

Statement

McKay Brooks

Utah Valley University Rotaract Vice President
67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Parallel Event

Empowering Mountain Women through Inclusive Student-engaged Learning Educational Initiative

March 6th, 2023

My name is McKay Brooks, I am the president elect of Utah Valley University Rotaract, and I am here to advocate for expanded support of Rotaract clubs. Rotaract clubs utilize the local knowledge of students as community members and empower them by providing access to the resources of Rotary International. Since I joined Rotaract last November, it has provided me with many opportunities to build skills through student-engaged learning or SEL. SEL encourages students to work inclusively as a group to solve real-world problems, with faculty and community members serving as mentors.

Through our work and mentorship with Orem-Lindon Rotarians, I have been able to help provide winter coats for children, fundraise for high school mental health resources, and advocate for Rotaract expansion in Kyrgyzstan. Through Utah Rotary District 5420 and SEL, Rotaractors have been able to travel to Puerto Penasco Mexico and provide assistance with projects like home construction.

Global communities have been empowered through Rotaract clubs and SEL as well. Rotaractors in the Philippines, for example, have built systems to capture and store rainwater. These provide a vital resource for rural communities in the form of uncontaminated freshwater.

UVU has been working with OSH Technological University in Kyrgyzstan to establish and empower Rotaract chapters by connecting Rotaractors at each university. In February, our Rotaractors coordinated a meeting with the ambassador from Kyrgyzstan to the US and Canada to discuss how we can establish a formal exchange program that utilizes SEL to allow Rotaractors from OSH and UVU to teach and learn from each other.

By the time Rotaractors graduate and become future leaders, education using SEL has given us skills to identify community issues and implement solutions that are tailored to our communities. Whether it be improving access to education for women, or any other issue, training leaders to find solutions to problems is instrumental to our continued ability to meet the needs of the future.

I encourage all of those in attendance to consider how they can empower Rotaract clubs in their own countries to create a new generation of leaders that will continue to carry the world forward.

Thank you.