in 1988 and is still working tirelessly to fulfill this goal. He expressed the need for countries and communities to come together now at this time to continue these efforts.



Yana Andersen, UVU Rotaract President

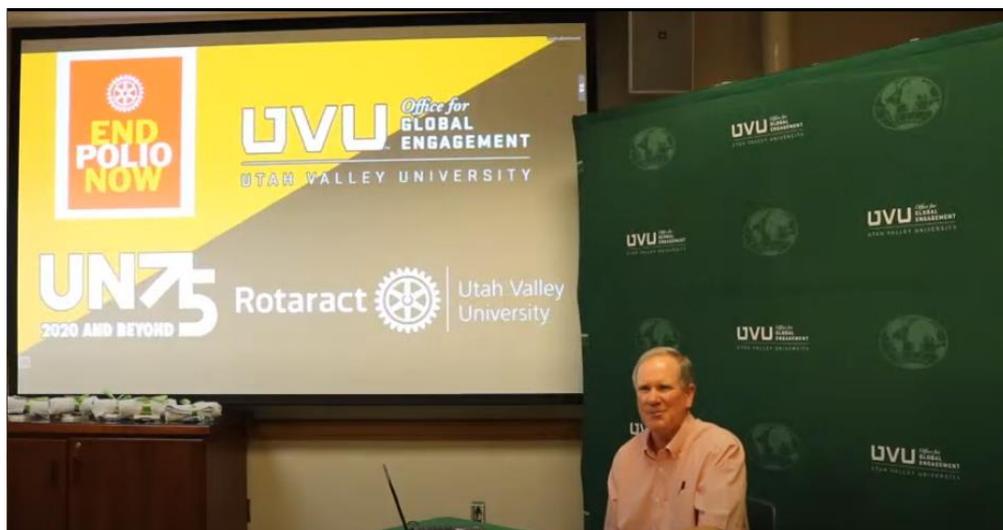
Yana AnderSen was the next speaker. Yana is a junior at UVU studying Political Science with an emphasis in Peace and Justice studies. She spoke about Rotary and it's close relationship with the United Nations. Rotary was founded in 1905 and has over 1.22 members worldwide. When the UN was founded, Rotary was invited to collaborate with them in their efforts for international cooperation. In 1970, there were over 350,000 cases of polio worldwide and since then there has been a 99% decrease in the amount of cases, largely due to Rotary International's efforts. Rotaract is a club for people ages 18-30 and there are multiple clubs worldwide. UVU Rotaract club was re-established in 2017 and focuses on implementing the six goals of Rotary International. Last year, Rotaract attended the United Nations as well as coordinated an event celebrating the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. In 2021, students will have the opportunity to attend the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women where they will advocate for women in mountainous areas.



Dr. Leckman, past Governor for District Rotary

The third speaker was Dr. Leckman. Dr. Leckman was District Governor 2018-2019 for Rotary District 5420 and is currently District 5420 Foundation Chair. He used to be President of the Rotary Club of Salt Lake City, former Assistant Governor, and the District's Polio Plus Chairman for nine years. Dr. Leckman joined the conference via Zoom. Dr. Leckman has organized multiple trips to India to help students get involved with Rotary International's efforts in Polio eradication. The polio epidemic began in the United States in 1916. In 1954, an inactivated vaccine was founded by Dr. Jonas Salk who didn't patent it, but instead gave it to everyone for free. A live vaccine was founded in 1961 by Dr. Albert Sabin. The first grant was given in 1979 as a project to vaccinate 6 million kids in the Philippines. Rotary international set polio eradication as a goal in 1985. When they first set this goal, there were over 350,000 cases in 125 countries and in 2018 there are only 29 cases centralized in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The only other disease fully eradicated was smallpox. However, Polio is much harder to eradicate since it is hard to identify and it's expensive. There are many reasons Polio eradication is important! It saves lives, it's achievable, it's a good investment, it strengthens the system. As both Rotarians, Rotaractors, and members of the community there are three main ways to help in the efforts of polio eradication. These include raising money, advocacy, and community awareness. Dr. Leckman ended his presentation by inviting everyone to attend the Utah Rotary Polio Day Event on Saturday October 24.

The last speaker was Dr. Dean Robinson. He has been a member of the Orem Rotary club for over 30 years and is currently Orem Rotary President. He spoke on the history of Rotary and the good that it has been able to achieve throughout the world due to its non-religious and nongovernmental stance.



Dean Robinson, Orem Rotary President

This was an amazing event and a great opportunity to learn more about polio and spread community awareness. We look forward to working with the Office for Global Engagement, Orem Rotary, and District Rotary again in the near future.

Albeny Singh, Rotaract Vice President