

World Polio Day at Utah Valley University

It was a pleasure for me to attend the World Polio Day commemoration that was held at Utah Valley University (UVU) on October 23rd. 2019. It was hosted by UVU students, who joined the Rotaract, a student club representing Rotary International (RI). RI is a famous worldwide non-governmental organization, which does many humanitarian activities, including the campaign to eradicate poliomyelitis. According to the World Health Organization, “Poliomyelitis (polio) is a highly infectious viral disease, which mainly affects young children. The virus is transmitted by person-to-person spread mainly through the fecal-oral route or, less frequently, by a common vehicle (e.g. contaminated water or food) and multiplies in the intestine, from where it can invade the nervous system and can cause paralysis.”

The agenda of the event included Dr. Baldomero Lago, CIO for Global Engagement at UVU, Dr. John Hanrahan, President of the District Rotary, Dr. Steve Anderson, UVU Director of community and government relations, and Dean Robinson, President-Elect of the Orem Rotary.



Dr. Baldomero Lago speaks at the event

The event was started with brief presentation of Dr. Baldomero Lago, CIO at UVU for Global Engagement, who spoke about contribution of Rotarians to the 68th Annual Civil Society Conference in Salt Lake City. He said also how successful the conference was, with representatives of 130 nations in attendance and 200 workshops on different aspects of the Sustainable Development Goal #11 on sustainable cities and communities.



Dr. John Hanrahan, President of the District Rotary speaks during the event at UVU

The keynote speaker for the event was Dr. John Hanrahan, President of the District Rotary. Dr. Hanrahan addressed the problem of polio. He explained that there are the three types of polio and how this disease affects a spine leaving the victim paralyzed and possible unable to breath or swallow. Dr. Hanrahan said that if we stop using vaccine, polio will attack 200000 person every year. The number of patients with polio this year reached 88, and polio came back to Philippine after 19 years of absence and the last case of type 2 was in India. Dr. Hanrahan at the end of his

presentation showed a short video about polio and how close we are to a complete eradication of this disease.



Dr. Steve Anderson speaks at the event



Dean Robinson speaks at the event

Dr. Steve Anderson was the third speaker and he explained how this disease is relevant to him by sharing a personal story of his grandmother who had polio. After that he spoke about student engagement and how UVU is encouraging student's successes by providing them high impact internships and study abroad programs.

The last speaker at the event was Dean Robinson, President-Elect of the Orem Rotary. He shared with us a brief history of Rotary International (RI) and that RI deals not only with polio eradication, but also it focuses on promoting peace, fighting diseases, providing clean water and supporting education. He mentioned also that the first Rotaract Club was established 51 years ago. Dean Robinson himself joined Rotary 30 years ago.

It was very interesting event and I learned a lot about Rotary International and Rotaract.

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