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Salt Lake City 2034 Winter Olympics Chief Outlines Athletes' Families Initiative at G20 Interfaith Forum

Salt Lake City, October 16, 2026 — Fraser Bullock, President and Executive Chair of the organizing committee for the 2034 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City, told the G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) on Friday evening that the Games will include an Athletes' Families Initiative, with a village to welcome the families of athletes from some 100 countries. The evening plenary paired the Olympics' power to unite the world with a conversation among university leaders on the place of faith in higher education.

Bullock recalled that the 2002 Salt Lake Games, held months after the September 11 attacks, gave the nation and the world a moment of healing, and said organizers want the 2034 Games to lead with purpose.

"Normally during the Olympics you think about the athletic part of it, which is of course its heart, but what we're trying to do in 2034 is do good in the world," Bullock said.

Olympic skeleton silver medalist Noelle Pikus-Pace described a career shaped by family: a leg shattered by a runaway bobsled before the 2006 Games, a fourth-place finish by a tenth of a second in 2010, and a silver medal in 2014 on a sled her husband designed, after which she ran into the stands to embrace her family rather than heading to the media. Finding lodging and logistics for family, she said, is one of the greatest stresses athletes face, which makes the new initiative a blessing.

"We finished together," Pikus-Pace said of that 2014 race.

Two-time Olympic gold medalist gymnast Peter Vidmar recalled finding his 1984 rival, Japan's Koji Gushiken, quietly reading aloud in a corner of the training gym on the day of their final, a reminder of athletes reaching for something bigger than themselves. He called the families initiative long overdue.

"Whatever seat we're in, we have an opportunity to do good. We're all in different seats," Bullock said. "The Olympics is a marvelous platform, but it's also a stewardship. It's a responsibility to make the world a better place."

In the evening's second conversation, moderated by Ruth Todd, Executive Vice President and Chief Content Officer of Bonneville International, Baylor University President Linda Livingstone and Brigham Young University President C. Shane Reese described how faith-based universities form character as well as minds.

Livingstone said Baylor's Faith and Character Study, which since 2018 has followed students from their first year through a decade after graduation, has found church attendance to be one of the best predictors of student retention, graduation and grade point average. The findings led Baylor to break its campus-wide chapel into some 70 smaller options and to restructure its Christian scripture courses.

Reese said faith-based universities hold their students to an aim beyond knowledge alone.

“Contrary to the institutions that are not faith-based, who challenge their students to learn something, we’re challenging our students to become something,” Reese said. “We’re not perfect, but that’s the goal.”

He described a multifaith consortium of institutions examining how artificial intelligence treats faith traditions and whether it carries built-in biases, questions he said faith-based universities are uniquely free to ask. Both leaders are involved in the American Council on Education’s Commission on Faith-Based Colleges and Universities, which Reese said grew out of the Council’s observation of higher graduation rates and a stronger sense of belonging at faith-based institutions.

Remarks from Prof. Ibrahim Saleh Al-Naimi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue and Undersecretary of Qatar’s Ministry of Education and Higher Education, were delivered on his behalf by Nicole Stirling of the Stirling Foundation. Al-Naimi asked whether universities are preparing students “merely to succeed in the world as it is, or also to take responsibility for the world as it could be,” and highlighted the Center’s Dialogue in Universities initiative.

“The measure of education is not only what our graduates know or what they achieve, but also how wisely they use their knowledge and how humanely they treat others,” Al-Naimi said in his remarks.

The BYU Indonesia Gamelan Orchestra opened the evening with a performance on traditional instruments.

The evening plenary took place October 16, 2026, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. MDT. The Forum concludes October 17, beginning with a session on artificial intelligence, ahead of the G20 Leaders’ Summit in Miami on December 14–15. The full program is available at g20interfaith.org/2026-forum-program.

Speakers included:

- **Ruth Todd (Moderator)** — Executive Vice President and Chief Content Officer, Bonneville International
- **Fraser Bullock** — President and Executive Chair, Organizing Committee for the 2034 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games
- **Noelle Pikus-Pace** — Olympic Medalist; Best-Selling Author; Leadership Consultant, Inspire Higher
- **Peter Vidmar** — Olympic Medalist; Vice President, Northern Trust
- **President Linda Livingstone** — President, Baylor University
- **President C. Shane Reese** — President, Brigham Young University

- **Prof. Ibrahim Saleh Al-Naimi** — Chairman of the Board of Directors, Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue; Undersecretary, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, State of Qatar (remarks delivered by Nicole Stirling)

Full speaker bios are available in the [2026 Forum Directory](#).

About the G20 Process

The Group of Twenty, or G20, is the premier forum for international economic cooperation, bringing together the leaders of Earth's most prosperous economies. Collectively, G20 members represent around 80 percent of the world's economic output, two-thirds of the global population and three-quarters of international trade. Throughout the year, representatives from G20 countries gather to discuss financial and socioeconomic issues as well as broader humanitarian issues targeted by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

About the G20 Interfaith Forum

The G20 Interfaith Forum seeks global solutions by collaborating with religious thought leaders and political representatives to help shape the overall G20 agenda. It draws on the vital roles that religious institutions and beliefs play in world affairs, reflecting a rich diversity of institutions, ideas, and values. Through its extensive network of networks, it helps prioritize key global policy goals and point toward practical means of implementation at every level of society.

For more information, please visit www.g20interfaith.org.

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