



## UTAH GLOBAL DIPLOMACY

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**Media Contact:**

Don Willie

[don@epicenterstrategies.com](mailto:don@epicenterstrategies.com)

801-859-5094

### **Utah First in the Nation to Recognize Citizen Diplomacy Day**

*For the first time in Utah's history, Citizen Diplomacy Day recognizes the influence of citizen diplomacy in Utah's global relations*

SALT LAKE CITY, UT - In recognition of Utah's prolific citizen diplomacy work throughout the state, The Utah Senate and Utah House of Representatives issued legislative citations designating Friday, February 16 as Citizen Diplomacy Day in Utah - a first in Utah history and a first at the state level in the United States. The citation was sponsored by Representative Robert Spendlove and Senator Luz Escamilla.

Citizen Diplomacy Day was first recognized by the United States Congress on February 16, 2011 at the national level. This day commends the achievements of citizen diplomats who have worked for generations to share the best of the United States with foreign leaders, specialists, and scholars. Similarly, Utah Global Diplomacy has worked for decades to share the best of Utah with civic, education, community and business leaders from across the globe.

Utah is an internationally recognized leader in economic, cultural, and educational success. With more than 130 languages spoken in daily business in the state, Utahns are a globally minded people who serve as a bridge to countries across the world. Citizen Diplomacy Day in Utah is a reminder of the role and responsibility that each individual plays in global relations and cultivating peace through understanding.

“By bringing people together to shake hands, sit down, and share their life stories, knowledge, and values with each other, we are taking action to make the world a better place for everyone,” said Felecia Maxfield-Barrett, President & CEO of Utah Global Diplomacy. “This day promotes these values and recognizes the tremendous contributions made by volunteer citizen diplomats across Utah.”

In recognition of this designation, U.S. Department of State Director of the Office of International Visitors, Amy Storrow, joined with legislative leaders and Utah Global Diplomacy leaders to promote



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the impact Utah has through the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). Through this program, Utah Global Diplomacy has hosted over 12,000 international visitors from over 200 countries since their founding in 1967. These international visitors have participated in over 400,000 professional meetings, volunteer activities, school tours, cultural activities, and dinners with Utah residents.

“IVLP delegation visits allow Utah leaders to meet with like-minded professionals, businesses, government agencies, and organizations to exchange best practices and network while highlighting Utah as an economic, cultural, and innovation hub,” said Representative Robert Spendlove. “Through these interactions, Utahns have the power to shape perceptions of our state across the globe, effectively shattering stereotypes and underscoring common human aspirations.”

Utah Global Diplomacy also recognized several high-profile Utah leaders with the inaugural Taza Armstrong Peirce Citizen Diplomat Award, which recognizes community, business and government leaders who have served as exemplary citizen diplomats in their respective roles. The 2024 honorees include:

- Senator Luz Escamilla
- Luna Banuri, Utah Muslim Civic League
- John Dougall, Utah State Auditor

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### **ABOUT UTAH GLOBAL DIPLOMACY:**

Utah Global Diplomacy is committed to promoting respect and understanding between the people of Utah and other nations. This is done through citizen diplomacy - the concept that every individual has the right, even the responsibility, to help shape U.S. foreign relations by connecting with each other one handshake at a time. Utah Global Diplomacy applies citizen diplomacy efforts through its International Exchange Programs (in partnership with the U.S. State Department), World Affairs Lectures, Dialogues, & Conversations, and its Young Diplomats of Utah program. You can join Utah Global Diplomacy's community and conversations at [www.utahglobaldiplomacy.org](http://www.utahglobaldiplomacy.org) or by emailing [info@utahglobaldiplomacy.org](mailto:info@utahglobaldiplomacy.org).