

UNA-USA Pomona Valley Chapter Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 21, 2016 5:30 PM Napier Center, Pilgrim Place

Introduction/Announcements: Mel Boynton, Chapter President, welcomed 30 members and guests and thanked Julie Steinbach for providing refreshments.

- Rizek Abusharr said that the “Pilgrimage to the Holy Land” tour is filled.
- Members in attendance were asked to check their status, using the enrollment sheet that was passed around. Also distributed were cards inviting all to join the UNA-USA organization.
- **The April meeting of the Chapter will feature Associate Dean Kebokile Dengu-Zvobgo who will talk about women’s programs in Africa, entitled “When We Play Our Own Drums”. The meeting will be Tuesday, April 19, at 7:00 PM in Room 101 in Hahn Hall, on the Pomona College campus. The meeting is co-sponsored by the Office for International Initiatives at the college.**
- Photos of the Chapter’s four interns were passed around, interns are on spring break.
- **The May meeting of the Chapter will feature Cal Poly Pomona’s MUN team that is representing Mexico at this year’s National MUN event in New York. The Meeting will be Tuesday, May 17, at 5:30 PM in the Napier Center on the Pilgrim Place campus.**
- The City of Claremont has presented the UNA-USA Pomona Valley Chapter with a certificate of recognition honoring the United Nations founding 70 years ago.
- The Southern California Division of UNA-USA now is comprised of ten chapters, the newest in Beverly Hills.
- The Whittier Chapter of UNA-USA invites everyone to Whittier’s “Climate Day” event on Saturday, April 30, from 10 AM until 2 PM, on the “Greenleaf Grassy Area”, along Greenleaf Avenue, between Philadelphia and Bailey streets.
- **The June 21 meeting of the Chapter will feature those members who will have attended the National UNA-USA meeting to be held June 12- 14. The meeting will be Tuesday, June 21, at 5:30 PM in the Napier Center on the Pilgrim Place campus.**
- Naomi Klein’s film, “This Changes Everything”, will be shown Wednesday, April 13 at 10:30 AM in Decker Hall on the Pilgrim Place campus.

Sustainable Development Goal focus: Katie Gerecke, Chapter Vice-President, displayed an article, “Not Equal in Any Nations” from a recent edition of the *Los Angeles Times* newspaper as an introduction to SDG Goal 5, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. In addressing the inequality women continue to face throughout the world, Goal 5 targets both negative actions such as violence and harmful practices and positive practices such as participation in decision-making and universal access to reproductive and sexual health. The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), a UN treaty, serves as the framework for this goal. Katie named three current approaches to addressing the inequality issue: 1. The June 2015 agreement of the G7 nations to stress the need for women entrepreneurs; 2. The UN effort, following the Nepal earthquake in 2015, to

advise youth / refugees of their rights; and 3. The establishment of mobile clinics in the Balkans for refugees from the Middle East. The discussion following Katie's presentation included the suggested reading of Nicholas Kristof's books, the measurability of the goals and the serious need to observe sustainable development throughout the world.

Program: Charlene Martin, Chapter Program Chair, introduced Professor Lako Tongun who gave "An Update on South Sudan", his native country. Tongun's talk was accompanied by a power point presentation composed of data including maps, charts, timelines and photographs. Historically, South Sudan became an independent country in July 2011 after being part of Sudan. Sudan, itself, was governed jointly by Britain and Egypt for about 60 years prior to its independence in 1956. The 50-year period between the two countries' independences was marked by civil war that caused three million deaths and the displacement of another four million people. Tongun noted that he was fortunate enough to escape from the area in 1962. The current civil war within South Sudan, a country of 11.5 million, has resulted in 50,000 deaths, 2 million people internally displaced and 4 million facing starvation. While South Sudan's civil war originally was between two factions within the government, it now has spread with many ethnic groups fighting among themselves. Control of the government, of the public purse and of lands that contain oil reserves are major reasons for the fighting. Other causes are land grabs, the availability of weapons and the "prestige" of being in uniform. Guns have been sourced back to the United States, Russia and China, albeit many times through circuitous routes. Negotiations to end the war have been facilitated by the UN and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). However, the agreements have failed to be implemented. Questions after Tongun's presentation referred to climate change and UN missions.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.
Respectfully submitted,
Carolee Monroe, Secretary