

UVU GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT



OFFICE OF GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

As the Spring 2026 semester concludes, this edition of our Global Engagement newsletter reflects a vibrant season of learning shaped by global perspectives and meaningful collaboration. Through a wide range of Global Spotlights and United Nations observances, our campus community engaged with timely issues such as refugee education, sustainability, digital rights, and cultural history, bringing global conversations directly into the classroom and campus experience. These events were enriched by guest speakers, community partnerships, and opportunities for dialogue that connected local learning to global contexts. We also recognize the continued efforts of our Global Fellows, UNESCO Chair participants, and Global Engagement Student Council members, whose contributions support and strengthen this work. We invite you to explore the highlights that follow and see the many ways global engagement came to life this semester.

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAYS

UN International Days draw attention to issues that shape our world—from human rights and peace to sustainability and global health. They offer meaningful moments to reflect, learn, and engage with challenges that extend beyond borders. This semester, these observances came to life on our campus through events, discussions, and community involvement. Read on to see how we marked these global moments and brought them into our shared experience.



September 8, 2025 | UN: International Literacy Day

On Monday, September 8, the Office for Global Engagement, along with the School of Education, celebrated UN International Literacy Day. The event was held in the McKay Education Building from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Students were presented with three activities that they could choose from. One was to color in a bookmark, another was adding a book review to a wall display, and the third activity was to complete a form that earned the participant a treat if it was completed correctly. Overall, everyone had a great time.

September 23, 2025 | UN: International Day of Sign Languages

On Tuesday, September 23, the Office for Global Engagement and the Department of Languages' American Sign Language & Deaf Studies program celebrated International Day of Sign Languages. This event was held in the language lab and was attended by 100, mainly Deaf Studies students. They watched *No Ordinary Hero: The SuperDeafy Movie*, played games, ate pizza, and enjoyed each other's company. A good time was had by all.





September 24, 2025 |
UN: International Day of Peace

On Wednesday, September 24, the Office for Global Engagement and the Reflection Center hosted International Day of Peace. We heard from organizers involved with myHometown Orem, a community nonprofit dedicated to strengthening neighborhoods and making them places people want to stay. A local member of the Baha'i faith also spoke, sharing wisdom about individual peace. Lizzy Jensen, assistant coordinator of Interfaith Engagement, prepared tips and taught small skills for having conversations with people who might disagree on matters of deep importance, drawing from *I Never Thought of It That Way: How to Have Fearlessly Curious Conversations During Dangerously Divided Times*. The program ended with remarks by Carlos Alarco, instructor of GEOG 2000, whose class was in attendance. The event was attended by 50 people.





October 6, 2025 | UN: World Teachers' Day

On Monday, October 6, the Office for Global Engagement hosted an event to celebrate World Teachers' Day. From 10 a.m. to noon, staff members hosted a table in the Science Building Atrium and asked students to write a “thank you” note to a teacher who made a difference in their academic journey at UVU. We ended the day with over 200 “thank you” cards, which were distributed to the teachers along with a piece of candy as a show of appreciation. We would like to thank all the students who participated.



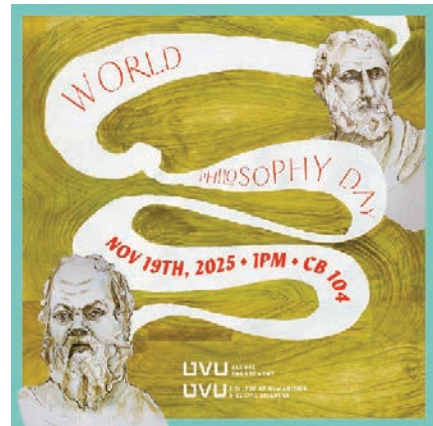
October 29, 2025 | UN: World Clean-Up Day

On October 29, the Office for Global Engagement celebrated World Clean-Up Day along with a Sustainable Fashion Show and the Really Really Free Market. The theme of this year’s event was textiles and fashion waste. All who attended had a great time finding items to take, enjoying the fashion show, and learning about fast fashion. Models for the fashion show were comprised of students from across campus and members of the Environmental Science Student Association. During the event, we prevented over 100 lbs of clothing from ending up in landfills.



November 19, 2025 | UN: World Philosophy Day

On November 19, the Office for Global Engagement and Michael Shaw from the Department of Philosophy highlighted World Philosophy Day. With a focus on Aristotle, Dr. Shaw led the discussion and guided attendees through the Greek philosopher's thoughts on The Four Causes from *Physics*, Book II.



November 20, 2025 | UN: World Science Day for Peace and Development

On November 20, the Office for Global Engagement collaborated with the College of Science to celebrate World Science Day for Peace and Development. The event featured a showing of the movie *The Martian* in the Science Building Atrium. Throughout the film, students and faculty shared scientific “facts and myths” about space travel and Mars.





January 27, 2026 | UN International Day of Remembrance for Victims of the Holocaust

January 27, 1945 was the day the Auschwitz concentration camp was liberated as WWII neared its end. In 2005, the United Nations recognized the significance of this event and the importance of this day and so they designated January 27 as a UN International Day of Remembrance for Victims of the Holocaust. To further the dialogue on human rights, peace & justice, and equality, the Office for Global Engagement had an interactive tabling display to remind, educate and honor this solemn event.

March 5-6, 2026 | UN International Women's Day

This year, our office got a jump start on International Women's Day (March 8) commemorative events. On March 5, we hosted a service project in coordination with The Refuge Utah. Throughout the morning students and staff stopped by to help tie blankets for women in crisis. Later that afternoon, Meghana Rawat, director of the UVU Global/Intercultural Program and assistant professor in the Department of Communication, moderated a discussion titled "Women in Business: A Global Lens to Success." She was joined by Dr. Rachel Bi, chair of Finance and Economics and director of UVU FinTech, and Legogang Monageng-Goad, executive director of Yoga Forward. On March 6, Dr. Susan Merrill from UVU Peace & Justice Studies gave a presentation "Women and War: From Victims to Victors," where she highlighted several conflicts in Africa and how women empowered themselves to peacefully protest and ultimately overcome their oppressors.





March 31, 2026 | UN: Zero Waste Day

The Office for Global Engagement celebrated United Nations Zero Waste Day in the Science Building Atrium with a well-attended Free Market and a presentation on reducing food waste.

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ZERO WASTE

"Zero Waste Starts on Your Plate"

MAR 31, 2026 SB ATRIUM 10AM - 12PM

WITH FREE MARKET AND SUSTAINABLE FASHION SHOW

UVU GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT EVENTS



The Global Spotlight Initiative, led by the Office for Global Engagement, brings global perspectives directly into the classroom and campus experience. Designed to support faculty and enrich student learning, each event incorporates an international component—connecting academic topics to real-world global contexts through guest speakers, cultural experiences, and collaborative dialogue. Along with Global Spotlights, our office also hosts lectures and concerts to promote global engagement on campus. This semester’s Global Spotlights and other events highlight the breadth of that engagement, showcasing how faculty and students explored global issues, cultures, and careers in meaningful and impactful ways.

October 9, 2025 | Global Spotlight: Mental Health in Nigeria

Moyosore Dasaolu highlighted the stigma surrounding mental health in Nigeria and emphasized the importance of community-driven solutions to increase awareness and access to support.



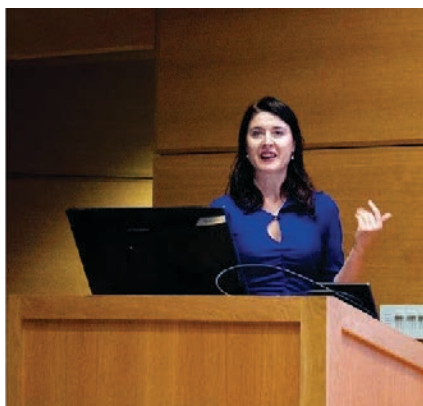


October 22, 2025 | Global Lecture: Peacemaking in a Violent World

Carl Stauffer discussed reconciliation and peacebuilding, drawing on experiences in Vietnam and emphasizing the importance of confronting difficult histories to achieve lasting peace.

October 23, 2025 | Global Spotlight: Mothers Without Borders in Zambia

Josephine Daka presented on efforts to support vulnerable children in Zambia, alongside student reflections from a recent service-learning experience.



October 28, 2025 | Global Lecture: Science, Music, and Art

Blanka Křížová explored the intersection of science, music, and art, in the life of Darwin, complemented by a live Czech musical performance, highlighting interdisciplinary global connections.

**November 10, 2025 | Global Spotlight:
Sustainability in the Dominican Republic**

Milines Sabala Vera discussed community-driven sustainability efforts in the Dominican Republic, particularly in response to recent environmental challenges.



**November 11, 2025 | Global Spotlight:
Turkmenistan in Central Asia**

Ana Caballero examined Turkmenistan's geopolitical position, highlighting its balance between isolationism and global engagement.

**November 12, 2025 | Global Spotlight: UK-US
Intelligence Sharing**

Dr. Mary Kent explored the evolving intelligence landscape and the role of open-source intelligence in addressing modern global threats.



**November 13, 2025 | Global Spotlight: Tariffs
and the Mexican Border**

Dr. Maria del Rosario Barajas Escamilla led a bilingual discussion on cross-border trade and tariffs, emphasizing economic cooperation and regional dynamics.

January 14, 2026 | Global Spotlight: Old New Year Celebration

Students celebrated the Slavic Old New Year through cultural traditions, fostering cross-cultural understanding and engagement.

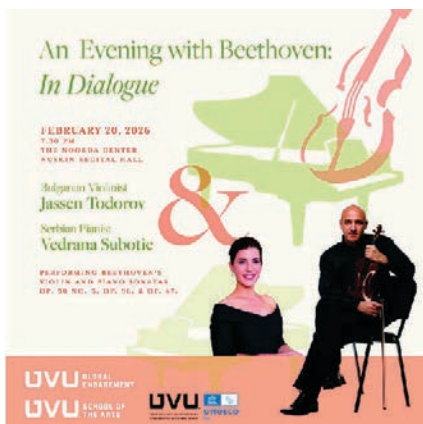


February 11, 2026 | Global Spotlight: Water Sustainability (Peru & Utah)

This UNESCO Chair project highlighted collaborative research in Peru, with students and faculty sharing fieldwork and findings on water quality.

February 12, 2026 | Global Spotlight: Hispanic Business - Cakes by Edith

A bilingual presentation explored entrepreneurship within a family-run business, highlighting cultural identity and business development in Utah.



February 20, 2026 | Global Concert: An Evening with Beethoven

An intimate performance brought Beethoven's sonatas to life, showcasing the global influence of classical music.

February 25, 2026 | Global Spotlight: Language Industry Day 2026

Students explored career pathways in language-related fields through a campus-wide event featuring a keynote from The Walt Disney Company and a professional networking fair.



February 26, 2026 | Global Spotlight: Bilingualism & the Global Brain

An interactive session examined how bilingualism enhances cognitive function, featuring student perspectives and discussions on language and identity.

March 3, 2026 | Global Spotlight: Securing Databases in a Global Context

A collaborative webinar connected students in Utah and the Philippines to discuss cybersecurity and global data protection.



March 17, 2026 | Global Spotlight: External Sector Statistics - IMF

A senior economist from the International Monetary Fund introduced students to global economic systems and international financial data.

March 31, 2026 | Global Spotlight: Refugee Health & Belonging

A panel discussion shared refugee experiences and explored how healthcare systems can better support displaced populations.



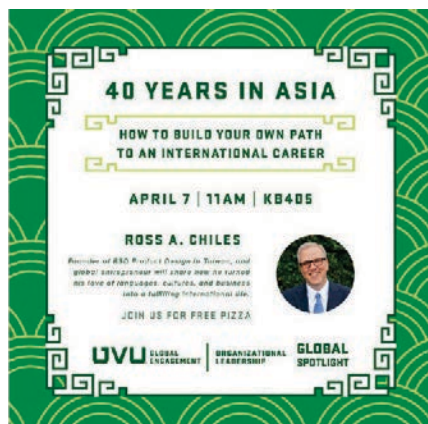
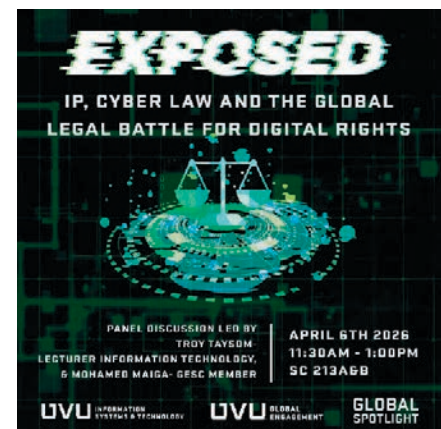
April 1, 2026 | Global Spotlight: Japanese American Internment in Utah

This event examined the history of internment in Utah, highlighting personal stories and the broader impact of discrimination during WWII.



April 6, 2026 | Global Spotlight: IP, Cyber Law & Digital Rights

Experts discussed global challenges in intellectual property and digital rights, emphasizing the evolving legal landscape in the digital age.

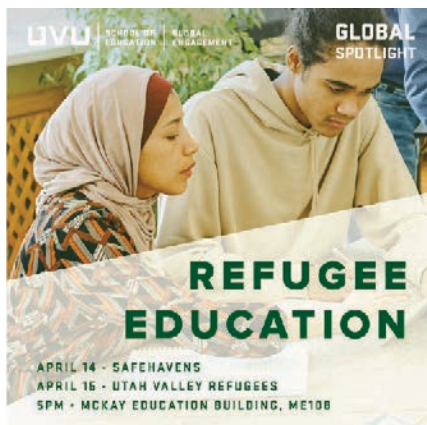


April 7, 2026 | Global Spotlight: Building an International Career in Asia

Ross A. Chiles shared insights from his career in Asia, encouraging students to develop adaptability and global competencies.

April 13, 2026 | Global Concert: An Evening for Ukraine

The UVU Symphony Orchestra welcomed Ukrainian-born violinist and Harrisburg Symphony concertmaster Peter Sirotnin for “*An Evening for Ukraine*,” a performance honoring Ukrainian culture and resilience. Blending powerful music with meaningful context, the concert created a space for reflection on the human impact of ongoing conflict. The Office for Global Engagement supported event logistics and hosted visiting Ukrainian Consul General Dmytro Kushneruk, reinforcing the event’s cultural and diplomatic significance.



April 14-15, 2026 | Global Spotlight: Refugee Education (Part I & II)

Speakers highlighted educational initiatives supporting refugee populations and shared strategies for improving access and outcomes.

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT STUDENT COUNCIL



The Global Engagement Student Council (GESC) plays a vital role in advancing the Office for Global Engagement’s mission to develop confident, capable global citizens. Through leading discussions, supporting Global Spotlight events, and contributing to United Nations international observances, GESC members bring global awareness and meaningful international perspectives into the classroom and campus community. We are especially grateful for the dedication and hard work of this year’s council members, whose efforts have strengthened student engagement and leadership throughout the year. As they continue their academic and professional journeys, we wish them the very best as globally minded individuals prepared to make an impact in an interconnected world.

Past GESC Member Spotlight: Carter Darger

What aspects of being part of our council/office did you most enjoy? Which did you find most impactful for their future education/career? :

Looking back at my time with the office of global engagement as a global student leader, the whole experience was transformative and deeply impactful. What I really enjoyed about the council was that there was a sense of comradery, helping one another out and broadening our horizons by networking and learning.



I have fond memories of gathering together as a group and putting on presentations, listening to high-level guest speakers, or even just getting lunch where the focus was undisputedly on helping us as students grow. The most impactful bits happened when I was shown that intercultural studies, collaboration, and global politics cannot be just concepts to learn, but must be put into practice through the genuine relationships you make with others. This manifested in everything I did on the council, and so while my experience in running and leading events, engaging with state department officials and international business leaders, and developing global literacy are themselves highly



prestigious, the translation into practical and relational aspects have left me with friends for life and deep respect for other cultures. It has led to me pursuing a master's degree at Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland on conflict transformation, a practice of peace studies that attempts to address the deeper roots at the epicenter of conflict by building the capacity of local actors and looking into similar methods at building genuine and positive relational patterns. I am incredibly grateful for my chance to work with the office, and would encourage any serious student at UVU to apply for this life-altering opportunity.

Cheers,

Carter B. Darger

END OF YEAR RECOGNITIONS



For our Global Engagement Recognition Lunch encompassing Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 semesters, we awarded 19 new Global Fellows. These members of faculty either hosted a Global Spotlight event with their classes or arranged a UN International/ World Day event. 10 faculty members returned again to either host another Global Spotlight or to allow a Global Engagement Student Council member to give a presentation in their classroom. For the 6 new faculty members that dedicated time and efforts on a UNESCO chair project, they were recognized with a Global Scholars award. Their projects took place in Greece, Indonesia, the Dominican Republic and Cameroon. 7 past awardees continued working on UNESCO chair projects in the Dominican Republic, Peru, Cameroon, and Thailand for a second year. At this event, we also recognized the contributions made by our six Student Council members.

2025 -2026

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.



DR. BING HAN
UN International Literacy Day



CHAD KENNEDY
UN International Day of Sign Languages



MICHAEL SHAW
UN World Philosophy Day



DR. BONNIE ANDERSEN
UN World Science Day for Peace and Development



DR. RACHEL BI
UN International Women's Day



DR. MEGHANA RAWAT
UN International Women's Day



SUSAN MERRILL
UN International Women's Day



HILLARY HOWELL
"The Price of Prejudice": The Story of Japanese American Internment in Utah



DR. LYNN ENGLAND
Peacemaking: Promoting Non-Violence in a Violent World



JONATHON WOOD
40 Years in Asia: How to Build Your Own Path to an International Career



DR. ADAM OGURLU
Refugee Education



MICHELE BILDNER
Mental Health in Nigeria



JOHN MCCLURE
The Evolution of Intelligence: UK & US



MARI DE DIOS
Hispanic Business in Utah: "Cómo llevar un negocio Hispano al éxito en Utah"



DR. MARITZA SOTOMAYOR
External Sector Statistics - International Monetary Fund



DR. COLLEEN PETERSON
Josephine Daka: Zambia In-country Director for Mothers without Borders



KRISTINA GIBBY
Tariffs and the Mexican Border



OLGA JARRELL
Slavic Old New Year Celebration



DR. SALLY ROCKS
Building Bridges: Collaborative Solutions for Water Sustainability Between Peru and Utah



DR. LAUREN BROOKS
Building Bridges: Collaborative Solutions for Water Sustainability Between Peru and Utah



DR. EDDY CADET
Building Bridges: Collaborative Solutions for Water Sustainability Between Peru and Utah



DR. KRISTINA OLDROYD
Bilingualism and the Global Brain



DR. GEORGIA HALKIA
Building Proximity and Belonging: Courage, Community, & Refugee Health



TROY TAYSON
Exposed: IP, Cyber Law, & the Global Legal Battle for Digital Rights



CARLOS ALARCO
Sustainability in the Dominican Republic



BAKTYBEK ABDRISEAEV
Isolation or Neutrality? Turkmenistan in Modern Central Asia



DEVIN GILBERT
Language Industry Day 2026 @ UVU



CARL CANLAS
Securing Databases in a Global Context

2025 -2026

GLOBAL SCHOLARS

Global Scholars are recognized for their work and research under the UVU UNESCO Chair on AI and Environmental Stewardship for Sustainable Futures. From fieldwork to research, these individuals have dedicated much time and effort to these impactful projects.



DR. ALIKI MILIOTI
*Architecture - College of Engineering
and Technology*



DR. SALLY ROCKS
Chemistry- College of Science



MICHAEL HARPER
*Digital Media - College of Engineering
and Technology*



DR. LAUREN BROOKS
Biology - College of Science



EMILY HEDRICK
*Digital Media - College of Engineering
and Technology*



DR. EDDY CADET
Environmental Science - College of Science



DR. LYNN FARLEY
*Occupational Therapy - College of Health
and Public Service*



DR. WEIHONG WANG
Geography- College of Science



MARI DE DIOS
*Languages and Cultures - College of
Humanities and Social Sciences*



DR. MARITZA SOTOMAYOR
Finance and Economics



DR. GEORGE ODONGO
Special Education - School of Education



DR. CHEUNG CHAU
Music - School of the Arts



DR. ADAM OGURLU
Elementary Education

