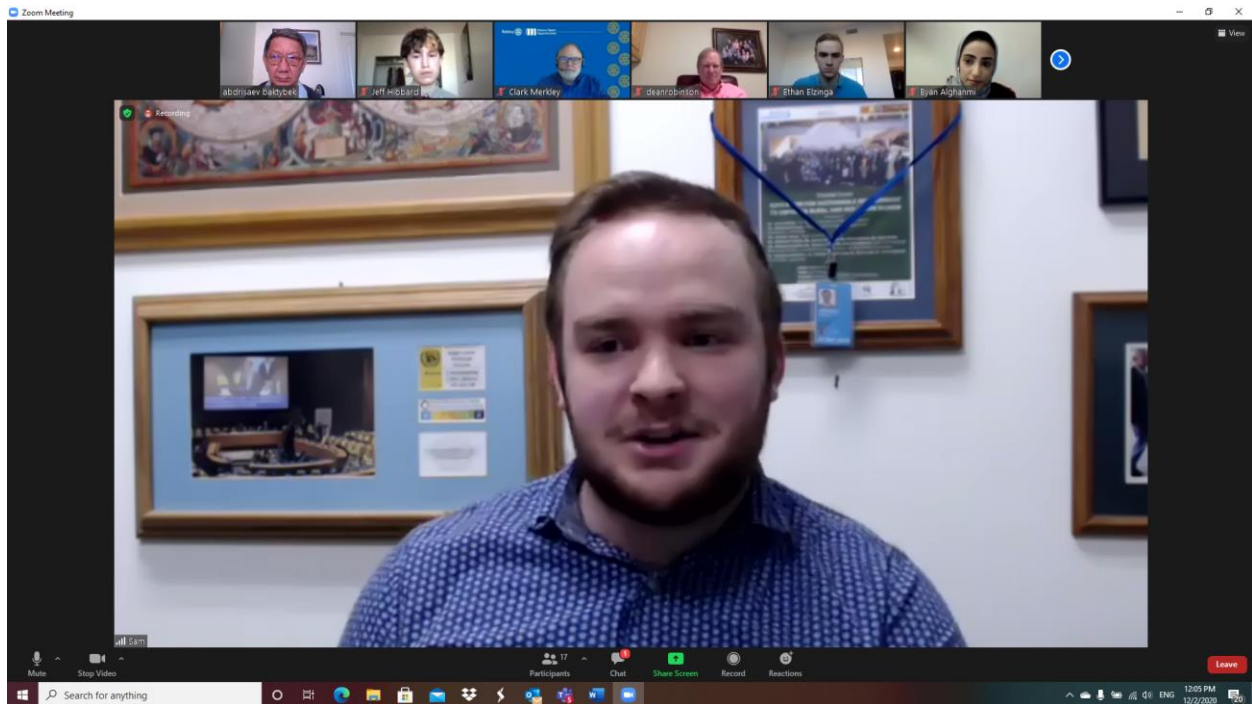


11th Annual International Mountain Day at Utah Valley University

On December 2nd 2020, at noon the 11th observation of International Mountain Day (IMD) at Utah Valley University (UVU) began with Dallas Karren, Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), Vice President, welcoming everyone to the event and laying out the event agenda. UIMF is a coalition of clubs at UVU, which advocates for sustainable development for mountain communities in Utah and everywhere. Jeff Hibbard, who is an UIMF member was tasked with introducing the first speaker. The first speaker was Sam Elzinga, President of UIMF.



Samuel Elzinga speaks during IMD 2020

Sam made a clear concise speech providing the background of IMD and the UIMF. He emphasized the progress he has noted took place during his time as a member and President. He took the time to acknowledge the commitment that members have shown during challenges such as the disruptive changes and difficulties caused by COVID-19s. Sam proceeded to explain the background of the UIMF in promoting and accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Dr. Rusty Butler, was the second speaker. But he could not attend in time due to technical difficulties that developed with the Zoom platform. Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev, UVU Professor and UIMF mentor, stepped for Dr. Rusty Butler.

Dustin Liu, Youth Observer to the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA), could not attend due to an emergency circumstance. As a result he asked Anna Mahalak, Youth Engagement Manager for UNA-USA, to present and attend in proxy.



Anna Mahalak, Youth Engagement Manager for UNA-USA speaks during event

I introduced Anna and read a short bio for Dustin. Anna spoke about UNA-USA and the role the organization plays as well as played a pre-recorded video from Dustin Liu speaking on the theme of the event- biodiversity.

Anna spoke about the work that the UNA-USA does and their 20,000 nationwide members across 200 chapters. She provided the background of UNA-USA, such as explaining that UNA-USA is the oldest NGO in the United States, and is older than the United Nations itself.



Dr. Dean Robinson, President, Orem Rotary speaks during event

For the final speaker, Ethan Elzinga introduced Mr. Dean Robinson, Orem Rotary President. Rotaract International is an organization that is meant to bring about peace, improvement on sanitation and hygiene, fight Diseases, educational status, ensure access to clean water and lastly to enable the growth of local economies. He further spoke on the polio eradication efforts of Rotaract International and stressed the importance of involvement in humanitarian organizations.

Byan Alghanmi, UIMF member