

A close-up photograph of a person's hands stitching a piece of fabric with vibrant, multi-colored geometric patterns. The person is wearing a grey jacket over a traditional garment with intricate embroidery. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the hands and the textile work.

GVU GLOBAL
ENGAGEMENT

MAY 2025
ISSUE

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT
NEWSLETTER



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ENGAGEMENT

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G L O B A L E N G A G E M E N T

NEWSLETTER

MORE THAN GREEN

Greetings from the UVU Global Engagement Newsletter!

We hope you are having a relaxing and fun summer so far. While this newsletter is a little delayed due to our busy end of the semester, we have a lot of great things to tell you about in this installment. A common theme this last month was sustainability: environmentally, in development, education, and even fashion!

Sustainability is a global issue because it's not just about caring for our world, but all the people in it. If you want to learn how you can practice sustainability in your life, read on! Save in style with fashion tips from our Sustainable Fashion Show, learn from an Indian, ecovillage monk about Sustainability, Nature, and Spirituality, see how UVU commemorated Autism Awareness Day with an insightful presentation from one of our GSLC students, plus a special visit from dignitary Mme: Elsie Effange-Mbella, a UN Advisor from Cameroon.

We hope this issue inspires you to do something to be a more sustainable, mindful global citizen. Whether thrifting, opting for paper bags over plastic, or donating to a sustainable development cause, we can all find ways to contribute to our sphere of influence.

Best regards from

-Kaisë McLane and the Office for Global Engagement



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF

ZERO WASTE





APRIL 3
2025

March 30th marks the International Day of Zero Waste, a United Nations-recognized day dedicated to promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns and advancing circular economy practices. This global observance invites individuals, communities, and organizations to rethink waste and embrace more mindful, environmentally conscious ways of living.

To honor this important day, the Office for Global Engagement at Utah Valley University partnered with several campus clubs to host a meaningful celebration on April 3, bringing awareness to the impact of consumer culture—and particularly the fashion industry—on our planet. The event featured a Really Really Free Market, a Sustainable Fashion Show, and a keynote address by Mohan Vilas Das of Govardhan Ecovillage in India, a community internationally recognized for its innovative sustainability practices.

A S U S T A I N A B L E

*f*ASHION SHOW / 20 / 25

The fashion industry is one of the largest contributors to global pollution. From the resources used to produce textiles to the billions of garments discarded annually, fast fashion leaves a massive environmental footprint. But each of us can make a difference—and UVU students demonstrated that making sustainable choices doesn't mean sacrificing personal style! On the contrary, the creative outfits featured in the Sustainable Fashion Show showed how reusing, repurposing, and thrifting can lead to bold, unique, and expressive fashion. Sustainable clothing often tells a story and reflects the wearer's individuality more than mass-produced trends ever could. By embracing secondhand styles, altering existing garments, or giving new life to old favorites, anyone



can build a wardrobe that's both environmentally conscious and uniquely their own. Here are a few practical ways to promote sustainability in your wardrobe:

WHAT'S IN YOUR CLOSET?

1. CHOOSE WELL, BUY LESS

Focus on quality over quantity. Invest in timeless, durable pieces rather than trendy, short-lived items.

2. THRIFT & SWAP

Shop secondhand or organize clothing swaps with friends and community groups. This keeps clothes in circulation and out of landfills.

3. REPAIR & REPURPOSE

Learn basic mending skills or get creative with upcycling. A small fix or a new button can give an old piece new life.

4. SUPPORT ETHICAL BRANDS

When buying new, research companies that prioritize fair labor practices, sustainable materials, and transparent production processes.



WHAT IS WASTE?

The zero waste movement encourages redesigning our systems so that all materials are reused, and nothing is sent to landfills or incinerators. The United Nations explains that, "This vision requires that governments, companies, and individuals change their attitudes and behaviors, and collectively act to reduce waste generation." (UN, Zero Waste Offer.)



A keynote address was given by Mohan Vilas Das of Govardhan Ecovillage in India, a community internationally recognized for its innovative sustainability practices. His presence reinforced the idea that small lifestyle shifts, when practiced collectively, can lead to significant environmental

*“Rethink
waste and embrace
more mindful,
environmentally
conscious ways of
living.”*



Events like UVU's celebration remind us that building a more sustainable world takes all of us. By coming together—through education, creativity, and collaboration—we can challenge wasteful systems and cultivate habits that respect the planet.

Whether it's sharing a coat at a free market or strutting a secondhand look on the runway, every action counts.

sustainability nature



GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT

10

May 2025

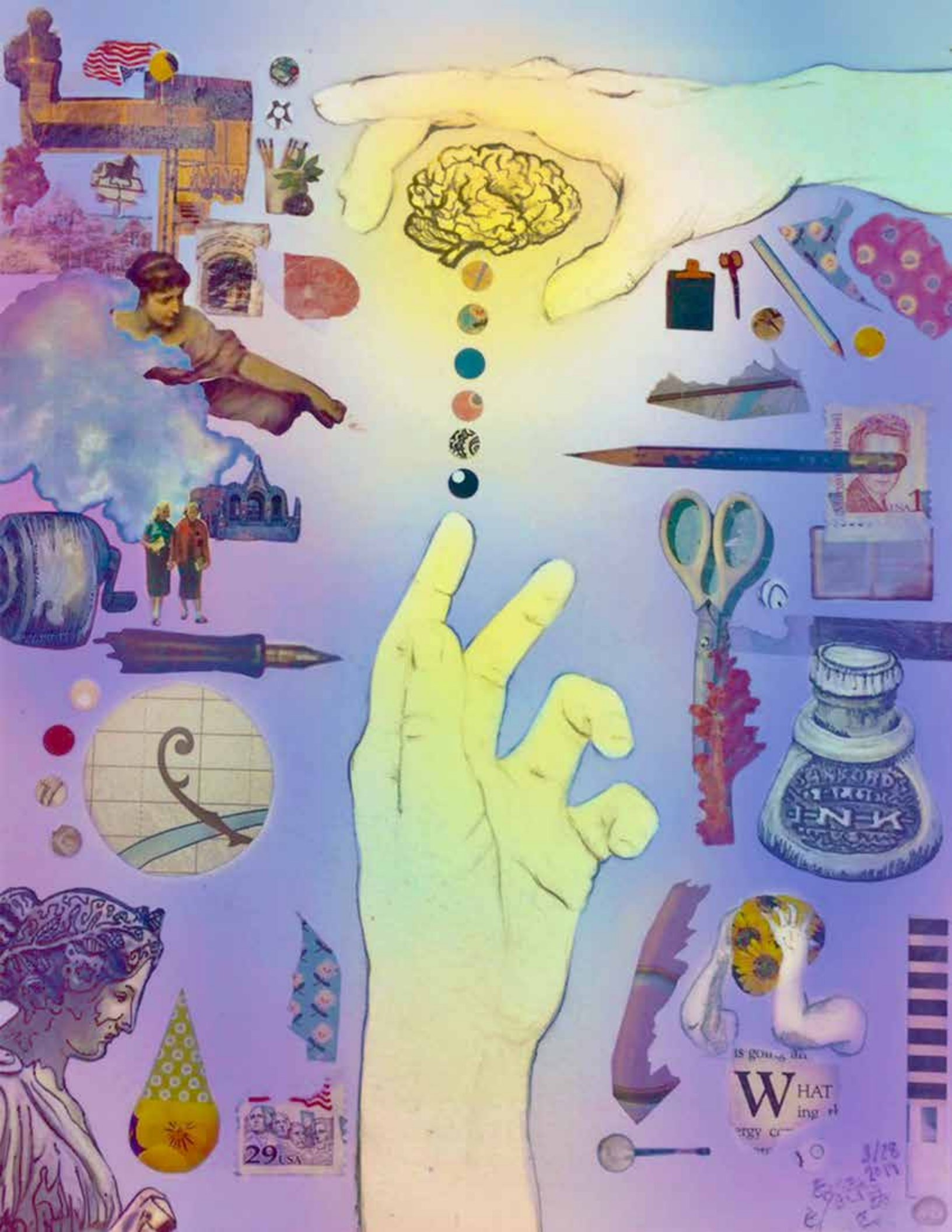


s p i r i t u a l i t y

April 18, 2025

As part of the Global Spotlight series, the event India – Sustainability, Nature, Spirituality highlighted the unique contributions of India's Govardhan Ecovillage to the global dialogue on environmental stewardship and inner transformation. The featured guest, Mohan Vilas Dasa of Govardhan Ecovillage, shared powerful reflections on how sustainable living and spiritual practice can serve as a foundation for both personal peace and global understanding.

Drawing from his experience at Govardhan Ecovillage—a United Nations-recognized model for sustainable development rooted in ancient Indian wisdom—Mohan Vilas Dasa emphasized the interconnectedness of nature and the self. He spoke on the urgent need to reconnect with the planet through mindful living, community collaboration, and spiritual values that promote compassion and balance. His message resonated deeply with attendees, offering not just a vision of ecological harmony, but a call to action for a more peaceful and conscious world.



AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

April 2nd, 2025

April 2 marks Autism Awareness Day, and our office commemorated the day with a powerful and enlightening Global Spotlight presentation titled “How is Autism Viewed Around the World?” This special event was led by Jacob Bunker, a dedicated member of our Global Student Leadership Council.

As someone on the Autism spectrum, Jacob brought a deeply personal and authentic voice to the conversation. He proudly shared his own experiences living with Autism, offering insight into both the challenges and strengths that have shaped his journey. Jacob then broadened the lens, comparing his story with perspectives from across the globe, highlighting how cultural attitudes and support systems for individuals with Autism vary widely.

During his thoughtful and engaging presentation, Jacob not only helped increase awareness but also sparked meaningful dialogue around inclusion, understanding, and global empathy. We are grateful for his leadership and for the opportunity to learn from his perspective on this important day.



LANGUAGE SERVICE

Language Services Day (April 3) was a Global Spotlight collaboration with UVU Languages and Culture. It was an opportunity for individuals looking to work in interpreting, translation and other language related fields to network and seek practical job guidance.



ES DAY CAREER FAIR



BOWLING!



GLOBAL FACULTY / STAFF NETWORKING APRIL 16

OUR CLOSING SOCIAL FOR THE GLOBAL NETWORKING
GROUP WAS A SMASHING SUCCESS!

Since September 2021, the Office for Global Engagement has been working towards creating an inclusive work environment by providing faculty and staff, that have a global background, the opportunity to meet and network with each other.

Join us again in Fall 2025!

CONGRATULATIONS NOOPUR!

WE WANT TO
CONGRATULATE OUR
AMAZING STUDENT
EMPLOYEE, NOOPUR
CHOKSHI, WHO JUST
GRADUATED WITH HER
BACHELORS IN HEALTH
SCIENCE.

NOOPUR WILL BE
SPENDING TIME
WITH HER FAMILY
IN INDIA BEFORE
RETURNING TO START
A MASTERS IN HEALTH
ADMINISTRATION.
CONGRATS NOOPUR!



DIGNITARY VISIT

April 17, 2025



MME. ELSIE EFFANGE-MBI

UN ADVISOR FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS, NOTABLE OF THE BUEA COMMUNITY AND

On April 17, we were honored to welcome Mme. Elsie Effange-Mbella, a distinguished diplomat of Cameroon, as our guest speaker. Mme. Effange-Mbella is a UN Advisor for Women's Rights and a Notable of the Buea Community in Cameroon. Her presentation, titled "Promoting Culture and Environmental Literacy for Sustainable Development," offered powerful insight into the deep connections between culture, education, and environmental stewardship.

CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Mme. Effange-Mbella emphasized how culture shapes our relationship with the environment, and how environmental literacy—defined as the understanding of ecological principles and sustainable practices—can be significantly enhanced when approached through a cultural lens. Her vision was brought to life through

the exciting announcement of the Fako Multipurpose Cultural Center, a project currently being developed in Buea. This center will serve as a hub for cultural preservation, environmental education, and community development.



Rendering of the Fako Multipurpose Cultural Center, credits from the Buea Royal Palace website.

A VISION ROOTED IN COMMUNITY

Throughout her talk, Mme. Effange-Mbella provided compelling examples of how to engage local communities, advocate effectively for a cause, and educate both the public and potential donors. The Fako community's fundraising and awareness efforts have centered around the Mbando Magazine, a beautifully curated publication that features environmental education, regional folk tales, traditional

ELLA
DIPLOMAT OF CAMEROON

recipes, and cultural commentary. All proceeds from the magazine directly support the development of the cultural center.



Fako Fabric worn at the 2023 Mbando Ya Hvako Cultural Festival

A particularly vibrant expression of this heritage is the Fako fabric, a unique textile design that embodies the identity, values, and history of the Fako people. It has proven to be a compelling way to promote cultural heritage—both within the community and to the world—by literally weaving Fako identity into every thread. To further generate support and celebrate Fako heritage, the community hosts an annual fundraising gala, showcasing music, dance, fashion, and storytelling. These events not only raise funds but also serve to preserve and share the richness of Fako traditions with a wider audience.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AS A DRIVER OF SUSTAINABILITY

Mme. Elsie Effange-Mbella's advocacy for women's rights is embedded in her approach to sustainable development, particularly in the Fako Division of Cameroon. As a Gender Adviser with the United Nations, her experience spans crisis management, peace-building, and mobilizing women in sub-Saharan Africa. This background has informed her community work in Cameroon, where she serves as a vital leader and mentor in organizations such as FAWONE (Fako Women's Network) and the EFFANGE Solidarity Fund.



FAWONE (Fako Women's Organization) promoting community involvement in health management and environmental literacy.

These organizations operate on the belief that empowering women is essential to sustainable development. In Fako, this vision is being brought to life through community-based initiatives that integrate health management, environmental literacy, and access to education.

By aligning global experience with grassroots commitment, Mme. Effange-Mbella has helped foster a model of sustainable development that is both inclusive and culturally rooted—one that empowers communities to care for their environment while honoring the identity and leadership of women at every level.

ART AS ADVOCACY: MAX LYONGA SAKO

A highlight of the cultural collaboration comes from world-renowned artist Knight Max Lyonga Sako, who was born in Buea and raised on the slopes of the iconic Mount Fako. Known for his vibrant use of color and symbolism, Max channels the spirit of his homeland into each piece.

In support of the cultural center, he created two original paintings specifically for auction at the MBANDO 2024 Cultural Festival. His work exemplifies how the arts can serve as a powerful medium for cultural expression and environmental advocacy.



One of two paintings exclusively created to raise funds for the cultural center, depicting the symbol of Mt. Fako. A copy was gifted to the UVU Global Engagement Office.



Second of two paintings by Max Lyonga exclusively created to raise funds for the cultural center.



EDUCATIONAL INTEGRATION AND GLOBAL SIGNIFICANCE

In alignment with Mme. Effange-Mbella's message, the broader presentation explored how cultural awareness and environmental literacy can be integrated into education through:

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

that incorporates indigenous knowledge and cultural context alongside scientific principles.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

that document and honor traditional practices.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

that allow students to participate directly in conservation and cultural programs.

Professor Dorothy Limunga Njeuma, pioneer Vice Chancellor of the University of Buea for 17 years, and later Rector of University of Yaounde I



Rector of University of Yaounde1, Minister Nalova Lyonga, now head of Secondary Education.

Under the distinguished leadership of trailblazing women the culture of women's leadership in education has been proudly institutionalized in the region. FAWONE builds upon this foundation, offering scholarships to bright, underprivileged students, forging partnerships with institutions of higher learning, and collaborating with farmers' associations to support local food systems.

Success stories from around the globe demonstrate how this integrated approach leads to greater student engagement, increased community participation, and more sustainable outcomes.

LOOKING AHEAD

We are deeply grateful to Mme. Elsie Effange-Mbella for sharing her wisdom, passion, and leadership. Her work reminds us that sustainability is not only about protecting the environment, but also about preserving the cultural roots that shape our values and actions. Her visit has inspired us to reflect on how we can each play a role in fostering sustainability—locally and globally—through education, advocacy, and collaboration.



We look forward to future partnerships with Cameroon and continuing our engagement in meaningful global academic initiatives

GLOBAL SCHOLARS, GLOBAL FELLOWS, & GSLC AWARDS

Recognition Ceremony

APRIL 18, 2025

Utah Valley University hosted its annual Global Engagement Recognition Luncheon, honoring faculty, staff, and students who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to global awareness, education, and leadership. Held in SC 213AB, the event spotlighted the work of individuals across campus contributing to the university's global mission.

The ceremony began with remarks by Dr. Baldomero Lago and recognitions presented by Kat Brown, with individual award segments led by Amy Barnett, Diana Briceno, and Dr. Lago.



Global Fellows were recognized for their leadership in hosting Global Spotlight events—international speakers and cultural experiences made possible by the Global Spotlight Program. This initiative enables faculty to provide students with enriching global experiences through university-funded programming

*G*lobal Scholars were honored for conducting interdisciplinary research under UVU's UNESCO Chair in Artificial Intelligence and Environmental Stewardship for Sustainable Futures. These scholars exemplify innovation at the intersection of technology and sustainability.

*M*embers of the Global Student Leadership Council (GSLC) also received accolades. These students were selected through a competitive process and awarded scholarships for their leadership. Throughout the year, they led global discussions, collaborated with faculty on Global Spotlight events, and supported international initiatives, including United Nations programs coordinated by the Office for Global Engagement.



*T*he event concluded by recognizing the Hon. Elsie Ngowo Effange-Mbella with a special recognition for her contributions to international collaboration and diplomacy.

Through these awards, UVU continues to foster a campus culture rooted in global competence, engagement, and leadership.



CONGRATULATIONS!

2024 GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT FELLOWS

GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT

The Global Spotlight Program allows faculty to provide a global experience for their students by making funds available to bring a renowned speaker to UVU or to host an international cultural event.



CARLOS ALARCO
Living in the UK and the Quill Project



GORDON HUNT
World Kindness Day



DR. FREDERICK WHITE
Russian Old New Year Celebration



DR. CARL CANLAS
Bridging Cybersecurity - Philippines / The Founder Mindset: Gilbert Lee, TORUS



MARIA LERI
The Brain And The Acquisition Of A Second Language



GLORIA YANG
China Dream



DR. SAIKAT DAS
Preventing Ransomware - Bangladesh & India



JOHN MACFARLANE
Counterterrorism and the Israeli Response in Gaza



DR. CHEUNG CHAU
Sibelius- Finnish Concert



DR. THIerno DIALLO
World Francophone Day



JOHN MCCLURE
Counterterrorism and the Israeli Response in Gaza



JEANNETTE GERMAN
Dominican Republic EMS Project



BRUCE EMBRY, JD
The International Presence of AI (w/ Alyssa Grover)



DR. GEORGE ODONGO
World Autism Awareness Day



MINDEE GRAVER
Travel Office



DR. DEVIN GILBERT
Language Services Day



JEFF PACKER
UVU German Day



HILLARY HOWELL
JET program - Japan



RITA SCHWISOW
Cross Cultural Job Strategies - United Kingdom



DR. HILARY HUNGERFORD
Climate Change: Who pays the price?



BRENT SPENCER
India: Sustainability | Nature | Spirituality

CONGRATULATIONS!

2024 GLOBAL SCHOLARS



STEVE ALLRED



DR. SALLY ROCKS



DR. LAUREN BROOKS



DR. KEVIN SHURTLEFF



DR. EDDY CADET



DR. MARITZA SOTOMAYOR



DR. CARL CANLAS



DR. WEIHONG WANG



DR. CHEUNG CHAU



BEN WILLIAMS



DR. HILARY HUNGERFORD



DR. YI YIN



KEVIN MCCARTHY



DR. ALESSANDRO ZANAZZI



DR. ADAM OGURLU

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2024

GLOBAL STUDENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The Global Student Leadership Council enhances student success and the leadership potential of its members by bringing immersive international experiences and global awareness to the classroom. Students were interviewed and selected as part of the council and given a scholarship award. Council members led global discussions, organized Global Spotlight experiences jointly with faculty, and supported initiatives of the Office for Global Engagement, including United Nations international events.





JACOB BUNKER

Computer Science (Utah, USA)



ANNETTE CABRERA PEREZ

Psychology (Dominican Republic)



CARTER DARGER

Political Science (Utah, USA)



ALYSSA GROVER

Software Engineering (Utah, USA)



ELLE PARK

Business (Korea)



MOHAMED TOURE

Engineering (Mali)

**GLOBAL
SPOTLIGHT**





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