

YOUTH AND THE MOUNTAINS

Student Papers on Sustainable Mountain Development



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Youth and the Mountains

Student Essays on Sustainable Mountain Development

Youth and the Mountains is a journal composed of student articles on sustainable mountain development. The journal is supported by the Department of History and Political Science, in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, as well as the President's office at Utah Valley University (UVU). The Journal is an undergraduate publication with the aim of providing a forum for undergraduate students to share research and encourage active pursuit of quality academic scholarship. Students who have questions about the Journal, or those wishing to make a contribution (IE: filling staff positions or submitting a manuscript for review), should contact the Editor-in-Chief, David Connelly by e-mail at: YouthMT@uvu.edu with the subject line of JOURNAL SUBMISSION. If you would like to see previous issues go to: <http://www.uvu.edu/hps/student/youthjournal.html>

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Introductions

2016 issue of the Youth and the Mountains Journal continues a tradition to be a staple of undergraduate research at Utah Valley University (UVU) with focus on the advocacy of the United Nations Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD) agenda. In addition, the journal provides an opportunity to promote the UVU model of student engaged learning through the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of clubs at UVU, and demonstrate the ability of undergraduate students to work diligently to increase awareness and academic research related to SMD both in the State of Utah and beyond its borders.

As official recognition at international level of the UVU model of student engagement in SMD advocacy, the first section of the 2016 issue presents an excerpt from the UN Secretary General's Report on SMD A/71/256 from 29 July, 2016. The UN document features for the first time UIMF for hosting the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC) in 2015 as a forum to address the critical issues faced by women and children living in mountainous regions globally. It also emphasizes that the final document of the WOMC provided recommendations for the implementations of such UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as SDG#5 on gender, SDG# 6 on role of women in protecting environment and SDG#15 on women role in promoting innovation and development.

In an attempt to further both of these goals, academic research and the sharing experiences of student engagement in key SMD advocating events and conferences at UVU and State of Utah, this journal contains three additional sections. The second section is filled with student research on different aspects of sustainable development in Utah and mountain regions worldwide. These include studies of best examples and challenges in sustainable development on local and regional levels, like conflicts in the mountain areas, environmental problems in the State of Utah and air quality in particular, gender issues in the Rocky Mountain region. Based on such types of experiential learning, as study abroad or missionary work overseas student authors present their analysis of the model of sustainable development in Japan or water management problem in the Middle East. One of the student papers presents comparative analysis of sustainable development models in State of Utah and the mountainous Republic of Georgia as contribution to the unveiling of the exhibition of Georgian Art at Springville Museum of Arts in Utah in September 2016 with official

delegation from the Republic Georgia in attendance.

As part of the agenda of the joint event to build cultural bridges between Utah and Georgia, UIMF members hosted through engaged learning approach a special essay writing contest about Georgian art for students from universities in the State of Utah. The third fourth section of the 2016 issue contains two essays of the student winners of the competition.

The fourth section of the 2016 issue is filled for the first time by reflective essays of the students, members of the organizing committee of the Fourth International WOMC. It provides an opportunity for readers to get acquainted with student reflections on how they were able to host major UN gender advocating forum on their own with faculty serving in role of advisors only. These student achievements in SMD advocacy demonstrate the effectiveness of the UVU's emphasis on engaged or experiential learning within the academic environment, and we hope to continue this tradition of including student reflective essays in further issues of the journal.

We are proud of the progress that our students and faculty were able to achieve in SMD advocacy in State of Utah and globally in 2016 and present to the readers current 2016 issue of the journal Youth and the Mountains as a prove of that.

David R. Connelly, Editor-in-Chief



The Youth and the Mountains journal is an opportunity for students to engage in research about sustainable mountain development using existing thriving mountainous communities as case studies. It promotes the sharing of knowledge across boundaries to better improve the development of sustainable mountain communities and showcases student lead and run events that further promote the sharing of knowledge across borders. The journal promotes engaged learning research as well as through participation in campus events.

Working on the Youth and the Mountains journal has been an opportunity for us to gain editorial skills as well as increase our understanding of the importance of engaged learning on a college campus. We look forward to working more in the future with the journal to further promote sustainable development goals, mountain targets in particular and engaged student learning.

Carlos Alarco, Tenika Ray, Co-Managing Editors

Section I

Official Documents



General Assembly

Distr.: General
29 July 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session

Item 19 (j) of the provisional agenda*

Sustainable development

Sustainable mountain development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Mountain and upland areas have a universal importance: they provide water and other global goods and services to humanity. However, mountain ecosystems are highly vulnerable to climate change, extreme weather events and land degradation and recover slowly from disasters and shocks. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States pledged to leave no one behind and stressed the importance of reaching those furthest behind first. Mountain communities in developing countries are particularly vulnerable and require special attention, given that one in three people in those areas is at risk of hunger and malnutrition.

To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the targets relating to mountains as well as to poverty, hunger, sustainable agriculture, climate change and gender equality, there is a need to prioritize mountain areas by focusing on the specific challenges they face and the opportunities they provide. Mountain-specific policies and the inclusion of mountain communities in decision-making processes and capacity development can improve the livelihoods of communities while also conserving and restoring mountain ecosystems. In particular, efforts should be made to increase scientific knowledge of mountains and collect disaggregated data for sound analysis, policy advice and, ultimately, for change.

39. The Utah International Mountain Forum hosted the fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference at Utah Valley University in October 2015 to address the critical issues faced by women and children living in mountainous regions across the globe and provide a forum to discuss gender equality. The outcome document contained the following observations:³

- (a) Goal 5 could be achieved through strong support for improving women's rights and welfare, including women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life;
- (b) Successful implementation of target 6.6 could be achieved by supporting the vital role that women play in the protection of the environment and water sources, particularly as custodians of traditional knowledge that builds resilience and allows for adaptation to climate change;
- (c) With respect to target 15.1, women play a critical role in joint planning as promoters of innovation, development and cooperation for common benefit.

* A/71/150.

3 "The final document of the fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference". Available from www.womenofthemountains.org/images/2015/16-03-31-WOMC-Finalized.pdf.



Section 2

Undergraduate Research, *Mountain Issues in Utah and Worldwide*

Women of the Rocky Mountains: The Younique Foundation

By: Sadie Conover

Sadie Lauran Simper is a Political Science major at Utah Valley University. She is currently living in Provo with her husband, Brett who she married in 2015. Sadie is a Springville High School Graduate and lived there most of her life, volunteering in the community on the Springville Museum of Art's Art Royalty, and on the Springville City Youth Council. Sadie hopes to someday open her own political consulting business.

Studies show that one in eight women and one in fifty men will be sexually assaulted in the state of Utah. As high as Utah's sexual assault statistics are, they are underestimated; the majority of sexual assaults occurring in Utah are not recorded. In the year 2014, Utah was nationally ranked the eighth highest state for reported child abuse and the first in the nation for child sexual abuse: 6,900 cases of child abuse, of those cases 27% were sexual abuse. The only crime in the state of Utah that occurs more often than the rest of the nation is that of sexual assault. Utah.gov defines sexual assault as the following:

Sexual assault is any unwanted sexual contact or attention resulting from force, threats, bribes, manipulation, pressure, or violence. Sexual violence can take many forms, including rape or attempted rape, domestic and dating violence, and child sexual abuse...Sexual violence is a crime of power and control....No one asks or deserves to be sexually assaulted.

Reportedly, only 12.7% of victims seek medical care to evaluate their physical condition after being sexually assaulted. A victim's reasoning behind not seeking medical assistance may be because they were not hurt, were not thinking clearly, were too afraid they would be found out, or because they were not old enough to ask for help. It is uncommon for a sexual assault to be committed by a stranger. Most often, sexual assault is committed by a family member or a significant other.

One Utah Organization, the Younique Foundation, is working to drastically change these statistics. Siblings and founders of Younique, Derek Maxfield and Melanie Huscroft, have one main goal: to fund and create a foundation that empowers sexually abused women. Younique started

in Maxfield's attic with the hope that the foundation would be fully funded within eight years. Three years after the company's establishment, the foundation was fully funded and had begun planning retreats to help the women who were victims of sexual abuse when they were young.

The mission statement of The Yunique Foundation, as stated on their website, defendinnocence.org states, "We educate parents and empower them to protect their children from sexual abuse while leading a public dialogue to bring the epidemic of abuse to light." The Yunique Foundation further asserts that any person taking care of a child is under the responsibility to defend innocence. The Yunique Foundation desires to reduce the risk of sexual abuse by empowering parents, grandparents and caregivers of children. Ninety percent of sexual abuse is performed by someone known by the family, therefore the overall concept is not just about "stranger danger." Caregivers and parents can protect their children by doing the following: knowing how to teach children about appropriate and healthy touching, understanding childhood sexual abuse risk factors, appropriately discussing healthy sexuality, and discussing with children the potential of any past abuse.

It is important that caregivers recognize the signs of sexual abuse in their child so they may help them overcome and heal from the abuse. While there is not a clearly defined checklist, there are common signs that may indicate abuse has taken place. Some of the behavioral signs of sexually abused children include reluctance to bathe or undress, not wanting to be around certain people, discomfort of physical affections, and increase in sexuality that is unusual for the child's age. Other behavioral signs may include increased sadness and a sudden lacking in school performance. It is also crucial to recognize the physical signs that a child has been sexually abused. These can include torn clothing, bleeding in the mouth or genital area, excessive discharge in the genital area, and swelling or rashes in the genital area. Urinary tract infections, sudden weight gain or loss, and a change in appetite or sleeping patterns can also be caused from such abuse.

Giving parents the tools to educate their children about appropriate and healthy sexuality is very important. A parent may wonder how they are going to have "the talk" about sexuality with their children. However, defendinnocence.org has found that it is better to have several small talks about sexuality over a period of time. When sexuality is an ongoing con-

versation, it is a powerful way to inform children. Deffendinnoce.org also includes several resources to aid parents in addressing such sensitive topics; the devices contain suggestions on how to have age-appropriate conversations with children and how to address unhealthy sexual behaviors. It's important to start teaching a child the correct autonomy of their body and keeping an open dialogue as the child ages to educate them about sexuality.

In August 2011, The Yunique Foundation held an event in St. Louis, Missouri to both set a world record, most self-portrait photographs (selfies) taken simultaneously, and to raise awareness of sexual assault. Participants of the event had the words "start defending" written in blue paint underneath their eyes and, after the record was broken, participants posted their selfies on social media. Chris Yadon, executive director of The Yunique Foundation, said, "the goal that we have and the purpose of the Guinness moment was to reach parents and caregivers of children with a 'Start Defending' message that there are things parents can do that will make a difference and protect their children from sexual abuse...Education is key. It empowers parents to engage with us, allowing them to keep their kids safe."

Melanie Huscroft, co-founder of Yunique, was a resilient child. She grew up in a family who had little money, and learned to support herself. Huscroft remarks that her family could not afford commodities such as vacations, eating out, and going to the movies. She thought these things were exclusive to "rich" families. At the age of 12, Huscroft had started her first job and by age of 13, she had received her first promotion. She paid her own way through college, not because her parents did not want to fund her education, but because they could not afford to.

Although her childhood may look flawless to an outsider, Huscroft says she was a victim of childhood sexual abuse from an extended family member. At the age of 19, Huscroft was able to begin her journey toward healing as she received therapy and was able to face the trauma she had endured. She is thankful she had parents who were willing to support her on that journey and taught her the importance of forgiveness and the value of working for what you want.

In recent years, Huscroft has been reminded that it is important to balance her many roles in life and to keep her priorities straight. She is a mother first and a business woman second. Huscroft said, "My proudest

utor, I get the opportunity to share what we do with women all over the place and it is such a neat experience. Defend Innocence is such a wonderful initiative and I donate every time I order!”

Fellow Distributor, Melissa Eiche says the following concerning Younique and its mission: Statistics show if we understand sexual abuse and communicate about it more, it is less likely to happen. As a victim of childhood sexual abuse, I am doing anything I can to help that not happen to other children. When I get to talk about the foundation, while selling makeup, it brings me great pride and joy. Younique has changed my personal life in ways I can't explain. But, more importantly, when I sell makeup I am bringing awareness to an even greater need- to uplift, empower, and validate women . The Younique Foundation's message to survivors of sexual abuse is of love and healing:

“You are worth the effort required to find wholeness. Freedom from the fear and shame of abuse is possible. We will help you reclaim what was taken—helping you to find healing and love for life. Wholeness doesn't just happen. You deserve to be free from the pain of the sexual abuse you have suffered and we can help.”

The Younique Foundation hosts 3 retreats each month in Utah County that are designed to assist adult women who have survived childhood sexual abuse. In 2015, the first Haven Retreat commenced. This retreat taught survivors how to heal and gave them a feeling of hope and empowerment by providing them community, acceptance, and education, all things required to make the healing process possible . Because of the generous donations from sponsors, The Younique Foundation is able to supply all food, lodging, and services completely free of charge. They will even pick the participants up at a designated location such as a hotel or family member's home and drive them to The Retreat .

In order to attend The Haven Retreat, a woman must have been sexually abused as a minor. Participants must be able to spend 4 days in a social environment and abstain from any alcohol or drug intake during The Retreat . Members attend a series of classes that educate women about how their trauma impacts physical and mental health and teach strategies to effectively overcome unhealthy habits. The Retreat incorporates activities such as yoga and Muay Thai that help participants relax and unwind from their stresses. In general, a survivor of childhood sexual abuse is not going to heal completely in just 4 days; healing takes a significant amount

of time for most women. However, the Haven Retreat is designed to teach survivors understanding and skills that can help start the healing process. The Retreat also reassures these women that they are loved and have true value .

The Haven Retreat provides four vital tools for success in the healing process. These tools are: Education, Experience, Community and Therapy. Education provides women with the foundation of understanding their trauma. This allows women to properly apply the skills and recourses they will learn. The Experience of the Haven Retreat includes many forms of therapy that are necessary in the healing process. Most often survivors of sexual abuse will apply talk therapy alone in their journey to recovery. While talking is an important step in the journey, there are other methods of therapy that can enlarge and quickly advance the healing process. The Haven Retreat also provides a Community of survivors, surrounded by the beautiful scenery of the mountains, to come together and support each other. Lastly, the Haven Retreat provides group Therapy as a means to assist in the healing process (Home).

Donna, a survivor of sexual assault, and Haven Retreat attendee said the following concerning The Retreat:

My time at The Haven Retreat was a time of refreshing, rejuvenation, and reflection! I reflect all the good The Haven inserted into my life! When I think about how God impacts a person's life, I always think of a creek or a stream and the rocks that lay on its floor. The rock, when formed, has jagged edges and it lays at the bottom of the stream and just allows the stream and its continuous flow to make the rock smooth! What I went through as a survivor and beyond is my jagged edge and God used The Haven to finally smooth that part out of me! Because of my Haven experience, my chains are broken and I am beautiful even in the broken places (Home).

It is important to understand how trauma impacts the brain of a survivor of sexual abuse. Trauma is what happens when a person has a disturbing experience or event occur in their lives (Home). Sexual abuse trauma happens when another person violates the personal space of another person without consent. When this trauma occurs, it is the tendency of the victim of sexual abuse to lose trust in both their abuser and also the trust of the world, thinking that the world may be an unsafe place to live (Home).

Those who have experienced trauma will often admit to feeling triggered

or frightened for reasons they don't understand (Home). Triggers can spring from any of a person's senses. Before stimuli can travel to the higher functioning, or conscious part of the brain, it will travel to the subconscious part of the brain. If this stimuli is associated with a person's sexual abuse trauma, a survival response can be triggered. This part of the brain will take over, because it's the "flight or fight" survival response that keeps us alive (Home). The survival part of the brain will overpower the rational or conscious part of the brain if certain strategies are not used (Home). Once certain behaviors become habit, the survival response becomes desperate and uneasy. The healing process requires a person to learn to manage the survival response in healthy ways (Home).

For a moment, consider yourself as though you are a survivor of sexual assault, minding your own business and doing some shopping at a grocery store (Home). You walk down the aisle and see someone who reminds you of your abuser. The response of your survival instinct is to send a message to your brain that you are in danger. It is not possible for this part of your brain to differentiate between the past and the present, and is warning you of any possible dangers. You leave the store without finishing your shopping trip, and feel sick and worried on your drive home and cannot find a feeling of safety (Home). An experience such as this can feel defeating and discouraging for a victim of sexual assault (Home). It can be hard for them to understand why such an experience can affect them so much and ruin their whole day. However, as survivors come to understand the reasons why the brain works in this manner they are able to learn strategies to overcome these difficult situations (Home).

Imagine the same situation of being in the grocery store, and seeing the same person who reminds you of your assaulter, however, in this instance you stop and think about what your brain is doing (Home). You understand that this person is not your abuser, as the conscious part of your brain has this realization. You realize you are not in any danger, and you continue to shop. The result of this experience is continued healing, as you were able to overcome a triggering experience. The experience did not ruin your day, and you were able to have empowerment over ability to choose how you reacted (Home).

The Yunique Foundation website lists five key strategies for survivors of sexual assault to use when overcoming and dealing with their trauma. These strategies are: Awareness, Acknowledge, Power through Surrender,

Mindfulness and Faith. With professional assistance and these strategies, survivors are able to overcome their trauma, and find healing (Home).

Awareness is the idea that life happens now, in the present, and how to develop a healthy relationship with time (Home). Victims of sexual abuse often struggle with the concept of right here and now, and will often try to escape to the past or future, instead of living in the now. When a person slows down, and lives in the moment they are able to connect with their inner self, and control their emotions and responses. (Home).

The second healing strategy The Yunique Foundation educates survivors with is to Acknowledge. A survivor must acknowledge the truth of a situation, no matter how difficult they may find it. Because of how our brains work, it is impossible for memories of the past not to keep coming up. When one acknowledges these memories, they realize that just because these things happened in the past, they do not need to ruin the present moment (Home).

The third strategy the Yunique Foundation suggests is The Power of Surrender is the next strategy presented by the Yunique Foundation, and letting things be. This concept may seem like a paradox to survivors of sexual abuse. Why would a person surrender when they are trying to overcome and grow stronger? This concept of surrendering is used to help victims realize when and what to fight and when to let things be. The concept requires that as one learns to recognize their triggers, and let those triggers be what they are, the triggers will disappear (Home).

The fourth strategy the Yunique Foundation gives to struggling victims is Mindfulness. The Yunique Foundation defines Mindfulness as the following: “the right and ability to focus on empowering thoughts and feelings while choosing to co-exist with non-productive thoughts and feelings without giving undue attention to the non-productive thoughts and feelings” (Home). When a negative thought enters the brain, it is the responsibility of the conscious to do something about these thoughts. It’s vital for a survivor to understand that they cannot change the past, but they can do something about their current thoughts. Training in mindfulness helps a person victim to tell the difference between the past and present, and choose how to respond to triggers (Home).

The fifth and final strategy provided by the Yunique Foundation is to

have Faith. The Foundation defines faith as, “a force or power that has the capacity to change and create things” (Home). Faith creates all constructive movement and creation in life. Faith gives survivors the power to change and act. Faith is where spirituality and science overlap. Martin Luther King Junior said, “Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase” (Home). An example of Faith used as a healing mechanism is meditation. A survivor of sexual abuse may avoid being in public due to the way that certain men look and act. However, by using meditation they are able to visualize themselves in the situations they avoid, but instead of cowering to these triggers they imagine themselves strong and capable. Then, when the survivor goes out in public, they are not as triggered as they normally would be, and they continue to heal and become stronger through the faith of meditation.

The Yunique Foundation uses the Kintsugi philosophy (Home). This Japanese Philosophy is based on fixing pottery, using a gold glue substance to put the pieces back together. It states that the breakage can become a part of the history of the pot, and enhance its’ overall beauty, instead of pretending the breakage didn’t happen at all. In the Japanese culture some believe this sort of mending increases the beauty of the piece, making it better than the original (Home). As people victims look at their own lives they may find that they too are broken or chipped, sometimes as a result of the actions of others (Home). This is always the case when it comes to survivors of sexual abuse. However, all hope is never lost. There are three important lessons which can be applied to our own lives when we examine the philosophy of Kintsugi Those lessons are as follows: worth does not diminish, broken pieces can be mended, and beauty can rise from the breakage (Home).

The Yunique Foundation website features several recourses for sexual abuse victims (Home). One resource listed is Muay Thai, a form of martial arts that combines movements and breathing to help a person feel empowered and in control. Another recourse is printable to inspire healing through writing. Writing is a way to heal that anyone can do, at anytime with little recourses, as it requires no special tools. The website suggests writing every day, for twenty minutes at a time, so as not to become overwhelmed and to write in a private and quiet environment (Home).

Other resources the Yunique Foundation provides on its website include breathing exercises to refocus your mind away from any stressors you may

feel, and focus solely on your breath alone. The website also includes instructions on how to meditate through guided imagery. Also included in these recourses are directions for Progressive Muscle Relaxation, which requires a person to focus on certain muscle groups, tense these muscles, and then relax them to refocus the body and mind (Home).

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Sustainable Mountain Development in Japan

By: Megan Adams

Megan Adams was born on July 26, 1995 in Bountiful, Utah. After graduating from Davis High school in Kaysville, Utah, Megan went to Utah Valley University for a semester, then Weber State University for a semester. After spending two years abroad doing church service in Japan, Megan is back at Utah Valley University where she plans to get her bachelors in Social Work with a minor in Autism Studies.

Our earth is covered with beautiful mountains that provide us with many resources such as water, food, and clean air. The mountains also provide homes for wild animals in their natural habitats, as well as for the people who also live in the mountains. So why do we, as humans, have to focus on sustaining the mountains? What is sustainable mountain development?

The United Nations defines sustainable mountain development as the need to, “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.” We can sustain our mountains by keeping them clean, harnessing their power and ability while respecting those that live there by not destroying the natural beauty and resources. Japan is a very mountainous nation, and as such has realized the importance of the mountains to their religious ties, economy, and survival. To ensure their mountains stay pristine for generations to come, they have initiated a comprehensive mountain sustainability plan that I believe can be utilized around the world in other mountainous regions to implement sustainable mountain development world-wide.

Japan has many natural sights from rivers, to the ocean, to the famous Mt. Fuji. The locals call Mt. Fuji, Fuji San. It is a very famous mountain, known for being the highest mountain in Japan, and possibly one of the most recognizable mountains in the world, for its unique shape and snow-capped top. It is one of Japan’s ‘Three Holy Mountains’ along with Mt. Tate and Mt. Haku.

The United Nations University or UNU’s Project on Sustainable Mountain Development reported, “One of the most significant decisions regarding

mountains taken by the United Nations General Assembly in November 1998 was designating the year 2002 as the International Year of Mountains. The importance of mountain issues has been recognized by the international community as one of the world's most vulnerable bio-geographical areas susceptible to land degradation, having variable climates, heterogeneous habitats often with the unique fauna and flora.” iii They also discussed how mountains are a priority in the ecosystem, and their fresh water resources are highly important.

Since Japan is a land of many mountains, it is important that their mountains are being protected. They are a resource for food, water, and healthy air. “National Forests which are equivalent to thirty percent of country's total forest area play various and important roles in producing wood, promoting functions for the public benefits such as conservation of land and water resources and providing natural environment.” There has been much action taken in tree breeding and seed technology.

Not only do mountains benefit Japan as a resource, but they are also important culturally. Many Buddhist temples and shrines are placed in mountains where people go to pray to ancestors and to worship. Maintaining Japan's mountains and forests would help keep these sacred traditions and cultures alive.

So how does Japan take a role in sustaining their mountains and preserving their sacredness? How can they preserve their mountains to keep them sacred and to better their ecosystem? Japan relies heavily on tourism. Not only does it bring revenue to the country, but it also provides jobs for locals. I lived in Japan for two years in the northern most part of Japan on an island called Hokkaido. Hokkaido is an island in between Japan and Russia. It is very cold. The winters are snowy, and there are many mountains on the island of Hokkaido. Because of the snow and the mountains, it is a good place for ski resorts. During the winter months, the island is crawling with foreigners who come to Hokkaido to ski and snowboard. Without this resource, many natives of the island wouldn't have jobs. The tourists wouldn't come to Japan to ski, and Japan wouldn't be making a profit from their snow.

Another time tourists go to Japan to take advantage of the mountains are during the summer months to hike. With the multitude of mountains there are many places to hike. Tourists can even hike Mt. Fuji. Tour guides get their income from taking foreigners on tours of the mountains. The examples above demonstrate why the mountains are important eco-

nomically to the country of Japan. They bring in jobs and tourists who boost the economy, and allow the Japanese to be self-sufficient. If Japan doesn't sustain their mountains then their economy would lose value, people would be jobless, and tourists wouldn't come to Japan

There are also many villages that call the mountains home. These villages have been around for centuries. The people that live in these villages need the mountains. Just like the people in Peru live in the high Andes, there are many people that live in the mountains of Japan. If the mountains were to be destroyed, or not sustained, then these people would lose the place that they call home.

The mountains are also important to the Japanese people because they improve their livelihoods. These resources help the people in Japan live clean and fruitful lives. "The natural environment of Japan offers its dense population of wealth of water, heat energy, oceanic and volcanic resources, and biological diversity. However, the very conditions that support the people sometimes cause serious damages to the quality of their lives, Japanese people must take this into account in order to proceed towards sustainable development."v

So what is Japan doing to conserve the mountains? According to the United Nations, "Japan has devised measures including regulations for the discharge of substances which cause environmental pollution as well as regulations on land-use for the sake of conserving the natural environment, based on individual laws such as the Air Pollution Control Law, the Water Pollution Control Law and the Nature Conservation Law."iii Japan is implementing environmental standards to improve water, air, and soil pollution, as well as noise. Making these improvements will help maintain the mountains and keep them healthy.

Japan is now promoting development of nuclear energy as well as its utilization. They are using nuclear technology for the conservation and recycling of energy. Along with this, Japan has established the Action Program to Arrest Global Warming. This program attempts to reduce global warming caused by the emission of greenhouse gases, deforestation, inefficient use and consumption of energy, transportation, industrial development and stratospheric ozone depletion." iii Using energy wisely, and reducing pollution will greatly add to the sustaining of mountains by keeping a clean environment and making for a healthy ecosystem.

"Japan is a mountainous island country. About seventy percent of its land is on the highlands covered with forest, while its narrow lowlands are used

intensively for urban and agricultural uses.” Japan needs to conserve its land in order to protect the resources that are found there. Japan has set a plan in motion for the conservation of land resources. “Japan has established successively the Comprehensive National Development Plan, which determines the use of land, water and other natural resources and the proper locations for industry, as well as the National Land Use Plan, which determines the basic framework for national land use. In addition to regulations concerning the prevention of pollution, conservation of the natural environment, protection of the historical environment, environmental impact assessment, and the relocation of industries, the plan also addresses prevention of traffic pollution, the quality of water in lakes and marshes, and the creation of comfortable urban environments.”ⁱⁱⁱ This means there are laws set in place in Japan that protect the land. It determines where businesses can and can’t build that protects natural habitats and urban areas. These laws are very important for the conservation of mountains in Japan. They ensure the natural beauty and the ecosystem of the mountains are safe from unnatural forces.

Japan is passionate about preventing deforestation. Deforestation is the clearing of trees from the forest areas. This is important to the mountains in Japan because most mountains are covered with pine-like trees and have a lot of forest vegetation—especially in Northern Japan. Sixty-seven percent of land in Japan is forest. ⁱⁱⁱ Forest in Japan are very important for water conservation and wood supply. The Japanese government created a plan called “A Basic Plan for Japan Forest Resources.” This plan has five major functions, which are conservation of water source, disaster prevention in hilly areas, conservation of environment, timber production forest, and health and cultural activities. Forest owners are also supposed to regenerate their forest after harvest.ⁱⁱⁱ Preventing deforestation helps to maintain mountains by not cutting their natural sources of water, timber, and habitats for wild animals. Preventing deforestation also helps the Japanese economy by offering jobs in the timber factories, jobs in national parks, and jobs for forest rangers.

How Japan is sustaining mountain development is very similar to how they are combating deforestation. The United Nations said, “In addition, given the superb ecosystems in mountain areas, Japan is studying the adoption of eco-tourism which will both conserve the ecosystems and promote a positive economic spillover to regional communities. Japan is establishing recreational forests within National Forests in the mountains and promote their use for the recuperation of health. ‘Eco-roads’ are being built in the

mountains to provide sufficient roads in harmony with the environment.”

Forests, that are expected to maintain their functions, such as headwater conservation and soil run-off prevention, are designated as Protection Forests. On these forests, limited tree cutting, restriction of land exploitation and obligatory tree replanting after cutting are imposed.

The number of hazardous spots of mountainous disasters due to slope failure, landslides, debris flows, and land creep increased from 131,000 in 1978, to 205,000 in 1992. Floods, avalanches, landslides and earthquakes are serious problems for Japan. Japan carries out continuous surveys and research on mountain areas in order to manage and conserve the various ecosystems.”ⁱⁱⁱ Japan has also invested in manmade forests to combat deforestation.

The concept of “eco-roads” is a good idea. Travel would be much faster if one could just go right through the mountain. While that is not possible, nor desirable in accordance to sustaining mountain development, it is nice to have a means of traveling in the mountains. Eco-friendly roads will help to make travel easier, more cost efficient, and it will help to maintain the preservation of the mountains. It is interesting that the number of hazardous spots of mountain disasters has risen from 1987 to 1992. We are all very aware that Japan is prone to natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, avalanches, and landslides. If we made more of a conscientious effort to preserve the mountains, protect the ecosystem, and fight against global warming, if this number could decrease. Japan is conducting the research to find out why numbers are increasing, and what they can do to decrease the occurrence of natural disasters. Only time will tell if the research and study is efficient, and if the laws set in motion already will accomplish this.

Japan has set goals to reach outside of their country to help better the environment of other countries. “The Science and Technology Agency, the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry are the institutions primarily responsible for Natural and Social Sciences and related legislation and policies. Both, representatives of the science sector (Natural and Social Sciences) and some individual scientists are represented in the National Coordination Mechanism for Sustainable Development.”

Having experienced serious pollution in the past, Japan has actively pro-

moted scientific research to address the problems of domestic pollution. Japan also works to improve public awareness of policies related to sustainable development, and to transfer scientific knowledge to developing countries. They actively participate in worldwide research projects, including the International Geosphere-Biosphere Program (IGBP), the World Climate Research Program (WCRP), and the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change Program (HDP), and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Japan also carries out related interdisciplinary research. Furthermore, Japan contributes to regional development, including the construction of a research network for the promotion of effective research in the Asia-Pacific region.”ⁱⁱⁱ These efforts made by Japan will better their country, their mountains, and the world. Sustaining our mountains is very important. A lot of work and effort goes into the conservation war. Japan is a very beautiful country and needs to work hard to lower pollution, prevent deforestation, and sustain the mountains, or else the beauty and the wonder of Japan will be taken away.

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ii Archived June 27, 2013, at the Wayback Machine.

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Lessons for Peace and Security in Mountain Regions

By Mark Driggs

Mark Driggs was born on July 15, 1996 in Burley, Idaho where he was adopted into a family from Provo, Utah. After graduating Timpview High School, Mark attended Utah Valley University before serving an LDS mission in Peru. Mark is currently studying at UVU where he plans to get a major in business and a minor in national security.

In the middle of the 19th century a mass religious migration took place in the United States as tens of thousands of members of The Church Of Jesus Christ Of Latter-Day Saints, commonly known as Mormons, traveled from the east coast going west to the Utah territory. It was the intention to establish an all Mormon society in order to escape religious persecution that had plagued them for several decades. As large scale Mormon expansion in Utah commenced, tensions began to grow between the emigrants and the Native American tribes who had been established in Utah for thousands of years. Mormon settlers also faced growing tensions with the Federal Government after they established themselves in the Salt Lake and Utah valleys. Lastly, many people (both of the Mormon faith and not) had to deal with the consequences of the “Mountain Meadows Massacre” committed by the settlers. Taking a closer look into the tensions and conflicts caused by the Mormon expansion in Utah will hopefully reveal lessons that can be applied to current mountain communities, both foreign and domestic.

In 1847 the first of many Mormons entered into The Great Basin led by Brigham Young, prophet of The Church Of Jesus Christ Of Latter-Day Saints, with the hopes of creating a “Zion” or society populated entirely by Mormons. Upon encountering Native Americans, (the largest tribes being the Ute, Shoshone, Navajo, and Paiute) Brigham Young came to the conclusion that the majority of Native aggression was preceded by provocative actions by settlers. Brigham Young had hopes of keeping tensions with Native Americans low and wanted Mormons to have healthy and positive relations with them. This desire prompted him to issue a policy recommending Mormon settlers to seek good relations with Native Americans through acts of kindness and service. Mormons were also encouraged to teach Natives the ways of the “white man.”

While this policy of peace lasted throughout the entire process of Mor-

mon expansion, the heed that they gave began to fade as time went on; particularly after the United States Military established a policy of force which ran counter to Brigham Young's policy of peace. Competition for resources, for land, miscommunications, and cultural differences contributed to the breakdown of relations between Native Americans and Mormons. This led to a series of conflicts including the "Walker War" and "Blackhawk War" that have collectively become known as the "Indian Wars" resulting in damage of property and deaths of both Native Americans and Mormons. The violent conflicts took place in 1849-1850, 1853, 1860, and 1865-1868.

The Walker War, like so many other wars, was preceded by high tensions between the opposing sides. The Ute tribe had developed their own sustainable way of life prior to the arrival of Mormon emigrants and began to suffer as their means of sustainability was challenged as tens of thousands of Mormons began expanding, taking land and resources for their own use. This left feelings of animosity towards Mormons in a number of Ute Indians. Meanwhile, territorial leaders issued edicts stating that the slave trade between Mexicans and Natives had to come to an end. These edicts prompted Brigham Young to issue orders calling for a militia to be sent through the southern Utah settlements to disrupt what he thought was a major slave trade happening in the south. The Utes were under the assumption that this militia was meant to attack them. Diplomatic efforts took place and peace was made after Young offered gifts to the Utes. However, this incident left tensions high during a precarious time.

Tensions continued to grow as more and more Natives, predominately Utes, harbored anger towards Mormons. Brigham Young, hoping to deter fighting, ordered a large militia to march through Utah in a show of force. This only left many Native Americans angry at this attempt at intimidation. Finally, in July of 1853 a dispute over flour and cattle left one Native American dead and another seriously injured. A group of Native Americans from Chief Walker's camp visited a nearby militia fort a few nights later and shot and killed a watchman. The fuse was lit and the Walker War began.

Initially an offensive expedition was launched by militia but was ordered to come to an abrupt stop by Young and other leaders as a strategy of defense and peace was adopted by Mormon leaders. This strategy was clearly illustrated in the set of orders calling the leaders of the expedition to return home,

"We wish it distinctly understood that no retaliation be made and no offense offered but for all to act entirely on the defense until further orders. It is desirable in order to completely carry out the policy indicated in the foregoing that no threats or intimidations be made or exercised toward the Indians no more than nothing had occurred."

Another order was given with further explicit orders of defense,

"It is distinctly understood that all the people shall assemble into large and permanent forts and no man is at liberty to refuse to obey this order without being dealt with as an enemy. All surplus stock that is not particularly needed for teams and milk must be driven to this city and placed in the charge of the presiding Bishop of this city until further orders."

After giving the orders of defense Young dispatched George A. Smith of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for the Mormon Church to ensure that the southern settlements honored the orders of defense and peace. Despite facing resistance in settlements such as Cedar City, Smith successfully carried out his orders. As this Mormon entrenchment took place, a growing number of Ute Chiefs reached out to Mormon leaders seeking peace, showing a continuous wane in Chief Walker's power.

After several months into the Mormon Entrenchment, Smith visited Provo and found that there was a negligent atmosphere among the people and that the issued orders of defense had not been properly carried out. When this was recognized the militia commander Colonel Conover was relieved of command and placed under arrest for having neglected his duty, and a new militia leader was installed to ensure Young's orders were carried out. As time went on discipline began to falter as certain militia attacked multiple groups of Ute Native Americans, causing Utes to respond in turn as they attacked vulnerable people killing and mutilating their bodies and stoking feelings of anger in militias. Brigham Young recognized that a cycle of bloodshed was forming and that if action was not taken the situation would soon spiral out of control. In response, letters were sent to the militias responsible for killing members of the Ute tribe, and to plead with them for an immediate cessation of hostilities. Despite Young's requests, another Ute killing took place. In seeking retribution, a Ute party went out and slaughtered a group of United States soldiers in what has become known as the Gunnison Massacre. After this massacre the killings ended unequivocally. A few weeks later word spread that Ute infighting had taken place, significantly weakening Walker's forces. Despite this

news Mormons continued to gather together in strongholds as their defensive strategy continued. In December, Young reached out in a sign of peace, offering amnesty to every Ute fighter along with aid in the form of food, clothing, and guns with gunpowder to be used for hunting, with the condition that hostilities would end. In March, Walker returned from the Navajo people and sent an emissary expressing his desire to hold talks and discuss his terms for peace. Despite a small increase in tensions that involved a small band of Mormons wishing to pursue Native Americans whom they believed stole cattle, and Utes demanding travelers to pay for safe travel, peace talks commenced and the war ended.

Prior to the Walker War, the Mormon expansion began to hinder the Ute way of life. The Utes access to food was limited and an active Mexican slave trade was stymied resulting in economic damage. This type of insensitivity is something that should be considered in contemporary times as nations see the need to expand. The Mormons paid no heed to the indigenous nations that had developed a system of sustainability over the course of many generations, therefore causing animosity between the two parties. Perhaps, it might be possible for all parties living in a mountain area to meet and develop a system of expansion that would allow the growing party to meet the needs of a growing populace, without endangering the needs or system of another party or parties. If diplomacy of this nature is not viable due to biases, a third party diplomat should be brought in, to act as a mediator and provide an unbiased view on how to guide all parties living in mountain regions to a sustainable plan.

When the Walker War broke out Brigham Young immediately adopted a strategy of defense and peace. This was made possible by the gathering of people and necessities into forts, strong leadership, kindness, and persistency. Doing so averted a large amount of bloodshed and saved the lives of many people on both sides. Today, and in the future, when mountain conflicts cannot be averted, at least one side (if not both or all sides) should seek to adopt such a strategy. While it may not be viable to persuade an aggressor to seek such a strategy, certainly the defender can carry out a strategy of peace and defense. Strategic points could be identified and strongholds could be made of these points. Orders can be given commanding that both civilian and military personnel gather in these strongholds and places of vulnerability be avoided whenever possible. Agricultural work needs to continue under the protection of armed personnel so as to discourage the opposing side from attacking civilians.

A set of loyal and strong officers need to be put into place. These officers need to be able to carry out orders given to subordinates and civilians quickly and effectively. If orders are not being implemented in a timely or effective manner officers who are responsible for such failures need to be promptly removed from power and replaced to show that failure to comply will not be tolerated, as was the case for Colonel Conover during the Walker War. If fighting continues to progress, we must learn from the mistakes of the Mormons and not allow discipline to crack. The crack in discipline that occurred among Mormon militia led to a cycle of killings that only served to prolong the war and threatened to spiral the overall situation out of control. Vigilance among all soldiers must be embraced if such a crack is to be avoided. If discipline does begin to falter it needs to be dealt with as soon as possible in order to contain any damage that might be wrought as a result. When the time for peace talks arrive, leaders should look to the example of Brigham Young who, rather than look for spoils of war to be given to him and his people, sought for a peace that would benefit both parties. If leaders of mountain societies develop a similar mindset and approach, then certainly the probability of a prompt peace treaty along with lasting peace would rise.

In 1857 a branch of the Utah territorial militia launched an unprovoked attack against a wagon train as it passed through Mountain Meadows just outside of Cedar City. The attack would later become known as “The Mountain Meadows Massacre.” This militia was composed entirely of Mormons, and the attack killed 120 California bound emigrants who were passing through Utah just as Mormons had adopted defensive policies due to a perceived threat from Federal troops who had recently been dispatched to Utah by President Buchanan. Only seventeen children who were considered “too young to tell tales” were spared. These children would briefly be adopted into Mormon families until government officials arrived in Utah in order to return all seventeen children to their family or next of kin. This attack was planned and carried out by Mormon militia with Paiute Indians playing a very minor role in this massacre. The two masterminds of the massacre met much resistance when they presented their plan to a local church council, and a letter was sent to Brigham Young in Salt Lake City in order to inquire how to proceed. Despite a letter being sent to Salt Lake City, the massacre was carried out. Two days after the attack, a letter arrived from Brigham Young instructing the people and militia to allow the wagon train to safely pass through. The lesson which can be applied to future confrontations is the necessity of subordinates to act only on orders given by their leader or leaders and to exercise patience

when inquiries are made, in order to allow the process of decision making and communication to run its course.

In 1857 President Buchanan dispatched 1,500 federal troops to the Utah territory along with the possibility of additional troops being deployed. The mission of the Federal forces was to quell what the U.S. government believed to be a “Mormon Rebellion.” (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints 2003, par. 1) The Mormons perceived this action as a possible resurgence of religious persecution. As a result, Brigham Young prepared his people for a possible conflict with the United States. Rather than lead with violence, Brigham Young had his people evacuate into Southern Utah while he engaged in diplomatic talks with the United States general leading the expeditionary force. Because of these diplomatic talks fighting was averted and not a single life was lost.

While the entire event could have been avoided with proper communication, it is also important to note how both sides handled the situation, particularly Brigham Young who was the defender in this case. Young took necessary precautions in the event that conflict was inevitable. However, he sought peace and took to diplomacy as his primary means of handling this situation. The expeditionary force that could be viewed as the aggressors opened their ears and was willing to listen and engage in diplomacy with the Mormons. In doing so, a war was averted sparing countless lives. Hopefully in future potential mountain conflicts, both the aggressor and defender will take this lesson and seek diplomatic means first, and look to violence as a last resort. Doing so will maintain peace and lower tensions between all parties.

In the 1860s, growing herds of cattle forced many Mormons to expand into what had initially been “Native Americans population.” This usurped these tribes of what had once been vital food sources and inadvertently weakened a starving and diseased people. In 1865 a Ute Chief known as Blackhawk led a loose band of Native Americans from the Ute, Paiute, and Navajo tribes in a series of raids that went throughout the year, stealing thousands of head of cattle from Mormons. While the cattle were the primary objective of these raids an estimated seventy-five Mormons were killed throughout the raids, the single largest killing being the slaughter of a family of six.

With an excess of beef, Blackhawk was able to rally a large number of Natives from the Ute, Shoshoni, Paiute, Goshute, Navajo, and Apache

tribes. As this mass recruitment was taking place, White and Latino traders offered Blackhawk guns, ammunition, and gunpowder in exchange for heads of stolen cattle. Now in command of a well-equipped and well fed army, Blackhawk began launching more attacks in order to deter the expansion of Mormons. The settlers had inadequate defenses and were not prepared for such a sudden war. This fear turned into a brutal reality as the slaughter of Native Americans began to take place, driving Blackhawk's forces to respond in kind.

The greatest massacre of Native Americans took place in the town of Circleville. Circleville had previously housed a militia of men who stopped to rest before riding out and skirmishing with Native Americans. Despite these hostilities Circleville failed to prepare adequate defenses and consequently fell victim to a deadly Ute raid that left three inhabitants dead. Months later, the civilians from Circleville captured a band of Indians. One man was shot and killed while trying to escape, while the remaining men were bound and the women and children were placed in a nearby cellar. Shortly after, the remaining Native American men untied their bands, under cover of darkness, and rushed their captors who opened fire, killing all the men. Next, it was decided that the women and children had to be dealt with. So one by one the women and children were brought up from the cellar, where they promptly had their throats slit. Only four young children were spared and adopted by local families. (W. Paul Reeve 1995, par. 7)

This type of brutality persisted throughout the extent of the Black Hawk War, all while United States Federal troops stood idly by, allowing the Black Hawk War to drag on for almost seven years. Finally, in 1872 Federal troops were ordered to intervene and engage Native American forces. When these orders were implemented the war ended almost immediately, with most people on both sides laying down their arms unanimously.

The Black Hawk War serves as a stark reminder of what happens in mountain regions when appropriate actions are not taken to avoid war. Again, Mormons failed to account for the repercussions Native Americans would experience as the settlers continued to expand for agricultural purposes. After Ute raids began, the Mormons failed to establish a strong and organized defense like they had done previously with the Walker War. Doing so left them vulnerable and emboldened Black Hawk's forces leading to a cycle of killings. It is imperative that mountain societies implement and maintain an effective fighting force for the sole purpose of defense and

determent against any potential aggressors. Diplomacy must still be the first line of defense.

However, militaries can and should act to ensure the defense of their respective people. A series of checks and balances must be implemented in order to keep corruption from gripping government and military officials. The type of organization, strategy of defense and peace, is what the Mormon community was missing during the Walker War and the Black Hawk War. This helped to fuel the killing as one side would commit a massacre and the other side would respond in kind, leading to a perpetual cycle. Had Mormons heeded the lessons of their previous war, perhaps lives may have been saved. It is of the utmost importance that the lessons of defense, peace, leadership, and organization presented in the Walker War be heeded today and tomorrow. Had the United States government ordered federal troops to intervene at an earlier point in the war, it's possible that fighting would have ceased and lives on both sides would have been spared. In today's mountain conflicts, a central government presiding over whatever region is experiencing war must do more than warn of intervention. If the situation demands, they must intervene. Doing so could end a conflict in its early stages and save lives, resources, and money. Perhaps a central government could consider international support if it becomes apparent that a conflict has spiraled out of control and they cannot hope to control, contain, and end the fighting.

Many factors played into issues of tension and conflict during the early Mormon settlement in Utah. Just as many factors play a part in current and future issues related to tensions and conflicts. It is apparent that most of the cases presented above were not handled in a way that led to peace and prosperity. Because of this, most of these conflicts ended in death and destruction. What has happened in the past cannot be changed, but hopefully now and in the future each of these tragic events have left behind lessons that can be utilized in future mountain issues regarding peace and security both domestically and foreign, for many mountain regions. While looking at the challenges faced by the early expansion of Utah cannot solve every case of mountain tensions and conflicts; lessons of communication, patience, defensive and peacemaking strategies, strong leadership, persistence, diplomacy, avoidance of differing and competing policies, and proper allocation of resources offer the possibility for peace to be maintained in mountain regions resulting in a drop in the loss of human life.

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Sustainable Development for Jordan's Water

By: Christine Behle

Christine graduated from UVU in public relations in December 2016. While in school Christine worked at the Center for Constitutional Studies for a year and a half. She hopes to use her experience to go to graduate school in the near future as she is currently working to gain some experience. Christine grew up in Cottonwood Heights, Utah. In her spare time when she's not studying at school or working she enjoys tennis, skiing, philosophy, and spending time with her family.

Abstract

Jordan has what is considered one of the most concerning water scarcities in the world. Currently, the issue of clean water resources is worsening, and Jordan is using nonrenewable fossilized-water aquifers as a temporary solution. This paper will highlight a history of the water issue, how the lack of water is impacting those in Jordan, contributing factors, potential threats, what's currently being done to solve the problem, and possible long-term solutions. Jordan is a crucial player in resolving the conflicts and continuing crises of the Middle East. Their current water issue is a potential threat to their sustainability as a country. With a significant amount of Jordan's population consisting of Syrian refugees fleeing Isis, and refugees fleeing persecution from the conflict in Israel, it is important that Jordan remains a sustainable place.

Introduction

In summer 2016 I attended a study abroad in the Middle East. One of the countries we visited was Jordan. The water issue first came to my attention after I took a five-minute shower at the American Center for Oriental Research (ACOR). Upon finishing I was reprimanded by the other students. Apparently, I was only supposed to take a two-minute shower due to poor water resources. I learned that day a five-minute shower was a luxury in Jordan not to be taken lightly. Later, in the study abroad, I happened to sit next to a civil engineering Ph.D. candidate from Purdue University who was studying the water issue. This engineer, through her research, came up with what she thought was the cause of the water shortage. To put it simply, in Jordan people don't take preventative measures and don't at-

tempt to fix problems until they've reached crisis levels. This isn't really a water issue, it is a cultural one, but it has become a water issue since Jordan has failed to address the poor infrastructure in the water system.

During my study abroad to Jordan I was able to see how Jordan played a key role in helping and providing sanctuary for those fleeing persecution. While we were in Jordan, a few of us attended an Evangelical Christian church where we found out from the pastor that many of the congregation were Christian Syrian refugees who were fleeing persecution from Isis. These refugees were surviving on the good graces of the Catholic church, but were running out of time as the funds given to them were nearly depleted. Later, during our stay we were able to visit a refugee camp. Here we were able to see more of the refugees that had come from Syria.

Becoming aware of Jordan's water issue and seeing the refugee epidemic lead me to realize that the water issue in Jordan isn't just a regional problem, but a crucial world issue. By solving Jordan's water crisis, we can not only help the Middle East, but we can also help the world. This paper will inform about how the water issue started, what's currently being done about the problem, and go over future solutions that might be able to solve the long term problem.

Overview of the Water Problem

Water Resources

Jordan has one of the world's scarcest water supply. It derives most of its water from the Jordan and Yarmouk Rivers. While a large river may easily sustain some smaller countries, the Jordan River is not a large river, and by European standards, would be considered a tiny ditch. To add to this, both Israel and Syria draw from these humble streams, leaving only a trickle for Jordan. Compounding this is the fact that there have recently been severe droughts in Jordan. According to the Ministry of Environment, Jordan is one of the most drought vulnerable countries in the world. Jordan is mostly desert, and since Jordan's water supply relies on rainfall—anytime it's not raining the water supply is in trouble. Jordan receives less than 200mm of rainfall a year, which according to the LA Times is less than half the amount of rain California receives annually. Many of the recent droughts in Arab countries were in the Mashreq region which is where Jordan is located.



(Photo by Med O Med)

Infrastructure

Jordan's water infrastructure has problems. To put it simply, the water pumps are old and constantly leaking. In some cases, the leakage can be up to 70% between water networks. This leaked water is pristine and has been treated and pumped from the distant aquifer. It's estimated that the water lost could supply the basic needs of 2.6 million people a year, which is more than a third of the population of Jordan.

Stealing Water

Another issue is water theft. Private water companies will sell stolen water to high-end hotels. Just this last year (2016) Jordan's water ministry dismantled a large-scale theft operation that was selling water for almost half the regular price to the hotels along the Dead Sea. This operation included illegal fixtures used to take the water from a main water source in the Jordan Valley. This particular illegal water operation was just one of several that have begun to be addressed by the courts. Some of these water theft operations are reselling 6,000 cubic meters per day, which had it not been stolen, would have provided for the needs of 75,000 individuals.

Impact

Food Industry

Droughts in Jordan have occurred in 1958, 1962, 1997, and 1999. The 1958 and 1962 droughts cost Jordan 70% of their camel herd; the 1997 drought cost Jordan 30% of their sheep; and the 1999 drought cost Jordan 40% of their red meat.

What's Currently Being Done to Solve the Problem

Waste Water Retreatment

Jordan developed a long-term plan to treat wastewater in response to the water scarcity in 1982. The first development resulting from this plan was the West Zapa pumping station. However, the retreated water from this system was causing health concerns when put into irrigation or dumped into other bodies of water. In 1997 Jordan sought to build a different system that was more effective at treating water. This new project started in 1998, and finished in 2003, becoming what's now known as As-Samra WWTP. The project includes eight aeration tanks, eight secondary settling tanks, an odor control system, four anaerobic sludge digesters, and biogas and hydro-powered generators. So far the ability to create safe reusable water for irrigation has been a success. The plant's average treatment capacity has been 365,000 cubic meters a day. There is a second system being implanted alongside the As-Samra WWTP. This is the Wastewater Network Project of the Jordan Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI).

Rationing System

At the household level, the water is stored in tanks on the rooftop. This is all the household has until the next water re-fill, which is usually once a week. The government and different non-government organizations or NGOs actively seek to educate people about water scarcity and encourage water conservation. The government has given different guidelines to the people such as how long a shower can be, how much water can be used for irrigation, and how often people refill their water tanks. Volunteers, often women that are called change pioneers, will show households how to do water plumbing, rainwater harvesting, and how to use water for gardens. These efforts have come about because of the Water Wise Women Initiative, which started in 2007, and originally covered five communities in Jordan. The Water Wise Women Initiative is backed by the Jordanian Hashemie Fund for Human Development (JOHUD). There are 50 differ-

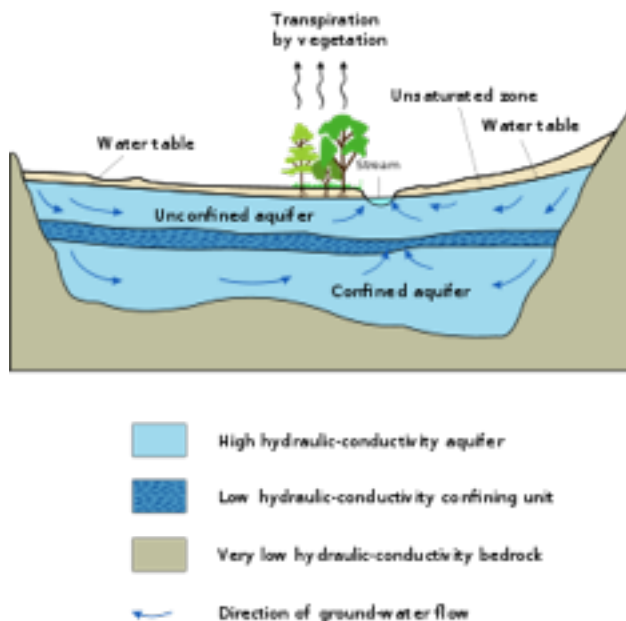
ent community centers for the organization. These support the rationing water system in Jordan and sustainable development as a whole.



(Photo by Frank Vogel)

Accessing Non-renewable Fossilized Deep Water Aquifers

One of the recent solutions Jordan has gone to, out of desperation, is to install non-renewable fossilized deep water aquifers. The problems with this solution are the aquifers are often over pumped, and the aquifers are becoming polluted by seepage from landfills, and the improper disposal of hazardous chemicals. Another problem arises since the aquifers are being used at twice the recharge rate, which makes it hard for the natural resources to replenish themselves. If the aquifers continue to be used at such a rate, this will lead to the drying up of what little resources they do have. A possible solution to the threat of aquifers drying up would be for the government to enforce regulations on the amount of consumption from these underground resources. However, this puts Jordan back at square one. There is simply too much water scarcity, and water is essential for humans to survive.



(GET WET curriculum, Theresa E. Thornton & John M. Peckenham)

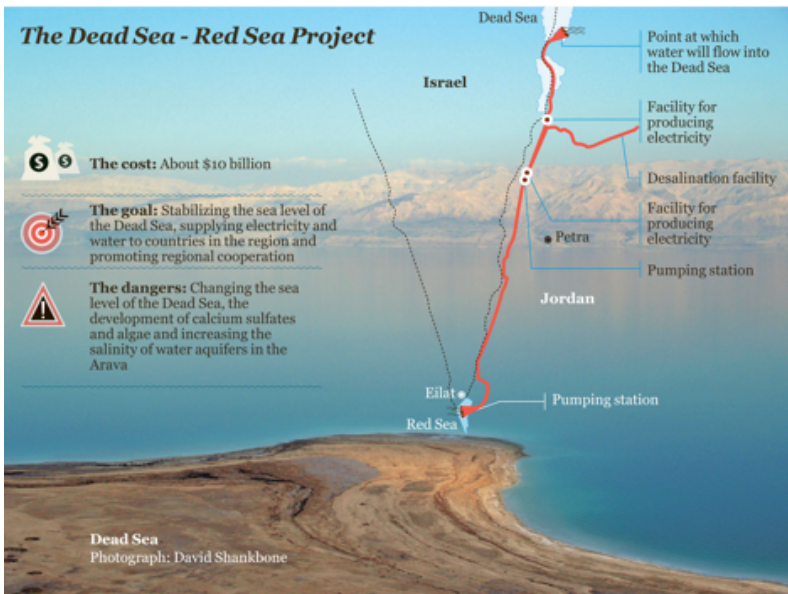
The Dead Sea/Red Sea Canal & Disi Water Conveyance Project

While the As-Samra waste water project is significant to the progress of Jordan's water scarcity, there are two megaprojects that have been ongoing since the 1990s: The Dead Sea/Red Sea Canal, and Disi Water Conveyance Project.

The Dead Sea/Red project is being financed by the U.S., and will cost around \$10 billion. This project will be joining two oceans with a pipeline to transport millions of cubic meters of seawater and will carry up to two-billion cubic meters of sea water per year from one point of the Red Sea to other, the Gulf of Aquaba to the Jordanian territory of the Red Sea. The pipeline will go about 180km long and will become the world's largest desalination plant. Israeli, Palestinian, and Jordanian authorities all signed and agreed to have this project taken underway. Some concerns with this project are how mixing different types of sea water and algae might have on the environment, such as algae starting to grow in the dead sea. There is also a concern of the salt water going into the ground water. Even with the controversies, Israel's energy and regional development minister has described the project as historic.



(Jamal Kanai, Global Research)



(Photo by Pakistan Defense)

From Zaatari Pumping Station in Mafraq Governments to the northern governorates. The US will be financing this project contributing \$1 billion. A Turkish company, GAMA, will carry out the construction. The pipeline will run 325 kilometers and carry 100 million cubic meters from the Disi aquifer to the capital in a one-year time span.



(Jordan Refugee Camp, By Christine Behle)

Conclusion

While this paper doesn't include every possible solution that is being speculated, or is being worked on in Jordan, it gives a summary of the major concerns and current solutions being worked on in Jordan. Some of these solutions, such as what the government and NGO's are doing through creating awareness and helping to train people on plumbing or rain harnessing, are proving effective. Also, their water re-usage plan seems to be yielding positive results. There are some plans that seem to be helping, but with the population doubling there needs to be more done, especially when it comes to clean drinkable water. Other solutions that hold high hopes for the future are the Dead Sea/Red and Disi Water Conveyance Projects.

One of the major issues seems to stem from infrastructure, which is causing quite a bit of waste. As quoted earlier, the amount of waste results in being able to supply water for almost a third of Jordan's population for a year. This goes back to my discussion with the engineer in Jordan. It seems to be a cultural thing not to fix problems until they are an issue. Infrastructure is something the Jordanian government could help redo. According to Amir Dakkak, the government could renew the old and rusted pipelines going into people's homes so that infrastructure works better. Simply cutting out waste would help the country's aquifers renew themselves without drying them up. While there are NGOs over in Jordan trying to help to train and inform people, this needs to be a bigger priority for the govern-

ment to prevent problems rather than fixing them, which seems to be one of the costs of Jordan's current water infrastructure.

Stolen water was also an issue mentioned. While Jordan is dealing with those crossing the lines of stealing in courts, they need to come up with a long-term plan that would prevent and make it harder for those to steal the water in the first place. Perhaps one solution would be to enforce stricter punishments if caught, this could prevent someone from going that route.

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Air Quality in Utah – The Growing Problem of Pollution in the Beehive State

By: Chelsey Laura Tufts

Chelsey is a soon-to-be graduate from Utah Valley University. She studied political science and peace and justice studies. She hopes to use what she learned to help situations of conflict and suffering in her own community and around the globe. She is married to Erron Bartleson, and together they parent their black poodle named Clyde. Chelsey is very passionate about nature, and loves to get out as often as possible to explore the mountains that surround her. While Utah has always been her home, she has only recently understood the beauty of the state. Because of her love of the outdoors, Chelsey is interested in finding solutions to environmental issues. While she hasn't fixed climate change yet, she is ardent about doing what she can to make a difference, even if it seems insignificant.

When the Mormon pioneers migrated to Utah in 1847, their first sights were the Rocky Mountains, the Great Salt Lake, and the desert landscape. There was no industrialization to the area because Native Americans were the only civilization to live on Western American land before European and Eastern American settlers. This provided a clean slate to those migrating to the area. The benefits included abundant resources, land to settle, and, something that is unknown to Utahns today, clean air.

The increasingly unhealthy air quality in Utah has been an issue since 1979. However, the dangerous levels that affect Utahns today were in the works for decades prior to then. There are countless problems that contribute to Utah's air pollution. The primary factors that are discussed in this paper will include: industrialization, population, and location. Air pollution is not victimless, it effects human lives and nature within an area. Because Utah's air condition is so poor, health problems run rampant. Looking to the future, changes can be made to improve the declining situation.

Industrialization

With the initial invention of many modern products, industrialization contributed to the poor quality of Utah air for over 100 years. The economic growth that came with inventions such as cars, factories, heating, and cooling have made life easier for citizens of Utah. Regrettably, because of the fuel these inventions burn, the state's environment has continued to

suffer.

Cars were introduced to Utah in the year 1900. This was about a year after automobiles became used by prominent people on the East Coast. Although many Utahns first saw automobiles around 1900, it wasn't until approximately a decade later that a significant number of cars were reported around the state. These automobiles were located primarily in Salt Lake, where the setting was the most urban.

Mining in Utah can be traced back to Patrick Connor. He was introduced to Utah in 1862 by many Mormon church officials who wanted to begin mining for certain metals, especially iron and gold. Mormon prophet Brigham Young wanted to dominate prospecting ore and precious metals across the state, as he understood the importance for these metals. Unfortunately, mining produces a very unhealthy state for the environment where it occurs. The process of extracting various substances from within the earth is strenuous and unhealthy to both the land being mined, and those who are mining that land.

In the year 1869 the Golden Spike was placed in Promontory Point, Utah. The spike driving ceremony celebrated the joining of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads. The joining of these two railroads created ease of access for both product and people from one end of the United States to the other. While this development was important for the advancement of communication and business, the increase in train transportation resulted in the demand for coal. This sparked a large development in both coal production and coal mines. Both problems contributed to the increase in poor air quality.

Industrialization in the United States has been developing since the 1850's. Although Utah was initially settled by a small number of migrants with a focus on agriculture, times began to change, and consumer demand continued to rise. This only increased the number of factories and mills. In the early 1850's the first factory in Utah was developed. It took over forty wagons to bring the machinery into the state. When it was established the factory produced sugar. While the effects of this initial sugar factory didn't impact the air in Utah all that much, the increasing number of factories in the area did.

As the 20th century rolled into view, industrialization had nearly over tak-

en the agricultural nature of the state, which improved the economic ease of business and relations. However the air began to suffer as the 20th century progressed. By the end of World War II, Utah had become dependent on the business of factories and plants. This dependency resulted in the continual growth of factories. By this time automobiles had also become a common household item, which resulted in the increased burning of fossil fuels.

Population

Although industrialization plays a huge role in the decline of air quality, the population of Utah contributes to this problem as well. By 1870, nearly 25 years after the original Mormon settlement of Utah, the population had reached 70,000. This was a large number for Utah at the time, but in 2015 Census records show Utah a population of 2.9 million.

Northern Utah cities are home to the majority of Utah residents. Consequently Northern Utah cities also have the highest levels of pollution within the state. These cities also have the highest manufacturing area within all of Utah. Mining towns scattered throughout the state do not help improve air quality.

Location

The Wasatch Front is a hot bed for pollution. There are two different kinds, invisible pollution and visible pollution. For Utahns, winter months are typically filled with visible pollution, and the term ‘inversion’ is heard across the state. Both forms of pollution are deadly, and cause many people to become ill, however only one can be seen by the naked eye, and in my opinion, angers Utah residents.

It is during the winter months that air quality soars to ‘red’ (dangerously high) levels. Air monitors throughout this time harp on the importance of staying indoors and keeping activities that contribute to the air quality as a necessity. While population plays its part in contributing to air pollution, it is not the sole factor. Utahns often gripe about air quality in the Salt Lake Valley through the winter, but one place completely unattached to Salt Lake City is actually known for having some of the worst air in the winter months. Located approximately 85 miles north of Salt Lake, in Cache Valley, is Logan, Utah. Here, the inversion is dangerous. On a good day the valley is full of clear air and gorgeous mountain views. However, throughout the winter months, Cache Valley sees countless days where

the beautiful scenery is replaced with a cloudy and dirty atmosphere settling over the valley.

Scientists have concluded that the primary reason Cache Valley continues to struggle with air pollution, despite heavy regulations, is that the location of the valley traps the pollution while allowing hardly any fresh air to circulate through. Because the valley is surrounded by mountains and twisting canyons, residents of Cache county are forced to sit in a pot of pollution for many months out of the year.

A similar pot can be found in the second most polluted place in Utah, the Salt Lake Valley. While not entirely closed in by mountains on all sides, Salt Lake struggles with the same issues of pollution as Cache Valley. Because of the closed nature of the valley, inversions here can be seen most winter days. Because of the number of people in the valley, the smog that sits across it is thick and colored; usually brown, but oftentimes having a red or orange tint to it. Salt Lake, and other counties, including Cache, that deal with high levels of pollution, struggle to pull themselves away from pollutants because of the area in which they reside. In Salt Lake and Cache County especially, warm air is trapped into each valley and sealed in by a lid of atmospheric pressure. Because improvements to these locations are very limited, the health of Utah residents suffers.

Health

There are many reasons why air quality is important. The main concern for Utah citizens is that the health of those breathing the contaminated air is on a steady decline. Because air is a required resource to live, people are living in areas of terrible pollution and are obtaining health problems such as respiratory issues, accelerated aging of the lungs, decreased lung capacity/function, asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, cancer, and a shortened life span.” These diseases are found the most in areas where air quality poor. Asthma in the state of Utah has one of the highest ratios in the country. It is assumed that this high ratio is a result of the air quality. More infants are being born with lung problems, and scientists presume that babies born in the winter months are more susceptible to lung diseases.

Unfortunately, pollution doesn't only effect the life of unborn children, but oftentimes prevents conception of children for many mothers in Utah. An easy way to understand the effect that air quality has on pregnancy is to look at the commonly understood rule of not smoking while pregnant.

For decades, smoking while pregnant has been understood and directly linked to decreased fertility, increased miscarriages, and birth defects. This is because the chemicals that are inhaled by an expectant mother are transferred directly throughout her system to her unborn child. If a woman is trying to conceive, her eggs will have a decreased chance of attaching and developing if they are introduced to a hostile environment. While similar, the difference between smoking and breathing air pollution do have one major difference; the frequency in which harmful chemicals are being introduced into the body and blood stream. Women in Utah are subject to breathing polluted air for a large portion of the year. This means that the chance for women to conceive and carry a pregnancy to term, is drastically lowered.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, elderly people, within the state of Utah, have had an increased occurrences with lung diseases and lung cancers, even where smoking is reported to be lower than any other state in the Union. The solution, told to many of these elderly people by their doctors and caregivers, is to move out of the state. For those fortunate enough to follow that advice, health issues, especially ones pertaining to the lungs are often cured relatively quickly. What about those who are not able to leave the state, are Utah citizens condemned to a life of declining air quality?

Solutions

On a national scale, many measures have been taken and laws created, to decrease all forms of pollution. In 1970 one of the biggest agencies that fights to protect the environment was created. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or was an executive order of President Richard Nixon, with the initial goal of protecting an environment that was rapidly declining across the country. Since its beginning the EPA has worked on various programs, including; radiation protection, pesticides, fuel economy, and air quality. The EPA's air quality program works through scientific and mathematic models. It creates new approaches to policy and regulatory decisions that affect air quality across America.

The EPA, while a federal agency, has spread to state governments as well. In 1990, The Clean Air Act (a previously enacted federal bill), was amended to include individual states responsibility in the fight against pollution. This led to the development of the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the creation of the Utah Air Conservation Act. The

DEQ manages all environmental issues within the state of Utah, but on the top of their list is air quality. Of all the air quality programs, notable ones include; the air monitoring program, the burn permit program, and the UtahAir App which allows citizens to be aware of air quality in their area by simply checking an app on their mobile phone.

Open burning has been one of the most impactful programs that has developed out of the DEQ. Depending on the air quality, determined day by day, burn laws have been put in place for Utah residents. This means that in counties that are forecasted to have a red level day, open burning is banned in those counties. While open burning has decreased over the years due to electric solutions, those with wood-burning stoves and log fireplaces, are not permitted to burn them on red level days without proper and prior authorization.

While strides have been made to decrease the poor effect of polluted air on Utah citizens, work has only just begun. According to the American Lung Association, 2014 the worst year in a decade for air quality. They gave Salt Lake county an 'F' grade in regards to air quality. While many other counties have steadily improved, Salt Lake, the most populated county in the state, has immeasurable work that needs to be done, in order to improve the health and safety of both Utah's outdoors and residents.

Electric inventions have made an impact on emissions and pollutions in the past, and with the world having a strong focus on improving and inventing new electric solutions, industrialization is a field to look to with hope to reduce chemicals and pollutants being pumped into the air.

Another advancement to look forward to is the progression of people who identify as environmentalists. In the latter half of the 20th century those who fought for tighter environmental regulations came to be known as 'hippies.' While the hippy movement had many facets to it, one of its primary focuses was on the health of the environment. Unfortunately, this group of people were a little bit before their time, and many found their movement to be unnecessary and extreme; thus, giving environmentalism a negative connotation. However, to care about the environment today is not considered 'hippie' or extreme. Children born today are raised by parents who live in an environmentally aware world. While problems with pollution have continued to decline, the concern for these problems have increased, causing an increase in solutions as well. While not all solutions

are perfect, or may only contribute to reduced pollution in miniscule ways, people are happy to ‘go green’ and clean up the environment around them.

Utah’s air will continue to decline if no alterations are made. The crisp and clean valley that refreshed the pioneers will not return on its own. Utah must make a choice to consciously maintain and improve upon current regulations and commitments that residents have made to the environment. It’s an issue that effects everybody who enters the Beehive State.

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Utah and Georgia: A General Comparative Analysis

By: Aaron Holloway

Aaron Holloway is a second-generation student at Utah Valley University and is currently a senior in Political Science. He interned for the Utah House of Representatives during the 2015 legislative session, worked as a Wood Research and Teaching Assistant at the Center for Constitutional Studies at UVU from 2015 to the summer of 2016, and is looking forward to applying for law school upon graduation at the end of 2016.

Utah and Georgia have similar population sizes, with Utah having close to 3 million, and Georgia close to 4 million . Both countries are geographically similar as well, where both deal with mountainous terrain encompassing population centers ; both are economically and politically stable for their respective regions; and both are heavily influenced by outside investments. Utah is influenced by the federal government, whose investment makes up nearly half of all state budgets, and Georgia is influenced mainly by the Russian Federation and to a lesser degree by the European Union, the World Bank, and various multinational organizations.

Religion in Utah

Utah's population is relatively homogenous ethnically, racially, and religiously. Over 60 percent of the population are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS church). The LDS church provides a foundation of principles, cultural ties, and additional benefits such as charity work for the poor and sick. The cultural ties and foundational principles provide a relief from political tensions that tend to grow between urbanized areas and rural regions of the state, and exacerbate those between the majority and minority ethno-religious groups. When different faiths have different views on public policy, such as the recent debate over the legalization of medical marijuana, such tensions become exacerbated.

The LDS Church's philanthropic work both among its members and among the general population provides relief to the state's welfare safety net system, redistributing wealth and providing access to services that

would otherwise not be accessible to some such as mental and physical health care, addiction recovery services, and temporary financial assistance. Often this assistance comes in the form of food, clothing, work training, and direct cash assistance for necessities like housing and medical needs. Most of the supplies donated come in from one of 129 “bishops storehouses” around the world, a large number of which are based in Utah.

Though there is a separation between LDS church’s philanthropy and Utah’s state welfare system, they do often cooperate and coordinate with one another. The state and local municipalities will work with the LDS church and other local charities to increase their ability to provide for the needs of the poor and sick in order to relieve stress on the state’s welfare and assistance programs.

Religion in Georgia

Eighty percent of Georgia’s population are members of the Georgian Orthodox Church (a form of Eastern Orthodox Christianity). This provides a bedrock foundation of principles and cultural ties that help relieve tensions that arise within the country and create a form of homogenization for the general population.

The relationship between the Georgian Orthodox Church and the Georgian Government is structured by a 2002 agreement between the powerful church and the government officially named the “Constitutional Agreement between the Georgian State and the Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Georgia,” and is informally known as the Concordat . This agreement covers many different aspects of the interaction between the two organizations including Church-State separation , reparations for damage done to property by the former Soviet Union , exclusive rights to the military chaplainry , and official recognition of the Georgian Orthodox Church as an official religion of Georgia.

The agreement also authorizes the Government and the Church to work together to institute various social, educational, and welfare programs affirming that the State will accept diplomas and degrees from Church institutions . While other religions such as Islam and the Armenian Apostolic faith have historically coexisted with the Orthodox faith, they are free to practice and preach their faith and can register with the government

under this agreement and subsequent legislation as non-profit organizations with religious affiliations. They cannot register as official religions of Georgia. It should be noted that all major Georgian Orthodox holidays are State holidays , showing just how interwoven the Georgian Orthodox Church is into the social fabric of the Georgian State.

However, those that are not members of the Orthodox Church tend to be members of minority communities. This is the case in the region of Kvemo-Kartli, where a majority of the local population belongs to Islam and has little power within the system structurally . This is not to say that these smaller denominations are inconvenienced in their religious or philanthropic activities, but instead to say that the Georgian Government and the Georgian Orthodox Church have a special working relationship with regards to providing social services to the Georgian people.

Analysis

There are three key elements traditionally necessary to group identity: group loyalty, shared history, and gratitude for benefits received from the group. Religion binds a people together into a political and social body. Though societies have been formed through all of these elements individually or in various combinations, religion can touch on all three factors. History, benefits received, and perhaps strongest of all, group loyalty, enforced by a strong sense of doctrine and dogma .

In Utah, this social-religious infrastructure is strongly established and has been, since before the state's founding, primarily due to the influence of the LDS Church and the shared history of the 19th century western pioneers. In Georgia, this social-religious infrastructure is developing in positive ways, "while inter-ethnic relations are marked generally by good cooperation and dialogue, incidents of inter-faith tension and conflict have become more frequent in a number of regions ." An example of this is the Javakheti region, where a majority of the local population belong to the Armenian Apostolic faith, where it makes up only 2.9% of the national population according to the latest census. As this social-religious infrastructure develops further into the future, through cultural and religious exchange enhancing understanding and tolerance, it is important for the central government to be vigilant that the majority that exists in its central urban zones does not overshadow the periphery.

Differences

A major difference between these two populations is the fact that Utah's population is relatively homogenous and somewhat centralized in population centers or regional/county hubs within the Wasatch front. At the same time, the Georgian population is highly diverse with minority communities scattered throughout Georgia's numerous mountainous regions and with a large portion of its population being in the encircled valley that makes up most of the country surrounding the capital city, Tbilisi. This difference plays a role in many of the outcomes and policies that will be explored later on.

The second major difference between these two political bodies is that of history. Utah is very young, having existed for just over a century and a half, while Georgia is hundreds, if not thousands of years old, having existed in various forms throughout history. Georgia, due to its history, regularly deals with both internal and external historic tensions and conflicts, such as its current contentious relationship with Russian Federation under the rule of Vladimir Putin. While Utah's history being so relatively recent, has few unique historic conflicts or rivalries either internally or externally. The difficult implementation of reforms with impact derived from historic conflicts will have an impact on many of the policies explored as this paper unfolds.

Areas of Comparison

The areas of comparison that I will focus on are each government's method to meet economic, environmental, and educational needs and provide their population with a proper model of sustainable development. These areas encompass a large swath of what are generally considered proper roles of government with regard to domestic policy.

Geography

The Mormon culture does not only exist within the confines of the geographic state of Utah, but continues throughout the western region, having a strong influence in Las Vegas suburbs, California, and small town communities stretching from the northern reaches of Idaho to central New Mexico. Utah's regionally centralized culture stretches from Cana-

da down into northern Mexico where the presence of Mormon colonies (abandoned by the central church due to doctrinal differences regarding polygamy) are a stabilizing force working towards economic development and against many modern challenges including the violence of the drug cartels. Despite this dispersion, the central areas of influence of this regional mountain culture are Utah's Salt Lake and Utah Counties.

Utah's geography is highly complex and was considered undesirable according to traditional standards in the 19th century. Mormons settled in the mountain west, some of the roughest and driest terrain on the North American continent. Not only is the State of Utah, primarily the Salt Lake and Utah valleys, surrounded by steep mountains on all sides and highly elevated above sea level, it was founded on the eastern half of the Great Basin, which forms one of the harshest deserts in North America.

The State of Georgia is nestled in the middle of the Caucasus Mountain range that runs through the area just north of the Middle East, east of Europe, and south of Russia. Georgia's climate is very mild being a temperate area bordering the Mediterranean Sea. This type of climate has made Georgian land highly desirable for the growing of various fruits which have allowed hazelnuts and wine to become major exports for the Georgian economy. Georgia's borders encompass mountainous areas that contain dozens of regional minority subcultures. These minorities make up a relatively small voting bloc, roughly 16 percent of the population according to the latest census. This 16 percent is made up of smaller minority groups such as Azerbaijanis, Armenians, Russians, Ossetians, Yezidis, Greeks, Kists, Ukrainians, Jews, Abkhazians, Assyrians, and Kurds to name just some the largest of these groups.

Economic Methods

Utah Methods

Within the United States, Utah in particular, authority is highly decentralized due to constitutional requirements. States or regional governments make and staff almost all of the primary social services available to the general population. This leaves Utah as the primary actor in its citizen's lives, providing police, firefighting, and medical services among others. In Utah, the state government goes further than most other states by regulating the

financial services industry. Utah has an independent financial-regulatory and enforcement agency, the Utah Department of Financial Institutions (UDFI). The UDFI is designed to regulate banks and other financial institutions chartered within Utah's financial system rather than the central governments. The department's self-description, and mission statement makes it clear why it was instituted, what its goals are, and what its general philosophy is:

The Department promotes a dual federal and state banking system. The dual banking system offers a choice between a national charter and a state charter. A state charter is often advantageous to financial institutions because the regulator is familiar with the community and management of the institution and also knows the trends in the state's economy. It's the concept of the regulator being as close to home as possible.

The philosophy behind both this institution's creation and operation is local control by those within the local community by leaders and bureaucrats that understand local concerns and needs. The philosophy yields positive dividends. The state agency currently oversees more than 119 financial institutions: 2 trust companies, 36 holding companies, 16 active state industrial bank charters, 4 out-of-state state-chartered banks, and 26 state-chartered banks—all told with nearly double that number in local branches. The sheer number of financial institutions increases access to the state's population to: accounting, money management options, and various credit types. Utah's banking infrastructure is as good, if not better, at providing access to its citizens to modern banking than some western European countries such as Spain where banking fees, are high on most transactions limiting access to the poor, and Greece where the political and structural problems within both their political and financial systems nearly collapsed it. Utah's system strength discussed so far has yet to factor in the credit unions, banks, and savings associations within the federal system that Utah's economic climate and infrastructure has attracted. In total 49 institutions: 4 savings associations, 36 federal credit unions, and 9 nationally chartered banks—all with countless smaller branches throughout the state that the UDFI does not track. In Utah's case, local control has led to a financial infrastructure that is not only healthy but thriving; and potentially one of the reasons why during the 2009 housing and credit crisis, though Utah had significant problems with regards to employment and job growth, it was sheltered from the worst national troubles. Utah has gone on to have some of the fastest job growth in the United States as of 2016.

Georgia Methods

Georgia is an economic model for its region, earning praise for its economic development from both the European Union and the United Nations. However, while remaining stable, there are some indications Georgia's economy has stagnated due to regional issues. A steady trend of increasing GDP, job availability and wages, relatively low corruption and a multiplicity of other economic indicators all bear this out, despite economic recession in Russia and other regional trading partners. Georgia, due to its resilience and determined political reform is a model of economic and political liberty in its region.

When looking at Georgian mountain minority groups, a slow trajectory of improvement regarding infrastructure growing at a weaker rate than the majority population on communications and economic status emerges. This trend tends to be associated with and tangential to general economic improvement projects. An example of this was the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. In order to build the pipeline, transportation-infrastructure such as roads were necessarily improved. However, the local population was only marginally employed by the project as illustrated below:

The persons belonging to minorities complain that they have rarely been invited to participate in these major works... [the committee] nevertheless calls on the authorities both to continue and step up their efforts to open up ... so as to enable the persons who live there to access basic services and thus to enjoy their social and economic rights on an equal footing with the rest of the population, as well as to develop income-generating activities in these regions.

With minority groups making up a small proportion of the population; and the central governments attention firmly fixed on gaining economic independence from Russia and rebuilding after the Russia-Georgian war in 2008; with minorities natural difficulty being politically relevant to highly centralized governments like Georgia complicating matters further, these actions stem from benign rather than purposeful neglect, brought on by necessities in infrastructure and economic development. Whatever the cause, the effects of developmental inequality have been felt. The Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in 2012 described the issue, as it existed then as follows:

A significant proportion of persons belonging to national minorities is particularly affected by unemployment and poverty, mainly because they live in regions which are highly disadvantaged both economically and in terms of infrastructure, and which have poor links with the rest of Georgian territory, not only for reasons of history, geography and climate, but also because of an unequal redistribution of resources between regions. This particularly applies to the regions of Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo-Kartli. For example, access to electricity and gas supplies, as well as to health care, is still sometimes difficult in these regions.

Since 2012, reform projects, particularly focusing on linguistic access to the justice system, have taken place. Unfortunately, concerning infrastructure and economic opportunity, these mountain minority groups are still relatively impoverished when compared to their counterparts in the national majority. Historically, mountain communities have relied upon the necessities of travelers and traders for shelter, food, and safety for their economic activity and trade. In modern systems, the geography or landscape itself is incorporated into such infrastructure systems as communications, transit, and trade routes. As with the above examples in the Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo-Kartli regions with the local populations, mountain minorities are bypassed and must be purposefully included in the economic activity that surrounds this improved infrastructure and its creation. Otherwise, similar problems will continue to happen. The Committee describes the situation as such:

[The Committee] ...is concerned about the lack of access for persons belonging to national minorities to jobs in the public service (see the comments in paragraphs 151 to 153 above and in respect of Article 4). Furthermore, the Advisory Committee has been informed that access to various occupations in the spheres of education, social services, etc, increasingly depends on success in the Georgian language tests, further reducing the opportunities for persons belonging to national minorities to find employment in the public sector.

It is important to note that the Georgian central government, in an effort to rectify this problem, would need to take steps that would slow the speed of construction. Linguistic differences, job skills and other factors play a large role in preventing these mountain groups from also enjoying the benefits of such projects. The Georgian central government has few incentives to change economic infrastructure projects: trading efficiency to ensure that the local populations of these mountainous regions also enjoy their benefits.

Analysis

Utah's economic model is influenced by significant levels of decentralization due to federalism, and has allowed Utah to thrive. This success has led to a strong culture of decentralization, where the Utah state constitution provides a great deal of autonomy to cities, counties and other municipalities. One of the few actions denied to municipalities on the constitutional level is the selling of water rights under article II. The Code surrounding municipalities heavily focuses on structure, which frustrates attempts at controlling individual municipality behavior, allowing for great latitude on the local level. Each municipality, and the state government itself, has the capability to meet the needs of those in their jurisdiction, without interference from, or in cooperation with the others.

By contrast, Georgia's economic model is heavily centralized. This allows for a single vision of the economic future of the country, which has led to Georgia being an example of economic stability in its region. However, this type of planning has led to marginalized cultures being further marginalized, and the regions that they live in, which are on the relative political, economic, and geographic periphery, being left out of economic activity that surrounds infrastructure projects. These groups have little recourse through the government structure that currently exists to use resources within their respective regions without interference from the central government.

Allowing for autonomous use of resources, and providing protections constitutionally for such activity, might benefit Georgia in the future by allowing marginalized regions to look after themselves while the central government focuses on large infrastructure projects. The central Georgian government would provide a vision of the future that all political entities within the country could work towards independently, and in cooperation with each other.

Environmental Methods

Utah

The state of Utah is a regional government. Despite its great amount of autonomy over most areas of law and regulation, there are some areas where

it is clearly subordinate to the federal government. There are some areas of law that overlap, where state governments like Utah have clear and historic precedence for their power, and where the federal government has a clear need to regulate in order to support or enforce their legitimate role in other areas under article I section 8 of the US Constitution. One of these areas is environmental law.

The federal government's enforcement agency is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA is consistently working with state agencies such as Utah's own Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to ensure that states are meeting required goals using the EPA's measurement standards. How a state achieves these goals is up to the state agency responsible for that given states environmental plans and implementation. The EPA sets minimum and specific standards for pollutants of all types, or media: land, water, air, among others. If the EPA does not believe that the state agencies responsible are meeting the standards, it can either take over primacy, meaning it can take direct control of the state's environmental management, or withhold funding of various projects such as roads. This system has created a large amount of bureaucratic oversight, but has allowed each state to adapt their plans to their needs.

There exist two major problems with this type of system. The first is that the EPA is considered one of the most controversial agencies in the central government bureaucracy due to the type of power it wields, and it is therefore highly susceptible to political changes within the executive branch. As it is known, this political instability is something that EPA regulators themselves are frustrated with. The EPA relies heavily upon the President of the United States and higher-level executive officers to direct their interpretation of law, rulemaking, and approval of regulation.

This has often lead to changes to the types of standards used by the EPA. Within the past thirty years, the EPA has gradually switched quality measurements away from health-based standards, which are the levels of various pollutants within various media, considered healthy for a human or wildlife, to technology-based standards. Tech based standards are created by regulators finding the most efficient, least polluting actor in a given industry, and that entities pollutant levels become the new standard. Currently health based standards still exist to protect the general population, however tech based standards are applied to companies and polluters.

In one situation for example, the national ambient levels of ozone were set to a level below the natural ambient levels in Utah. This was because the ambient level measurements used to create the standard were taken in a different environmental system, leading to a situation where the ambient level standards were impossible for Utah to reach, due primarily to differences in elevation. Additionally, these types of standards do not take into account natural weather pattern phenomena like inversions during winter that tend to make Utah's air quality poor for a short time, usually lasting a week or so. Averaging the quality measured each month Utah's air quality doesn't meet the national standard, but it is entirely because of those few short days or weeks where inversions take place.

The second systemic issue is that states, Native American tribes, and other countries such as Canada, Mexico and China, all have a powerful environmental impact upon one another. This bleed through from other sources is rarely taken into account by the EPA with regards to measurements or standards set. Additionally, each type of political entity (country, tribe, state) has different pollutant levels and requirements, or are not required to coordinate plans with the DEQ. Native American tribes as sovereign nations implement their own environmental plans. These plans have a heavy impact on the states that they live in and without proper mutual coordination this situation can lead to both the state and tribe being out of compliance with federal standards.

An example of the type of complexity that Utah's Native American tribes can cause is presented in Fig.1, below of Duchesne County. The contrast in this one area is stark. The land is literally patch-worked with some areas owned by Utah, and others by various Ute tribal entities. The land is often used for natural resource extraction, and the shared air-shed (a local weather system) that these plots of land are tested on is very easily effected by the activities of the other entities on the land next to it. Utah's extraction activity is often curtailed or inconvenienced by tribal activity, though Utah tribes have been historically willing to work with state regulators.

Additionally, Utah's Department of Environmental Quality often has to take foreign nation's activities and weather patterns into account , all coordinating through the EPA, regarding environmental pacts, agreements, and legislation. Exceptional events, like forest fires, fireworks, and other large overseas activities, are taken into account by the EPA when analyzing

air and water quality, but the day to day bleed-through is not. In the end pollution does not acknowledge geo-political boundaries while governments have jurisdiction only within their geo-political boundaries. This forces cooperation and coordination among those of good will; however, actors such as China who, despite some modern reforms, care little for environmental quality and pollution, cause major strain on the system.

Georgia

The law titled “On Environmental Protection” structures Georgia’s environmental protection agency. The Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources Protection is the primary enforcement agency for the Republic of Georgia. Past legislation and informative documents, as well as parts of the Georgian Constitution, heavily inform “On Environmental Protection.” This law is highly concerned with “taking care of natural surroundings and cultural heritage” seeing culturally significant sites as part of taking care of the natural environment. Additionally, the law makes environmental protection the responsibility of the average citizen in four different ways. First, all citizens are required to observe all requirements within Georgian law regarding environmental protection. Second, they are required to “take care of natural surroundings and cultural heritage.” Third, they must care for the protection of the environment. Fourth, they must inform authorities of any environmental accidents that have occurred of which they might have knowledge. Additionally, the law also lays out provisions for research, taxation, environmental protection goals (long term and short term) and plans for the country, as well as permitting and testing.

Permitting and testing rules for polluting industries are detailed under Article 24 of the law, titled “Licensing for Adverse Impact on the Environment.” The first half of the article lays out the ministries authority and what kinds of activities fall under its purview, as well as the requirements for technology based standards. The second half specifies the ministries involvement with approving further rules and regulations, and where to find them. The rules regarding standards are laid out clearly in article 29 titled “Standards of Quality of the State of Environment,” and are listed as such: 1. The standards of quality of the state of the environment are: a) Maximum permissible levels of the amount of microorganisms and of concentration of microorganisms and of concentration of substances harmful for the health of humans and for the environment in atmosphere

air, water and land... 2. The standards of quality of the state of the environment are defined in every five year by ... the Ministry of Health Care, in compliance with the Ministry of environment and Natural Resources Protection.

These standards are a hybrid of both health-based standards, which are the overriding factor set by the Ministry of Health, and technology based standards, which take into consideration the best available technology. These standards are updated every three to five years depending upon demand and which pollutants are being observed.

Additionally Georgia's enforcement and adjustment of goals and regulations are handled with some latitude by regional offices. This decentralization of enforcement, according to the On Environmental Permitting law, goes so far as to give municipalities their own 'regional offices'. This type of flexibility, while using clear hybrid health and technology based standards set by the ministries over public health and environmental protection, set Georgia up with a clear and concise system.

A major issue that Georgia has been running into over the past few years has been the lack of resources, both in terms of funding, and personnel training and expertise. According to the Country Environmental Analysis Report of the World Bank regarding this issue in 2015,

Environmental policies are receiving increasing attention from Georgian policy and decision makers, recognizing that sustainable development is about a profound change of policies that drive systemic transformation of production, consumption, and behavioral patterns. The list of the country's environmental challenges is long. Current policies and instruments lack the rigor to effectively reduce pressures on natural assets and protect public health from poor environmental quality.

The problems with the system that have come about in recent years primarily stem from relatively weak support, lack of expertise, and funding difficulties. With some policy changes also required with regards to providing enforcement agencies additional enforcement tools and rule making capability. The report goes on to say that, large sections of Georgia's population both in urban zones and in the country are exposed to higher than acceptable levels of toxic pollutants, such as lead, CO₂, and other air pollution stemming from economic growth and activity.

Utah's environmental and air/water pollutant standards are not set by the state government but rather by the federal government. However, Utah is in charge of enforcement and implementation. This disconnect between rule makers and those that actually conduct studies and control permitting on the ground inevitably leads to miscommunication, overlap, and frustration to the point that one Utah environmental specialist from the DEQ said that the entire situation was "very, very complicated," due to the "bureaucratic nightmare" that is the current system. However, Utah's, and the United States' enforcement agencies have the resources, authority, and support necessary to carry out their work.

By contrast, the environmental legal system of Georgia though just as complex, is much more deliberately designed (as the US system came about from preexisting legal structures) with experts on the local and regional level making adjustments for the environmental systems unique to their region. However, they have little authority, few resources, and a lack, in some cases, of training and expertise. The issues with the US system are systemic, and need to be addressed on the highest legal levels. While those within the Georgian system are primarily authority and resource-based, requiring ground level work on legislation, budget increases, and education or training for those within the agencies.

Educational Infrastructure

Utah-Education

Utah's state Constitution, article 5 section 1 on education reads, The Legislature shall provide for the establishment and maintenance of the state's education systems including: (a) a public education system, which shall be open to all children of the state; and (b) a higher education system The separation between the two systems is clear, and both systems are the least partially funded through direct state tax revenue.

Utah's Lower Educational System

Utah's lower school system is highly diverse, with much of the rule and curriculum decisions being made at the local school board level. Utah has an elected State School Board, further distancing the executive and legislative bodies of the state from direct influence over the state's education

system .

This had led to mixed results. Some school districts thrive, with some of the best testing scores in the nation, while many languish with little funding. Utah is considered one of the worst states, usually around the bottom of the ladder when looking at teachers' salaries and teacher-pupil ratio at high schools, which is around 22.2 to 1 according to the State Board of Education's 2015 report. It should be noted that this is a general overview, and due to the heavily decentralized nature of the lower school system, this statistic does not reflect the quality of education, which is actually being provided to the majority of students, as some districts are much larger, and some are much smaller. An example can be seen in the Teacher-Pupil ratio of the two extremes: the Piute district has a ratio of 11.35 to 1, whereas the Morgan District has a ratio of 24.59 to 1. There are clusters of districts throughout the spectrum, making an average of the system not necessarily indicative of its health. In general, the smaller districts correspond with the most stratified, meaning the wealthiest and excelling, or the poorest and languishing districts.

This situation is, at least in part, due to how these districts are funded: primarily through the state system consisting of over 50 percent of local board budgets , and then through local property taxes which make up around 35 percent. Some of the remaining funding comes from private donations, but majority of it comes through federal appropriations. Education taxes properties that are often already taxed by local municipalities, taxed further by the local school board based on the estimated value of each home, leading to higher tax revenue for the smaller, wealthier districts, and lower tax revenue for the smaller and poorest districts.

Though in recent years some reforms have been proposed, many have not passed the legislature or school board, been fully implemented, or have been stripped down with subsequent legislation. One example of reform was taking a portion of each school district's direct tax revenue and adding it into the state's general education fund. The legislature and the state school board decide how to use this fund, with those revenues being aimed at the less fortunate districts. This would allow the poorest districts to be supported by the wealthier ones, providing at the very least an adequate educational level for all students throughout the state.

Currently state funds go to each school district based on a formula that

takes into account the number of pupils each school district has and the type of pupils the school has, such as special needs children and “at risk” youth. The funding from the state level is relatively equitable, with constant strides from the state school board, and Utah’s Office of Education to improve management of the system and prevent corruption or misuse.

Utah’s Higher System

In comparison with the Lower School System, Utah’s Higher education system is a model of consistent innovation and technological improvement. Utah has eight major upper division colleges and universities that cater to the needs of Utah’s economy and expert fields of study, such as the legal profession and Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics fields (STEM). This system also includes a sub system of technical and professional schools such as Mountain Land Applied Technology College (MATC) through Utah Valley University, which provides a constant stream of educational options for skilled labor and entry-level STEM fields.

These eight are additionally broken down into three categories. To quote directly from the 2015-2016 schools report from the Utah Department of Higher Education:

Each has a particular role in the educational fabric The Utah System of Higher Education is comprised of the eight public colleges and universities in the state:

RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES University of Utah—flagship; medical, dental, pharmacy, and law schools, etc. President David Pershing Utah State University—land grant; 33 regional sites and campuses statewide President Stan Albrecht

REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES Weber State University President Charles Wight Southern Utah University President Scott Wyatt Dixie State University President Richard “Biff” Williams Utah Valley University President Matthew Holland

COMMUNITY COLLEGES Salt Lake Community College President De-niece Huftalin Snow College President Gary Carlston [emphasis added]

These eight upper division public schools service an estimated 170,000

students each year and the numbers are growing. Though, it should be noted, that a large portion of these students are from out of state, some being from international locals such as Saudi Arabia. These educational institutions utilize some of the most innovative technologies available to provide quality education inexpensively and easily to those in rural or sequestered mountainous regions such as Duchene County. Though relatively close to Utah County in mileage, during winter is almost impossible to access safely by car. Such regions have few if any public transportation options, being either far from, or inaccessible to central population hubs, and so spread out among their own region that public transportation is cost prohibitive.

Technologies include online courses, satellite campuses held throughout the state in or around regional hubs (such as Vernal Utah), and distance education, which allows professors, based in other regions of the state, to teach students via Voice Over the Internet (VOIP) technologies in other regions. These technologies have become extremely important to how these state institutions provide quality education to so many students so easily and inexpensively. These programs are funded by student tuition, which increases only as needed and which generally keeps pace with inflation, direct state funds, and private donations. As an example, Utah Valley University has built the majority of its new buildings through a mix of donations from private wealthy citizens and alumni, and state funds. Utah's higher education system is robust, technologically modern, and cost accessible.

Georgia-Education

Georgia's education system is mandated by law, and is broken up into three sections. Primary and secondary are what the United States would consider primary education, while upper division education is named Tertiary education.

Georgia's Primary-Secondary Education System

According to the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals in Georgia report, Georgia's lower education system is vibrant. "Georgia has a strong tradition of education, with almost universal primary school enrolment rates across the country. The country has maintained high primary school enrolment (96%-100%) since 2000." Georgia's lower education sys-

tem has seen remarkable improvement over the past twenty years. Marked improvements in quality, access, and linguistic access has increased literacy rates to around 99% for the adult population and increased attendance rates to near universal levels according to the most recent United Nations Human Development Report (HDR). Additionally, the pupil to student ratio is at or around 9.1 to 1, which is far better than its neighbors and far better than any district in Utah, the lowest being at around 11 to 1.

The primary concern aside from growing the system and improving teacher training and access to technology, which will all come with economic and therefore tax growth, is linguistic access. While having improved markedly, there are still concerns within the numerous minority communities of being forced to learn Georgian, and not being taught in their ethnic language whenever possible, despite legal protections and assurances to the contrary. These issues will primarily be resolved as the system grows more robust, and professionalism and training within the lower education system increases with time and funding.

Georgia Tertiary Education System

The upper division education system of Georgia is primarily centered around its population centers, like Tbilisi with a handful of the 17 major public institutions and many of the accredited private institutions, not including the numerous technical training schools and programs distributed throughout the country, located around other smaller urban zones like Gori and Batumi. These 17 public higher education institutions service an estimated 115,005 students. Each upper division institution services an estimated average of 7,000 students, though there are very large and very small universities that do not match closely with these average numbers, one of the largest being Georgia Technical University (GTU). Additionally Georgia has a program of vocational and technical school integration and expansion, which includes 20 institutions directly associated with the government, and 67 institutions accredited by the Ministry of Education and Science, which oversees both upper and lower division education.

The locations of these higher-level institutions often lead to them being inaccessible to the more rural populations. Not only the mountainous regions, but also farm and mining country that exists throughout the main valleys. As a result, many vocational and technical schools have begun operation in more rural areas of the country. The needs of large higher-level

universities and colleges necessitate them being located within or at least near large urban hubs. This has led to around 33 percent of the population compared to the school age, being enrolled in tertiary schooling according to the 2015 UNDP. This includes those who did not complete their degrees or certificates. This increase shows a steady climb since the ending of, and devastation caused by the Russian-Georgian war in 2008 in infrastructure improvements and rural access. Post war numbers fell as low as 28 percent from their high in 2005 of 46 percent. It should be noted, that data is not available for some years during and around the war.

Georgia's upper division education system is separated into three different types of universities, designed to meet the needs of the Republic of Georgia for bachelors, masters, and PHD programs. The Ministry of Education and Science, which oversees these institutions describes each below:

University - Institution of higher education, which carries out higher educational programs of all three stages and scientific researches; Teaching University-Institution of higher education, which carries out higher educational program/programs (except doctorate programs); teaching universities necessarily carry out educational programs of second state - master program/programs;

College – Institution of higher education, which carries out only first stage educational program of higher academic education. This breakdown is less about meeting specific needs of any one region, and more about structural educational integrity, putting less emphasis on providing for the needs of the country, and more on academic rigor: though individual institutions have different needs based mandates.

Analysis

Utah's system for lower education is broken and sporadic with regards to funding, policy, and curriculum. Much of local school districts' funding comes from disparate sources. Utah's upper division does not suffer from this broken nature, having to be accredited by national organizations, and receiving nearly all of its funding from traditional sources. Each university is encouraged, if not mandated depending on the institution, to increase access to rural and isolated areas to education. They have done this through innovative and relatively inexpensive technology and programs.

By contrast, Georgia's system of lower education is highly centralized, which has provided for its robust and swift growth. Its upper division education system however, due to its high levels of centralization around urban hubs, has not been able to effectively increase access to more rural and isolated communities to higher-level education. Georgia could benefit from implementing many of the technologies that Utah's upper division system has implemented, while Utah could benefit from implementing, a more centralized funding distribution model for its lower division system, similar to Georgia's model. Georgia's higher education system includes a system of private universities accredited by the Ministry of Education and Science and many trade schools not included among the 17 higher division institutions. Georgia's trade school program, similar to Utah's own is predicated on the idea of decentralizing the teaching of skilled trades to smaller communities.

Conclusion

Both Utah and Georgia are providing and are constantly looking to improve services to their citizens in all three areas: economic growth, environmental protection, and educational needs. Both Utah and Georgia have problems that need resolved in each of these areas stemming from either too much or too little decentralization/centralization. Adjusting the current legal structure in each of these areas, providing additional resources to beleaguered agencies and seeking training opportunities among their staff will always benefit any system. The suggestions and reforms proposed in this paper come from the others experience. These solutions are vague and general on purpose, as they are not intended to be more than a general guide for where each political body might be likely to find their answer. Both Utah and Georgia would be well served to look at the experience of the other, and adapt the lessons learned there to their own systems.

Section 3

Essay Winners,
*Georgian Art at Utah
Springville Museum*

The Soviet Babushka: A Standard of Tradition and Keeper of Faith

By: Hannah Leavitt

Hannah Leavitt is a Junior at BYU studying Art History and Statistics. She lived in Eastern Europe as a child with her family and then later as a young adult serving an LDS mission. She speaks Russian fluently and has a deep love of the culture and people throughout Eastern Europe. She began visiting art museums as a child. Even at a young age, Hannah loved sculpture, architecture and paintings. She plans on attending Law School and beginning her own art collection someday.

Building Bridges: Exploring Georgian Art and Politics

The Revolutionary, painted by an unknown artist in 1967, features a pleasant-seeming old woman identified in Georgia as a bebia and in Soviet culture as a babushka (Fig. 1). She wears a white headscarf, and blue jacket, and sits atop a stool in the yard of what appears to be a dacha, or small country house. Initially, viewers are drawn to the staff the babushka firmly grasps in her right hand. She sits under, but only partially within, the shadow of a large unknown structure. Behind her we see a small stool and storage shed, trees, and a fence. The Revolutionary asserts that these Soviet women—babushkas—are not the ‘revolutionaries’ the Soviets expected, but are instead revolutionaries in unseen and simple ways by quietly preserving Georgian culture, traditions, and religion. Although it may initially seem that this quiet babushka is an unlikely revolutionary, she is reminiscent of the icons of St. Nino—the powerful and nationalistic patroness of Georgia—and thereby threatens the atheist Communist patriarchy as a matriarchal keeper of Georgian culture, traditions, and especially religion.

To understand the babushka’s world, and her part as a quiet revolutionary, one must be familiar with the Soviet context. Early Soviet leaders ironically claimed to be “the custodians of a great revolutionary tradition” by abolishing local, minority, and religious traditions—including those of Georgia—and imposing Soviet culture. During the 1920s and 1930s, Stalin promoted vicious persecutions of religious leaders and their followers. Despite villagers’ protests, Stalin closed churches, killed or exiled countless priests and other religious leaders, and sponsored rallies promoting

atheism and the supremacy of government and science. After Stalin's death, Stalin's successor—Nikita Khrushchev—led a campaign known as 'the Thaw,' which attempted to liberalize social policies and decrease the oppression experienced under Stalin. However, persecutions worsened, especially for nationalistic Georgian people. Ultimately, Khrushchev's rule—along with that of his successor Brezhnev—simply perpetuated the persecution of dissenting opinions.

The babushka, as a quiet revolutionary, is representative of those with dissenting opinions. The babushka's fully frontal position, clothing, facial expression, and staff are all remarkably similar to Georgian Orthodox icons of St. Nino (Fig. 2). Like most Orthodox depictions of saints, she sits directly facing the viewer with a neutral gaze—neither joyous nor mournful. Additionally, the babushka's white headscarf, blue jacket, and staff are similar to St. Nino's standard clothing. Icons of the saint direct the devout's thoughts to her role as "Enlightener of Georgia" and "Equal to the Apostles." The Georgian Orthodox tradition teaches that St. Nino was directed to go to Iberia to declare Jesus Christ's Gospel. God promised she would "erect in that land the saving banner of faith" in Jesus Christ and then bestowed upon her a cross-like staff to perform miracles. St. Nino's most notable success came when the king of Iberia, King Mirian, was suddenly overcome by a cloud of darkness and was only relieved of blindness after praying to "Nino's God." The babushka is not only reminiscent of St. Nino in her apparel, but in her role: she must determinedly wait in the face of tyrants to "erect in that land the saving banner" of Christianity.

The babushka, who has lived through political persecutions and social upheaval, now sits in the foreground of the painting, in the edges of the shadow. The shadow likely alludes to the Soviet government, its unabatingly oppressive impact in her life, and in the lives of thousands like her. Although the shadow's source is not visible, its effects darken the bottom third of the painting. Significantly, however, it does not darken her face. Despite the shadow all around her, the babushka's face and clothing, like many saints in iconic depictions, radiate light. This indicates that no matter the darkness, the babushka—and those she represents—remains psychologically and philosophically unmarred. She takes literally the counsel given in Psalms 23:4, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." She sits determinedly, holding her cross-like "rod and staff" showing that she "will fear no evil."

The background depicts a storehouse, stick fence, and trees. These domestic items may hearken back to simpler times in pre-Soviet life, and as such they still remain in sunlight. The items positioned in the light are not simple relics of the past but represent elements of the babushka's domestic influence, and position as a keeper of long-held beliefs and traditions. These items, unaffected by shadow, stand as sentinels behind their leader. By placing the babushka in the forefront and foreshortening her legs, the viewer sits at the babushka's feet and learns from her—even from within the shadow.

Despite the shadow from government or other institutions, the viewer may quietly sit at the babushka's feet in private moments and absorb wisdom of the past, enjoying the warmth and light radiating from her. Behind the babushka sits a stool, perhaps to illustrate that she is the last watchman, or keeper of earlier times. Though others once guarded with her, she now does so alone—the sole keeper of past wisdom. She stares determinedly forward, defying the shadow while simultaneously inviting viewers to join her as protectors of hallowed traditions.

Strong vertical lines assert a position of strength afforded to the babushka. She sits erect, holding a cross like staff. The staff's strong vertical line mirrors the lines of the storage shed, trees, and fence. These represent the domestic traditions, order, wisdom, and connection to ancestors. The vertical staff symbolizes the babushka's authority and responsibility to maintain past wisdom. The babushka's posture aligns her as the living standard of the not-too-distant matriarchal past deriving from the female evangelization of Georgia by St. Nino. The Revolutionary depicts a babushka whose first impression seems common and conforming to the collective. However, in light of the socio-political climate, she is a revolutionary against forced conformity as she firmly sits, protecting the beliefs and practices of her ancestors. She stalwartly faces the shadow and remains the standard keeper of religion, culture, and traditions.

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Toska: A Soviet Longing for Community and Spiritual Fulfillment

By: Annilyn Spjut

Annilyn Spjut is a current graduate student at Brigham Young University pursuing a degree in Art History and Curatorial Studies with an emphasis in Soviet art of the 1930s. She graduated BYU in 2013 with a undergraduate degree in Studio Art, minors in Chemistry and Art History, and a Russian language certificate. Annilyn met her husband, Lars, in Russian class while at BYU and two months ago, they were blessed with the arrival of a baby boy they named Lev Aleksandr in honor of two of their favorite Russian authors. After graduation, Annilyn hopes to pursue a career in museum work.

Socialist Realism, the officially sanctioned art of the Soviet Union, was tightly regulated and centered on building a communal identity which would unite various cultures and peoples. The aim of the style was the propagation of Soviet socialist ideology, and in the 1930s when Socialist Realism was first implemented, ideologues firmly believed that acceptance of this ideology would reform individuals into model Soviet citizens, spiritually fulfilled by the community and the ideals offered by Communism. Yet as the decades passed, these promises went unfulfilled. Individuals remained recalcitrant, and communities became more disconnected. By the 1980s, during the period of Zastoi, (better known in English as Brezhnev's Era of Stagnation) restrictions on art began to relax somewhat, allowing for the expression of frustration with unmet expectation and fermenting among the intelligentsia a search for spiritual redemption and community. Two great works of Georgian art—Abuladze's film, *Repentance* and Mushambadze's painting, "Sacrificing the Bull"—show how two artists reacted against the loneliness and spiritual stagnation of the Zastoi period and used their disparate mediums to call for a return to the traditional, spiritual, communal life of Georgia.

Repentance, first screened in 1984, uses a frame story to depict both the horrors of Stalinist repressions as well as the intellectual ferment of the 1980s. Immediately upon release, Abuladze's film was recognized as subversive to official Soviet ideology and did not have another showing until 1987. Throughout the film, Abuladze uses religious symbolism to highlight the spiritual bankruptcy of all totalitarian regimes, the Soviet system in particular.

The events of the film center on the story of the fictitious Barateli family. The father, artist Sandro Barateli, is depicted as a Christlike figure who falls victim to the totalitarian repressions of the tyrant Varlam Aravidze. The mother, Nino, is visually depicted as the madonna and characterized as the allegorical figure of beauty. They are purged, leaving their daughter Ketik completely alone. Ketik's loneliness and desire for spiritual redemption is embodied by the opening scene of the film, where the adult Ketik is shown alone as she decorates cakes to look like Orthodox cathedrals, only to have them eaten by a vulgar man reading the newspaper. The film continues on to depict Ketik's revenge, whether real or imagined, on the tyrant who destroyed her family. The film concludes back in Ketik's kitchen, when an old woman approaches the window and asks if the road, named for the deceased dictator Varlam, leads to the temple. When Ketik answers that it does not the woman replies, "What good is a road if it does not lead to a temple?"

When the film was finally widely released in Gorbachev's period of Glasnost, the themes of the film, and particularly that final question, resonated with Soviet viewers who, like Ketik, were begging for someone to pay for the pain of their past and were searching for spiritual meaning in their lives. The Soviet system had promised to consummate the deepest desires of the human soul by replacing traditions and religion with ideology and progress, but by the 1980s, it was clear that path did not lead to self-actualization as promised. A new path must be sought through the return of the beauty, art, and belief that Stalinism had squelched. One critic described "the spiritual and moral victory" of Abuladze's film as "the feeling that man, despite all, is great and will not die; that art and the memory of the good and the true and the beautiful can somehow bring retribution and forgiveness for the complicity of the past."

"Sacrificing the Bull", painted in 1980, similarly reacts against the constraints of Socialist Realism in celebrating a traditional Georgian religious ritual. Mushambadze's painting depicts villagers gathered to participate in an ancient pagan tradition of animal sacrifice. Under the Soviet system such folk traditions had been mocked as backwards, and religious practices had been discouraged. Communism and the rites of the party were to replace such beliefs, and community was supposed to be found in identification with the proletariat. Typical Soviet Socialist Realist paintings celebrated the comradeship of workers, the progress of industry and technology, and the glories of the Party of Lenin; but viewers were keenly aware of the

deceptive nature of these images. The realities of Soviet life under Stalin were far removed from the golden, happy world depicted in Socialist Realism; instead they inhabited a world colored by the fear, distrust, and terror of repeated purges.

Mushambadze, like Abuladze, subverts the Stalinist paradigm by calling for a return to the real human connection and belief that came before the “enlightened” age of Communism. Mushambadze in subject matter and style celebrates not Soviet culture, but traditional Georgian practices. The vivid hues and skewed perspective differ markedly from typical Soviet Socialist Realist pieces and offer a uniquely Georgian view that harkens back to local folk art and icon painting traditions. The intensity of the colors gives the piece a palpable feeling of the warmth of the Georgian sun, while the skewed perspective conjures up the feeling that the landscape could have been inhabited by mystical beings as Georgian legend suggests. The brutality of the rite about to be performed is directly addressed through the glistening knives in the foreground and the child hiding her face in her mother’s skirt; yet the artist seems to celebrate rather than condemn the act. In addition to the sense of the reality of the mystical, there is a strong sense of the way in which this rite unites the community. The figures depicted here are not the backwards, idiotic peasants earlier Soviet discourse would have portrayed; Mushambadze depicts multiple generations of real, strong individuals joined in this sacrificial rite. Through this painting, Mushambadze observes how traditional Georgian culture has succeeded where the Soviet system failed.

The 1980s was an incredibly eventful decade in the Soviet Union; from Brezhnev’s *Zastoi* through Gorbachev’s *Glasnost*, citizens increasingly questioned the emptiness of Soviet Communism, leading to the eventual collapse of the entire system. Individuals had not been remade in the image of the new Soviet man, finding collective identity and spiritual completion through party anthems and fulfilled production quotas. Instead, courageous individuals such as Mushambadze and Abuladze began to suggest that the old system had failed, that those living under the Soviet regime needed to seek redemption and find a new—or return to an old—path leading to the temple of spiritual fulfillment.

i Repentance, dir. Tengiz Abuladze, perf. Avtandil Makharadze, *Repentance*, 1987.

ii *ibid*

- iii Viktor Bozhovich, "Ispytanie sovesti," Vechernii Tbilisi, 28 November 1986. Cited from Julie Christensen, "Tengiz Abuladze's Repentance and the Georgian Nationalist Cause," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 50, No 1 (Spring, 1991), 163-175.
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Section 4

Reflective Essays, *Student Experiential Learning Through Hosting the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference*

Happy International Mountain Day

By Deann Torsak, executive Secretary of the WOMC (2015)

Deann Torsak was born and raised in the small island community of Wrangell, Alaska. In 1995 she married her husband, Kenneth and together they have four children. A small business owner, she is actively involved in community service. She has managed the Utah Grizzlies Special Needs South hockey team for seven years and has been heavily involved with the Boy Scouts of America for the past eight years. Deann is currently a senior at Utah Valley University studying Political Science with an emphasis in American Government, with two minors: Constitutional Studies and Native American Studies. She is the first recipient of the Rebecca D. Lockhart Endowed Scholarship for students within the Constitutional Studies minor at UVU. She has been involved with the Utah International Mountain Forum since 2014, and is currently the President of the Sustainable Mountain Development Club and is the Executive Secretary of this conference.

Throughout March 1-8, 2016, the students and faculty at Utah Valley University celebrated International Women's Day. It was phenomenal that this year UVU was able to dedicate an entire week to the International Women's Day celebrations. As a member of the organizing committee, I was proud to help contribute to another highlight of women's role in life, modern society, and in the state of Utah in particular. As student at UVU, I know from my own experience how challenging it can be for many women to grow professionally, and at the same time be able to work and take care of our families and children. I have four children of my own, including a boy with autism, and I help my husband operate our small construction business while studying full-time at school.



Figure 1: (L to R): Darian Hackney, UVU student, Deann Torsak, Leslie DeeAnn Mower and Danielle Butler celebrate International Women's Day at Utah Valley University

There are too many problems that exist in the contemporary world that women have to face. Yet, when I see women like Barrington Jones, who was honored at UVU on March 1st or Leslie DeAnn Mower, co-founder of Neways company who are able to be mothers and successful business women, in addition to be generous philanthropists, I find myself wondering: "What can I do to make a difference both in the life of my family and other families in the state of Utah and beyond?"

Additionally, I find myself inspired by other women such as Becky Lockhart, the late Speaker of the Utah House of Representatives and Dr. Danielle Butler, Chairperson of the International Women of the Mountains Conference, that has become a major international event regularly hosted at UVU in order to promote gender and family issues in the State of Utah and globally.

This last year I was able to contribute to the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference under the umbrella of the Mountain Partnership, a part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The conference for the first time ever was hosted by students. It was extremely successful and a great example how undergraduate students can handle a high-level United Nations event in the same way that professors and experts in gender studies do.

Another crowning achievement for me was becoming the first recipient of the scholarship that bears Rebecca Lockhart's name for students who minor in Constitutional studies. It gave me more energy and a greater desire to dedicate myself to helping advocate for family issues in our state and globally.

Recently, I also participated at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. along with the members of the U.S. Congress and President Obama. There were many inspiring women there as well. Having never been to our nation's capital before, attending the National Prayer Breakfast was an amazing opportunity for me to see many of our national treasures while getting to meet many fascinating people. It was a joy to be able to represent Utah Valley University at the breakfast and the subsequent activities that occupied my time there.

I am extremely grateful to the UVU faculty who allowed me to be actively engaged in so many educational opportunities. I would also like to use this opportunity to express my special appreciation to Dr. Rusty Butler, Associate Vice President for International Affairs and Diplomacy at UVU, who retires next week. Dr. Butler and his wife Danielle Butler's leadership and support in student's engagement in global affairs and in founding and sustaining Women of the Mountains Conferences since 2007 has made a significant difference in future careers and professional lives of so many students at UVU and in the state of Utah. Happy International Women's Day to everybody.



Figure 2: (R to L) Deann Torsak Presents Certificate of Appreciation from the Food and Agriculture of the United Nations affiliated Mountain Partnership to Dr. Rusty Butler, Associate VP at UVU with Kiersten Dumas, member of the organizing committee of the WOMC

Inspiring Experience of the Women of the Mountains Conference

Tony Medina, Vice President for Logistics and Protocol of the Fourth
International Women of the Mountains Conference

Tony is a Utah native, born and raised in the Salt Lake valley. He attended Bingham High School, and after graduation he enlisted into the U.S. Army as an Infantryman. He was initially stationed to Fort Wainwright, Alaska, where his new unit was deployed to Mosul, Iraq. After a sixteen month deployment, he came down on orders to Fort Riley, Kansas in 2007. That is where he met and married his wife Stacy. After a year in Kansas, he reenlisted to go back to Alaska. He did two more deployments to both Iraq and Afghanistan respectively. In 2012, after his last deployment, he was diagnosed with a herniated disc at his L5-S1 vertebra. After surgery, he was functionally unfit for military duty. He was honorably discharged in October of 2012 and set out to begin his civilian life again. Tony is currently a Political Science major at Utah Valley University, working towards a Bachelor's of Arts in World Politics. He enjoys fly fishing, backpacking, building truck motors, and trying all of the local restaurants and coffee shops he can find.

“Don’t tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results.” George Patton

I had seen this quote many times throughout my time in the military. However, it wasn’t until the end of the Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC) that I truly understood it. The year and a half that I have been working with the WOMC2015 has been a learning experience that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. The people I have had the opportunity to work with have been inspiring and true leaders for all to emulate. Following the conference on October 10, 2015, I wrote an email to those intimately involved in the planning and organizing of the conference. What follows is an edited version of that original email message:

Hi guys,

I just wanted to send a quick email out now that this headache is behind us. I hope you all are out celebrating, sleeping, or getting drunk; I know I would be doing one or the other if it weren’t for work.

I just wanted you all to know how much I appreciate every single

one of you and all of your efforts over the past months. When I first came on board over logistics and protocol, it seemed like an easy job, writing letters, ordering food, reserving rooms, etc. It was a scary moment when I realized just how much I had bitten off and had to chew.



I am with Kimberly Williamson, 2015 WOMC Secretariat Advisor and Deann Torsak, Executive Secretary of the 2015 WOMC

Deann (Torsak-Executive Secretary of the Conference), thank you so much for taking over for Hailey (Eggleston, who left UVU due to family reasons during summer 2015). I had just accepted the fact that I would also be doing her job when she quit working with us. When you came on, I kept thinking I need to do that, and the next day it would already be done. You have done a fantastic job and I couldn't have asked for a more fitting partner in crime (we still need to steal that couch, by the way). The example you have set for your kids and the other students around you is one we should all hope to live up to. I can't tell you exactly how much I have relied on you the past year because I don't think the words exist. Just know that it is a lot, and I look forward to working with you for a long time to come!

Jenny (Starley, PR and Fundraising), you are amazing, for lack of a better word. Your experience, professionalism, and leadership

took us to a whole new level and propelled us to places I had never dreamed of going. Every time you prepared a document, packet, or a press release, it blew me away! It was always professional-level and of the highest quality and standard. If it is any representation of your professional life outside of our conference, your boss owes you a big raise (or their job, for that matter)! Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication. We all sincerely appreciate it!

Kamaile (Harris, Liaison at Salt Lake City and Business Fair Coordinator), you are the sister I never had. When Jenny first brought you on board, I would read your name and see your attachments and I always imagined you as this very stiff and rigid typical liberal (I can admit this now). Once we first met you up at the capital, your personality clicked and everything made sense. You are THE kindest and gentlest person I have ever known, and the size of your heart is only surpassed by your willingness to use it to help others. Your connections, ideas, and dedication made this whole thing happen. From the bottom of my heart, Mahalo (I hope I used that right).

Yanko (Dzhukev, Social Media Liaison), you have done an amazing job bringing us into the 21st century. Your dedication and tenacity is, what I believe, what really caught the eye of the world and directed it on us. This organization owes you a huge debt of gratitude for your long hours and willingness to get the job done regardless of the hardship it would put on yourself. Additionally, the fact that when you were 20,000 miles away and could have just forgotten about us and yet kept doing your job screams volumes of your character and personality. I am honored to call you my friend.

Parker (Nielsen, Head of Protocol), although you came on a little later than the rest, you represented us to the world with integrity, professionalism, and dedication. When it came time to start arranging the dignitaries and VIP attendance, I really thought I was going to die from being overwhelmed. Your personal experience and personality are invaluable to the organization, and these past few days would not have happened had you not been tackling such a huge aspect of this whole thing. It had to be like herding cats, and between students and international dignitaries, you probably need that drink more than most. Thank you for all you did, all you do, and will continue to do, and I know that eventually you will get to where you want to go and

represent the United States to another country in a phenomenal way.

Carlos (Alarco, Liaison at the University of Utah), you were the man behind the curtain this whole time, just like the Wizard. Whenever anybody needed something with the website, posters, or program in general, you always came through and rescued us from the brink of insanity, and brought us back to Kansas (to continue the Oz reference). Although I have only known you for a short while, I know that Utah Valley University lost an incredible asset when you transferred to the University of Utah. Please know that we all sincerely appreciate everything that you have done for us over the past months.

Bek (Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev, Faculty Advisor), that new piece of glass in your office is only a symbol of the amount of admiration and respect I carry for you. You have become more than just a mentor or professor to Stacy and I. You are a treasured friend with whom I owe an innumerable large debt of gratitude for your dedication to pushing and propelling students far beyond what they thought possible. You once told me you would be with us through to the very successful end. I think we reached that now. All I can put into words is спасибо.

I just want you all to know that through my time in the military, I worked with some great and amazing people. However, working with you folks over the past year has been the single greatest honor I have had. In the military, you work with people who are more or less there because of contractual obligations. You all sacrificed so much and gave even more for a reward that may not reach you for years to come, and even when things looked the worst you all kept pushing forward. To me, that is the epitome of leadership and dedication, and you all exemplify it beyond any other group of people I know. I want you all to know how personally grateful I am to have met and worked with you. You all have made me a better person and taught me things about myself that I never knew existed. From the bottom of my heart, THANK YOU. You are all amazing.

Take a break and relax for a while, and we will hit the ground running in a little bit. There is still work to be done, and I know if we put our heads together there is no limit we can't reach. With warm regards and the utmost respect, Tony.

The wonderful people I have been able to surround myself with during this amazing experience have truly opened my eyes to the leadership potential that exists outside of the military. I once thought that the military taught me everything I needed to know about leadership. However, now I know that the military only taught me what leadership is. I have since learned how to lead from the wonderful examples of the organizing committee.

Lastly, I want to say one last thank you to someone who has supported me more than they realize. My wife, Stacy, has been a huge support to me throughout this experience. She lent a hand many times when I needed help, and always supported my late nights and long days. To her, all I can say is: thank you.



2015 WOMC Team during Social Party after the Conference

The Role of the Grass-Roots Approach in Implementing the Post-2015 Agenda

By Jenny Starley

In both her professional and personal life, Jenny has worked on several public events and fundraisers. She's excited to utilize skills with the Women of the Mountains Conference. Jenny has worked for Provo City since 2001 and has been with Provo Fire & Rescue for six years as an Office Specialist. Her varied job responsibilities with Provo City have included the planning of various social and public events in addition to other administrative office responsibilities. In 2006, she worked with Draper City as an Executive Office Assistant to the City Manager, assisting with the implementation and planning of city events among other duties. In 2008, she and her husband joined 'Africa is Life Changing,' a humanitarian organization through which they spent time in Tanzania teaching sustainability skills to women and orphanages, teaching life skills to school children, and assisting in basic medical care. She was a Site Coordinator for the Utah Community Food Co-op of Utah for several years and is currently a volunteer for Utah County's Habitat for Humanity as a Family Mentor. She's been a member and microloan lender with KIVA since 2007. Jenny grew up in Utah County and has been married for 19 years. She and her husband have enjoyed raising her step-son and son who are now in pursuit of their own adulthood goals. She is a junior at Utah Valley University, seeking BA in Political Science and currently resides in Eagle Mountain.

2015 was an important year for the United Nations and the international community: new sustainable development goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on September 25–27 in New York as a plan of joint action for people and countries to promote progress and prosperity around the world.

The role of students and the youth in monitoring and implementing those goals is very important. I believe we are moving towards an age of global enlightenment where younger generations can use their energy and initiatives to push toward sustainability goals. Through their involvement, they will accumulate more knowledge and experiences for the time they assume the roles of future leadership of our planet.

Utah Valley University (UVU) students have been very fortunate to be in-

volved in the initiatives of the United Nations, with a focus on sustainable mountain development (SMD) since 2006, when UVU joined the activities of the Mountain Partnership (MP) under the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The engaged learning approach at UVU requires students to be involved in extra and co-curricular projects pertaining to local, regional, or international issues concurrently with their studies of theories in the classroom. As a result, they were able to contribute to the discussions of the new SDGs in 2013–2015 and attend sessions of the United Nations Open Working Groups on SDGs, among many other activities.

One highlight of the activities of UVU students includes when played honored host to the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC), a major international event with focus on gender and SMD agendas, under the umbrella of the MP at UVU campus in Orem, Utah from October 7–9, 2015. Members of Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU, have advocated for gender and SMD agendas in the state of Utah and North America since their founding in 2011. They were given an opportunity to prove to themselves and to the international community that, by hosting such a big international gathering, they will be able to demonstrate their acquired skills, knowledge, and experiences on SMD issues in addition to raising funds from different local and international sources. The fact that the majority of students at UVU need to combine these activities with other responsibilities, such as taking care of their families, careers, and school studies, made such efforts quite challenging, but exciting.

One does not usually receive many offers in life to be a part of an organization that can make ripples of change throughout the world. However, I did receive such an offer during the summer semester of last year, which I accepted. Knowing about my experiences with public relations with Provo City, Draper City, NGO “Africa is Life Changing,” and other personal endeavors, members of the student organizing committee of the WOMC asked me if I would be interested to join them as the Public Relations and Fundraising Coordinator. The duties of this title included supervising many fellow student volunteers, gaining media attention locally and internationally, and coordinating fundraising efforts by soliciting organizations for opportunities. This was an exceptional opportunity to not only utilize my current skill set and experiences (I work at Provo Fire & Rescue as an Office Specialist), but to conquer new and greater challenges.



Kamaile Harris and Jenny Starley after the Silent Auction

My activities at the conference were a result of a very exciting team effort. I was able to recruit a very good friend of mine, Kamaile Harris, who is our Salt Lake City Liaison for the Women of the Mountains conference and the Utah International Mountain Forum. Her enthusiasm and experiences as a grass-roots level activist and promoter of sustainability, both in Utah and in her native Hawaii, was instrumental in the success of our conference. The other main team member of my division was Yanko Dzhukev who is our Media Relations Coordinator for WOMC and the UIMF. The three of us become a tightknit and well working team under the Logistics and Protocol Vice President Tony Medina. Kamaile and Yanko were given a large amount of autonomy, as they both proved to be highly professional and did not need a lot of direction to complete their job functions efficiently and above all of our expectations.

Our first priority was gaining as much funding as we could. After creating a sponsorship package, I began contacting local and regional organizations that we considered to be “like-minded” in our organizational values via electronic communication. Through this method, we gained smaller sponsorships from more than thirty different NGOs and companies in the state of Utah. Each organization was deeply valued and we feel fortunate to have received so many in-kind and monetary donations, including: The

Women's State Legislature, Nu Skin Enterprises, Provo City, The Parliament of Religions, The Wasatch Academy, The Utah Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau, Charter for Compassion, and World Trade Center Utah.



During Silent Auction in Salt Lake City on August 29, 2015

As we received so many in-kind donations, Kamaile and I thought the next logical step would be to organize a silent auction. We were able to organize event at the Pacific Heritage Academy, while raising an awareness about both WOMC and SMD agendas in the area of Salt Lake City. This was a great experience and we received countless assistance and donations from our fellow volunteers, including: Tony & Stacy Medina, Deann Torsak, Jennifer Russel-Fenus, and Joshua Isbell. The highlight of this event was having Alex Azmi, Producer and Director of the documentary “To Climb a Gold Mountain,” fly out from California to screen his film during the auction. We were able to successfully raise nearly \$1,500 at this event: well beyond anyone’s expectations.

After the fundraising event at The Pacific Heritage Academy, I continued to work on fundraising through soliciting sponsorships. This was a difficult task and not one I particularly enjoyed, but having committed to the task, I worked hard at contacting organizations when time allowed outside of my full-time job and full-time course load. I received approval to fill out sponsorship applications with large organizations who donate funds to non-profit groups, so I began working on this responsibility as well. I was fortunate to have again support from Kamaile who sought advertising and media opportunities while I worked hard on fundraising. Kamaile

made numerous connections to help our notoriety, including: getting free ad space in City Weekly, a state-wide newspaper; getting radio time with KRCL, a radio station in Salt Lake City; and creating a relationship with the Pioneer Park Coalition, which brings together many NGOs, companies, and individuals in the greater Salt Lake City area to focus on improving the lives of the local community. I spent many hours submitting press releases and requests for free advertising with dozens of local and national media outlets to which many organizations published our event information on their websites. We also gained a radio commercial with KRCL. Yanko also spent an extraordinary amount of time publishing information on the Women of the Mountains social media accounts, reaching out to international organizations and inviting many prominent people to our conference.



Jenny Starley interviewed Derek Miller, President and CEO of the Salt Lake City World Trade Center

During the conference, I spent three days interviewing our participants, attendees, and volunteers; I estimate that I completed approximately 60 interviews. I met many people from all over the world. It was gratifying to see how the efforts of the dozens of volunteers who helped in the preparation of the conference paid off. I most enjoyed seeing so many international, national, regional and local organizations come together because of their passion and belief in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and particularly how those goals relate to mountain sustainability and gender equality.

I feel that the conference was a success and it was rewarding to know that my team and I were instrumental in its organization. I believe our efforts will help future Women of the Mountains events. We hope that as a grass-roots initiative, it will help our students obtain more skills and experiences with gender and SMD advocacy, while contributing to the implementation of the SDGs and post-2015 agenda of the United Nations.

Engaging mountain communities through the International Women of the Mountains Conference

By Yanko Dzhukev

Yanko is from Bulgaria, a country in Eastern Europe. Both of his parents were professional basketball players. His sister is also professional athlete, so it was no surprise he took the same path. When he was only 17 years old, he earned a basketball scholarship from Wasatch Academy, a prep boarding high school in Mount Pleasant, Utah. After spending three years in Utah, he continued playing college basketball in Rockingham Junior College, North Carolina. Before Yanko completed his bachelor's degree, he returned back in Europe to play professionally. He had spent almost 10 years playing all over Europe. He has never abandoned the idea of getting his degree. Coming to Utah at early age, he chose to return and complete his studies at Utah Valley University. He is a senior, majoring in Political Science and emphasizing in International Relations. He is fluent in French. He has a very strong passion for global issues and cultures and more than anything, Yanko loves to travel. As a professional basketball player, he has performed various volunteer services and work with disadvantaged children, including young basketball player sponsorship, tutoring and working with children without parents in Bulgaria and France. He is engaged to his longtime girlfriend and they have a ten-month old son Antoine.

May 8th 2015, I remember walking into class – International Relations of the Middle East. I had just flown all the way across the world from Bulgaria for summer school at Utah Valley University (UVU) located in city of Orem, state of Utah, USA. I had signed up for eight classes aiming to graduate as soon as possible. I remember stepping into class, meeting my professor – a short individual, speaking with a very strong accent and knowing I had absolutely no idea what is coming next. From this moment on, my life has completely changed. I had been playing professional basketball for nine years in Bulgaria and I decided it was time to give it up and focus on my other dream: a diplomatic career in the field of International Relations. I did not have any understanding how that was possible and I had to do to make it happen. After all, my life up to this point had only been about playing basketball. I knew that the time had come and it was now or never.

Professor Baktybek Abdrisaev began lecturing and in the middle of it, he started to talk about an international conference titled “Women of the Mountains” under the umbrella of the United Nations Mountain Partnership (MP) that was going to be held in October and that he needed students willing to participate in its preparation and hosting. MP coordinates global activities with a focus on the sustainable mountain development (SMD) agenda of the United Nations and works under the umbrella of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome, Italy.

He later informed us that for the first time such a high level international forum would be hosted by students and in particular by the members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU. The next thing he mentioned was an incentive for his students to get involved: extra credit for those, who are willing to participate, plus gaining professional experiences and skills on an international level. I knew only one thing – I need all the help I could get; taking so many classes in one summer and I had to do whatever it takes to complete my courses successfully because I could not afford to not pass any of my classes. So needless to say, I was very interested.

The next morning I woke up early. The first thing I did was to rush to his office. “I want in,” is exactly what I said, even though I did not know what I was getting into. I soon realized that this was the very moment when my actual education in diplomacy started. I was asked how I was willing to help and what would I like to do for the conference. I knew that at the end of the summer I had to fly back to Europe, so if I wanted to work for the conference it had to be something I could do from a distance.

I was introduced to the members of the organizing committee of the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC) including Tony Medina, Vice President for logistics and protocol; Dean Torsak, Executive Secretary; and Jenny Starley, PR and Fundraising. I quickly decided to manage the social media campaign, having learned that the websites for the conference had only been managed occasionally during last few years. I accepted the responsibility of the social media liaison. My initial work consisted of contacting globally over 300 members of the Mountain Partnership – governments, intergovernmental organizations, major non-governmental organizations and sub national authorities, informing them about the conference, and inviting them to follow the Women of the Mountains conferences social media outlets.

It was important for me to increase our social media presence in order to promote our efforts on a grass roots level and engage student groups from the State of Utah and beyond, to raise awareness and advocate for SMD and gender issues throughout the Rocky Mountain region and the world. I spent countless sleepless nights sending personal emails aiming to put the Women of the Mountains Conference on the social media map. Not very many institutions and individuals knew about us and I had to find new ways to attract attention and interest from the local and global audiences. From those 300 emails, to my disappointment, I received only a few replies. Many recipients didn't take us seriously as we were only students.

Later, to my surprise, I received some encouraging responses from people ready to do whatever it takes in favor of the mountains. Through this communication, I was able to contact, and later meet at the conference, many amazing people from all over the world, and people that I will always call friends. I am very happy now to count among them, for example, Noorani Barkat, from Pakistan who is a graduate student at Texas A&M. During the Panel Session on Education of Women & Children she was very outspoken about role of education of women and children in improving lives of mountain communities in Pakistan. I was also impressed by the energy and persistence of Sejuti Sarkar De from India, a chief coordinator for the Society for Natural Resource Management and Community Development, who was so determined to come to the conference, that she found funds for air travel, while we provided her accommodation and transportation in Utah. Sejuti made a great presentation during conference on the topic of "Utilization of Forest Products by Mountain Women."

Similarly, I was glad to establish the first contacts and then facilitate a dialogue with several women entrepreneurs and participants of a business fair, whom our student organizing committee was able to bring to Utah by raising funds for that purpose: Yunita Kopjanski, a founder and executive director from North Sumatera, Indonesia, who was interested in finding a business partner in Utah with focus on Renewable Energy for improving livelihoods of mountain communities in her native country; Diana Lucia Chaman Salas, a project coordinator of the Red de Agroindustria Rural (REDAR) del Perú from Peru, another amazing young woman that I had the chance to communicate and interact, was looking for local business partners in Utah focusing on use of educational alternatives for rural development in the Andes.



Ambassador Baktybek Abdrysaev, Diana Lucia Chaman Salas,(Peru) Project Coordinator, Red de Agroindustria Rural (REDAR) del Perú and Yanko Dzhukov

My involvement with the conference allowed me also to work with Ms. Mia Rowan, a Communications and Advocacy Officer from the Mountain Partnership Secretariat, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. I was able to learn from Mia Rowan many professional lessons, both in use of media and in gender and SMD advocacy as well, and I am so thankful to her for sharing with me her enlightening experiences. And finally, it was a special pleasure for me to contact and invite as a presenter at the conference Mr. Joseph Loftin, the principal of Wasatch Academy, where I had received my secondary education. Wasatch Academy, founded in 1875, is an independent, coeducational, college preparatory boarding school for grades 8-12 located in Mt. Pleasant, Utah. It has students from more than 40 different countries including mountainous ones. Mr. Loftin, during his presentation titled, "Access to educational opportunities for women in communities throughout the world," spoke about opportunities at school for students and girls in particular to broaden their horizons to gain a global perspective from living and learning alongside students from different cultures and traditions.



Joseph Loftin, Principal, Wasatch Academy, Mount Pleasant, Utah
“Access to Educational Opportunities for Women in Communities Throughout the World,” Panel Session on Education of Women & Children

As part of the activities of the conference I was also responsible for creating and using the conference social media outlets to contribute to the campaign organized by the Mountain Partnership for inclusion of mountain indicators among the new United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) during their adoption by the United Nations in September 25, 2015. These SDGs were built upon the Millennium Development Goals and laid a foundation for the post 2015 development agenda of the United Nations. During the sessions of the United Nations Open Working Groups on SDGs in 2013-2014, UVU students were able to contribute to the joint efforts of MP members to ensure that the three mountain-related targets have been included among the draft of SDGs.

Starting at the beginning of June 2015 through the moment when United Nations Sustainable Development Summit 2015 in September 25-27, 2015 adopted new SDGs, we attempted to reach out to numerous mountain related governments, organizations, individuals, and well-known mountain climbers. For that purpose I created an additional social media link – “Keep Mountains in the SDGs.” I contacted also the leaders of mountain nations and their Permanent Representatives to the United Nations urging them to advocate for keeping mountain indicators among the SDGs during the

intergovernmental negotiations on the outcome of the document. I kept on pushing this very important agenda and urging for support, spreading this message because all of us, members of the UIMF, wanted to make a significant impact. Finally, when the three mountain indicators were adopted among the SDGs, it gave to us, and myself, satisfaction in knowing that we have fulfilled our obligation.

Meanwhile, our social media network grew significantly. I was able to attract more than 400 people to join our social media network. Our Facebook pages, titled: “Women of the Mountains,” and “Mountains Matter” was followed by more than 200 people, and more than 160 people joined our “Utah International Mountain Forum” pages. Alongside Facebook, I administered a “Women of the Mountains” LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter accounts and a Flickr profile where I have uploaded all of our photos.

An additional item on the conference agenda was also to contribute to the social campaign organized by F.A.O.-U.N. and the Mountain Partnership in gathering signatures to support petition “UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: Ensure that the impact of climate change on Mountain Peoples and Ecosystems is fully addressed in the UNFCCC COP21 new climate deal.” We are proud that through efforts of our students and partners in many part of the global mountainous world, including in Kyrgyzstan, our team was able to mobilize more than 1,000 signatures from 6,283 gathered in total as a result of this campaign.

My social media liaison work kept me busy all the time, as there was always something to be done. No matter how many invitation letters I had sent or how many posts I had made, I felt like something extra could, and probably should be done. It was very interesting and enriching experience, allowing to me to network with so many institutions and people around the world and build personal relationships along with promoting very important for me mountain cause. I believe that coming from Bulgaria, a country where the mountains play a very important role in the lives of the people, has allowed me to understand in a more intimate way exactly how the WOMC demonstrates its importance for the people of my country to work together with mountain communities in North America and globally. Frankly speaking, during the preparations to the conference, I had completely abandoned my school work, as I saw the fruits of our labor beginning to take root.

I was very happy to be part of the student team which successfully hosted the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference in Orem UT on October 7-9, 2015. Many of my colleagues started preparation to the conference one year in advance when traditional organizers of the WOMCs, Utah Valley University and the Kyrgyz National Centre for Development of Mountain Regions, decided that students from the State of Utah and UIMF members in particular will be able to play role of major hosts of the 2015 WOMC. UIMF was created in 2011 and as a coalition of several student clubs at UVU gained recognition since that time on local and international levels for contribution to the promotion of the United Nations SMD agenda. The Fourth International Women of the Mountains conference continued the traditions set during the previous International Women of the Mountains Conferences hosted in Orem, Utah in 2007, 2011 and in Puno, Peru in 2012 in promotion of gender and SMD agendas of the United Nations and in strengthening the involvement of North American mountain communities with the MP. The conference gathered a majority of the MP members from North America in addition to representatives of the U.N., U.S. State Department, envoys from mountain nation accredited to the U.N. and to the U.S., experts and scholars on gender issues from the Rocky Mountain region and abroad.



H.E. Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations and Yanko Dzhukev during the conference at Utah Valley University

I had a valuable and enriching experience during the Conference. While being in Europe for the summer, I flew back to Utah to be there for the

conference and to see that all the hard work that we had invested during entire year come about. We had more than 120 distinguished guests from twenty mountainous countries, and I felt so happy of being a part of such a big event. And, now that I know that my contribution made a difference, I am ready to invest so much more and many more sleepless nights for the mountain cause that is completely worth it. A cause that most of the people take for granted, but not me. Advocating for sustainable mountain development has become a new passion of mine and I will continue to pursue it in all of my future endeavors in international affairs.

In closing, I would like to thank all of my colleagues that joined together for such a worthy cause. And finally, I would like to thank His Excellency Professor Baktybek Abdrisaev, for helping me reach my full potential and believe in myself.

Yanko Dzhukev, Organizing Committee, Social Media Liaison of the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference

Great Lessons of the Women of the Mountains Conference

By Thomas Hone

Thomas is from Pleasant View, Utah, and has a Masters in International Affairs & Global Enterprise from the University of Utah and a Bachelor of Political Science from Utah Valley University. Thomas currently works as the Assistant Program Coordinator for Utah Valley University. Thomas has served in a variety of roles with the Utah International Forum such as writing grants and an essay for the journal. When Thomas is not at work or at school he enjoys being outdoors, attending sporting events, reading and spending time with his wife.

My association with Women of the Mountains conference (WOMC) began a few years ago when I took a class from Professor Baktybek Abdrysaev POLS2250 “Globalization and Sustainable Mountain Development.” As part of this class, we were responsible for writing a research paper dealing with sustainable mountain development. I wrote a paper titled “Sustainable Mountain Development: State Rights vs. Federal Rights,” that was included in the first volume of the journal Youth and the Mountains, published by the History and Political Science Department of Utah Valley University in 2013 (See: https://www.uvu.edu/hps/docs/bound_book.pdf). Researching for my paper opened my eyes to not only the issues that the state of Utah was facing but issues of other nations and peoples as well.

Sadly, I took this class my final semester at Utah Valley University (UVU), and I left for graduate school. During this time while I was not a part of the WOMC organization I continued to learn about the issues facing others, especially those in developing mountainous nations. In addition, I had multiple opportunities to improve my writing skills. This served me well, for soon after I graduated from the University of Utah with a Masters in International Affairs and Global Enterprise, I began working at the Center for Constitutional Studies at UVU.

It was there I became once more involved in the WOMC organization when I agreed to join a student organizing committee led by the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU. My primary duty was helping secure funding for the upcoming event by

writing proposals for a number of grants. This experience was new to me. I had written countless papers but none like this. It was a great opportunity to be taught and learn a new skill in applying for grants and learning how the system works.



(L to R) I am with Tony Medina, VP for Logistics and Protocol during the WOMC

Through writing the grants, I came see the importance of the WOMC organization in a light I had not known before; as a grass-roots forum focused on the promotion of the United Nations gender and sustainable mountain development agendas, gathered by UVU students, faculty and local communities in the State of Utah with support from many like-minded institutions in the Rocky Mountain region. I presented to the committees handling grants the role the WOMC plays not only in the international community, but in our local community as well. I showed this through the idea that the faces and languages may vary, but the issues that most face are the same.

It was a great opportunity, and my activities were part of a joint effort in an organizing committee focused on raising funds for the conference. The committee included Jenny Starley, who was responsible for media and fundraising, and Kamaile Harris, who successfully organized a silent auction in Salt Lake City to raise funds benefitting the conference.

My task was to find funds that would allow WOMC to cover trips for six women-entrepreneurs from different mountain nations (two from Africa, two from Asia and two from Latin America). I, primarily, approached

funding institutions in the state of Utah and at UVU as well. I know that my other colleagues had applied for several grants before but experienced some setbacks. When we remembered the famous saying of Winston Churchill “Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm,” I was full of enthusiasm to try again. I prepared and submitted grant proposals for the GEL Seed Grant)--handled by the Office of Engaged Learning at UVU--and ELLA Grant which is handled by College of Humanities and Social Sciences at UVU.

While our proposal for GEL Seed Grant was rejected, I am grateful that my efforts in writing the ELLA grant were able to help fund a major international conference hosted by UVU students for the first time under the umbrella of the United Nations-affiliated Mountain Partnership. I was glad that ELLA committee recognized all hard work done by UVU students. They made the following decision: “The ELLA committee finds that support for this project is warranted due to the important experience the student participants gain in planning the Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC) and contributing to developing a protocol for future meetings of the conference, one which serves an important academic community with a humanitarian mission and in which UVU plays an increasingly important role internationally. The money requested is to pay the expense of bringing one of six women entrepreneur participants to the conference. Given that the . . . conference planning has generated a significant portion of its funding from a variety of sources far exceeding what is requested, and given that the student participants’ efforts in planning the conference would be diminished by losing one of the conference luminaries, the committee recommends funding of the full amount requested.”

As part of my responsibility, I also helped to organize the presentation from Pauline Zvonkovic, Senior Management Analyst at United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. She made two special presentations about writing grants and shared her experiences in helping fund various projects and initiatives for local communities in the number of states of the Rocky Mountains region.



Judge Griffith (C) with UVU Students at the Center for Constitutional Studies.

In addition to writing grants, I acted as liaison between the Center for Constitutional Studies and the WOMC organization. WOMC invited Susan Griffith, wife of Judge Griffith a federal judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, to make a keynote presentation about her life and ability to balance family, her own role as mother and grandmother with official duties of being a wife of a high level official of the United States. Knowing that Susan Griffith would be accompanied by her husband during the WOMC, I helped to organize a sit down with Judge Griffith and his wife Susan Griffith at the Center for Constitutional Studies at UVU. The meeting served as an opportunity for the UVU students, who received special scholarship named as Wood Assistants to not only learn more about Constitutional law and the appellate process but look at what takes place behind the closed doors of the judicial system. Judge Griffith spoke of the desire that the Washington DC appellate court has to not become partisan because of the need to stay focused on what the law is and not what public opinion wants. This is necessary for a judicial system to remain relevant and useful in a free society. In addition, Judge Griffith shared some practical experiences and recommendations with students and was very open and candid about the amount of time and research an appellate court judge must do for each case and the necessity of having a united court rather than a divided court.

Along with the insights of the judicial system, we were also treated to hear-

ing from him and his wife Susan on the struggles and benefits of raising a family when one spouse has such a demanding and stressful career. Their insights showed that it takes a team to be successful in life and in a family each member is equally important to the success of that family.

This Conference was such a great success because of the amazing work done by so many students who were able to work as one strong and united team. It also gave me the opportunity to work closely with my wife, Molly Hone, who has such a passion for the topics that were discussed during this conference. This conference showed me that there is still work that needs to be done in order to continue to improve the lives of others, and by working together, we can make it happen.

Handling Protocol for the Women of the Mountains Conference

By Parker Nielsen, Head of Protocol, 2015 WOMC organizing committee.

Parker Nielsen is a Political Science and International Relations major at Utah Valley University. He is working towards a career with the State Department with the hopes of doing diplomacy work around the world. He grew up in Okinawa Japan and spent time in Italy and Malta. He speaks Italian, Maltese, and some Japanese. He has attended university in Okinawa, Hawaii, and Utah. He worked as the Head of Protocol for the Fourth International Women in the Mountains Conference.

When I first decided to work with the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC), I did not anticipate the amazing opportunities and experiences that awaited me. I had recently transferred back to Utah Valley University (UVU), and, as I was walking to class one afternoon, I saw a poster advertising an opportunity to work with the organizing committee that was to prepare and host the conference at UVU on October 7-9, 2015. The preparations had started a year prior, so I joined the team later than most. However, the four months that I helped leading up to the conference were some of the most crucial.

Since I was interested in working with the US State Department, Tony Medina, the Vice President of Logistics and Protocol, and Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev, the advisor for the conference, suggested that I help with the protocol of the conference. My job was the Head of Protocol. I was to supervise the work of twelve students. We were responsible for particular VIP guests from the United States and abroad. I was grateful and humbled that they would trust me with this assignment.

It was my responsibility to follow up on invitations that had previously been sent, and to prepare and send additional invitations to federal officials and foreign diplomats from the United Nations, United States, and experts from overseas. Here, I express my sincere appreciations to Dr. Rusty Butler, Associate Vice President for International Affairs and Diplomacy at UVU. He established a wonderful tradition of bringing ambassadors of different counties from the United Nations and the United States to present at UVU regarding their nations. He is also the coordinator for

the Mountain Partnership (MP) under the Food and Agriculture of the United Nations (FAOUN) at UVU. He coordinates the programs with a focus on sustainable mountain development (SMD) agenda of the United Nations since 2006 when UVU joined the MP.

Dr. Butler and his deputy, Amy Barnett, contributed to the WOMC by covering trips for some of the VIP guests and allowing us with opportunities to host the VIP guests from the moment of their arrival to the Salt Lake City airport until their departure at the end of the conference.

First, I worked with the Ambassador Extradorinary and Plenipotentiary of Tukmenistan to the United States, H.E. Dr. Meret Orazov. He had responded that he would be able to attend and present at the conference. Ambassador Orazov has participated in the WOMC since 2007. It was a great experience to work with the envoy from Turkmenistan. The presentation on his country included the initiatives they are currently undertaking to continue sustainable development for women and children. He was supportive of all student's efforts and initiatives.

In order to invite Ambassador Simona-Mirela Miculescu, I contacted Ms. Mihaela Stamate, assistant to the chief of the Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations. Romania, at the United Nations, worked hard to further the SMD agenda, particularly for women and children. They have coordinated the efforts of several mountain nations to have mountain indicators included among the sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the United Nations during general discussion in 2013-14.

Mihaela informed me that Ambassador Miculescu finished her tenure and returned to Romania. I prepared and sent an invitation from the organizing committee to the newly appointed Romanian envoy to the United Nation, His Excellency Dr. Ion Jinga and his wife, Daniella Jinga. He accepted the invitation. He was a cheerful person, encouraging students and contributing to the success of the conference, before and after. The ambassador emphasized the commitment of Romania to promote gender equality in his presentation and in his Op-Ed published in the Huffington Post.



Parker Nielsen with Ambassador of Romania, H.E. Dr. Ion Jinga

I also worked with several other United Nations mountain countries: Lesotho, Argentina, Nepal, Bhutan, and Azerbaijan. I invited their top envoys to attend the conference. Of all of these, only Ambassador Kelebene Maope of Lesotho, and H.E. Elin Suleymanov, Ambassador of Azerbaijan, responded. They, regrettably, would not be able to attend. The other nations did not respond to our invitations or attempts at following up. It was a great experience developing contacts and working with embassies and international dignitaries regardless of the response we received.

Special attention was given to providing protocol and logistics to the representative of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS) based in Rome, Italy. It was one of the main institutions providing support to our conference. The Secretariat sent Mia Rowan to UVU. She is a communication specialist at the MPS. As such, she had the responsibility to conduct several meetings with the MP members present for the current projects the MP was undertaking. She also oversaw the plenary session where the document was finalized for presentation to the United Nations. She worked to help the students accomplish these tasks and to ensure that the conference was a success. It was a pleasure for me to work so close with her. I learned many lessons in networking, presenting, and protocol that I will use in my professional life.

From my interaction with UNWomen I gained important experience. During the second Women of the Mountain conference in 2011, the head of the UNWomen, Michelle Bachelet, set participants of the conference a letter. As future leaders of the post-2015 agenda, conference planners

sought UNWomen's participation to share with them the success of promoting the United Nations gender agenda in North America. The organizing committee sent several invitations to the UNWomen one year prior to the even, offering to cover the expenses of the UNWomen representative.



Mia Rowan and Parker Nielsen

I attempted to get a representative from UNWomen for the conference, but gave up after several months. The day before the conference I heard that they would not be able to send a representative. The UNWomen were busy co-hosting, with China, the “Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: A commitment to action,” one week prior our conference. Consequently, we didn’t receive correspondence with official greetings. We did, however, get participation from the Utah chapter of the UNWomen. In the future, we hope to have representatives from the UNWomen in New York.

I was also able to work with several high-level dignitaries from the United States. I had the pleasure of introducing Irene Marr, the Senior Policy Advisor for Europe and Central Asia, in the United States Secretary of State’s Office for Global Women’s Issues. She was helpful as she participated in almost every panel and session of the conference. She informed us that her office and the state department were making every effort to ensure that women’s issue were addressed at the highest level possible. As I intend to work for the State Department I had the opportunity to question her about working for the State Department. She was encouraging and helpful as I asked what I could do to prepare. I am grateful for our contact and her aid with the conference.



(L to R): Yankila Sherpa, Nepal; Parker Nielsen; Irene Marr, State Department

In addition to working with international VIP-guests and ambassadors, I had the opportunity to work with other international dignitaries. I sent them official invitations to the conference, helped prepare travel plans and itineraries, and worked with US embassies to get visas approved so the guests could attend the conference. I coordinated the efforts of our team to arrange trips to Orem, Utah for Dian Lucia Chaman Salas, (Peru), Yunita Kopjanski (Indonesia), Bernice Frimpong Ankrah (Ghana), Gulshan Tynystanova and Mira Attokurova (Kyrgyzstan), Manzura Makhkamova (Tajikistan), Yankila Sherpa (Nepal), and others. Yankila is the former Minister of tourism of Nepal. She works to advance sustainability and development for women and children.

After working with visa issues, international guests, dignitaries, and US representative I put together a team of students responsible for protocol during the conference. Students volunteered to help pick people up from the airport, escort guests, and be on hand to help with any other issues that could arise from a conference of this size. Keeping the student's interests and availability in mind, I paired each student with a guest. I prepared a packet with itineraries, hotel information, conference schedules, and the appropriate protocol for greeting and working with people from different cultures and backgrounds.

I paired Matt and Emily Murdoch with Ambassador Jinga and his wife. Matt and Emily did an excellent job accompanying them. The ambassador gave them the highest praise for their efforts. Johnny Warren worked with Irene Marr from the State Department. He went above and beyond what was asked of him. Samantha Hawkins and Andrew Browne worked

with Yankila Sherpa from Nepal. They picked her up from the airport and met every need that she had. Trevor Williams escorted Mia Rowan from the MPS. She worked hard to help her accomplish all the goals and tasks that Mia had planned during the conference. Christian Jensen worked with Yunita Kopjanski from Indonesia. He also received high praise for helping Yunita with everything she needed during the conference.

Andre Jones, Ryan Belliston and Andrei Pylnikov accompanied Gulshan Tynystanova and Mira Attokurova from Kyrgyzstan. Andre Jones, who speaks Russian, and Andrei Pylnikov, who is from Russia, helped translate for Gulshan and Mira during the conference. Ryan demonstrated flexibility as he helped multiple VIP guests. Jason Linde accompanies the Ambassador of Turkmenistan, H.E. Dr. Meret Orazov. He helped make the Ambassador's stay in Utah pleasant while maintain school, work, and family. Michael Scott Montrose was paired with Vicki Fenwick-Judy from the Mountain Institute. Michael met every need that Vicky had. When met with an issue he approached it head.

Finally, Vinicius "Vinny" Pacheco accompanied Alexey Semyonov, President of the Andrei Sakharov Foundation. Since Alexey had limited time he left to attend work matters after his presentation. Vinicius sacrificed much, being on call to aid in any action needed, working tirelessly to help in every way with the conference. His contributions were invaluable, as well as those of Travis Webb, Drew Swainston, and Chase Marstella, who exceeded expectations and helped more than was asked of them. The team of individuals deserve the highest acknowledgements for their contributions.

The conference was a success because of the students and faculty. Dr. David Connelly, Chair of the History and Political Science Department, ensured that the student in the department had the opportunities and resources they need to succeed globally in their chosen field. The department provided an office for the organizing committee with all the equipment and logistics necessary for the conference. Students continue to use it as the headquarters for the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at UVU.

Dr. Connelly provided funds to cover some expenses during the conference and helped to raise additional fund when it was necessary. He made an almost unlimited contribution from the department which included,

printing, copying agendas, materials, and sending invitations. He has supported the SMD since the time he arrived at UVU. As a scholar he has an interest in sustainability and rural development.

Kimberly Williamson, Dr. Connelly's administrative assistant, was instrumental in the success of the conference. She printed and prepared all the necessary documents, supported and helped students on the organizing committee with scheduling, contacting, reimbursing, and parking. She taught the students how to make the reservations for the VIP guests and coordinated travel to and from the airport. She also helped reimburse the VIP guests and the students who traveled to and from the airport. This was done on top of her normal responsibilities within the department.

Baktybek Abdrisay, lecturer at UVU and former Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan, provided opportunities for students to participate in events on an international level. He made sure they are recognized for their efforts. He refers to them, not as students, but as colleagues, and trusts them with responsibilities. He works hard to ensure that his students are prepared for the future. Tony Medina, VP of Logistics and Protocol, taught us important new skills. While attending class and dealing with normal family responsibilities, he worked nonstop before and during the conference. He prepared the rooms we needed, the food we ate, and more. He has a friendly and encouraging attitude that people love to be around. He helps those around him accomplish great things.

Deann Torsak, Executive Secretary of the conference, was an incredible help. She managed every aspect of the conference including, panels, scheduling, and contacting and working with everyone involved. I learned many things and met many wonderful people from working at the conference. It was a difficult and stressful experience, but also one of the most fulfilling and rewarding. I am a better person because of my involvement in the conference. I am better prepared to face the challenges of the world.

The Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference is not the last step. There is more to be done to promote sustainable development in mountain regions. Women and children around the world suffer for many reasons, but by working together across international borders, solutions can be found. That was the purpose of the conference, and because of everyone involved, we have taken a big step in the right direction.



The Ambassador

New York, 13 October 2015

Dear Mr. Nielsen, Dear Parker,

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank you for inviting me to the Utah Valley University with the occasion of the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference.

It was an honor for me to be among the speakers of this event and to participate in the fruitful subsequent discussions. The ideas exchanged during the Fourth International Women of the Mountains (IWM) conference are a good starting point for further initiatives in this respect on a global scale.

I would also like to reiterate Romania's commitment regarding the timely resolution of all gender-related issues and of a complete empowerment of women in our society on a global scale.

The policies adopted by Romania within the HeForShe framework are witnessing our desire to correct any gender-related disequilibrium and to continue our way towards full gender equality.

This initiative was not only a celebration of the progresses achieved in this field, but also an occasion for professionals and experts to cooperate for the improvement of the global situation.

I hope this Event it was fruitful and successful for all participants, as it was for me.

Please accept, dear Mr. Nielsen, the assurances of my highest consideration.

with best wishes,

Dr. Ion Jinga

*Mr. Parker Nielsen
Head of Protocol
Organizing Committee
The Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference
Utah International Mountain Forum*

Thank you letter from Ambassador of Romania, Dr. Ion Jinga, to the United Nations

My Experience at the Women of the Mountains Conference

By Trevor Williams

Trevor is from Salem, Utah. He is currently a senior at Utah Valley University majoring in Integrated Studies. Trevor helped with the Women of the Mountains by providing protocol for the Mia Rowan, United Nations Mountain Partnership Secretariat representative. He also contributed to the campaign at Utah Valley University to collect signatures for including mountain issue in the agenda of the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris.

I recently had the opportunity to participate in the Women of the Mountains conference hosted by Utah Valley University students in Orem Utah on October 7-9, 2015. My assignment was to provide a protocol for Mia Rowan, representative of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat and F.A.O. of the United Nations, during the conference and around the campus of UVU.

Mia had flown in directly from Rome on October 6, 2015. Her flight was delayed and as person responsible for her protocol, I waited for her at Salt Lake City airport that day until 11:00 pm. I immediately recognized her when she appeared at the baggage zone thanks to the photographs I can collect prior. She was a very short lady, friendly and very energetic, despite the long flight. I drove her to the hotel in Orem which is just 50 minutes south of Salt Lake City.

The Mountain Partnership is a “United Nations voluntary alliance of partners dedicated to improving the lives of mountain peoples and protecting mountain environments around the world.” It was founded in 2002 and has been meeting the challenges and issues that mountainous regions have been fronting. Drawing from a variety of resources, the Mountain Partnership is currently working with “more than 250 governments, intergovernmental organizations, major groups (e.g. civil society, NGOs and the private sector) and subnational authorities.” Mia also works with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations which focuses on the “eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. Needless to say, her experience was very much needed and appreciated during the

conference.

We started out by going to meetings immediately after Mia's accommodation at the hotel. She was very interested in meeting many participants of the conference during the social event in the evening of October 6, 2015: women entrepreneurs from Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Tajikistan, and Peru greeted her and socialized with her.

Mia met with the panelists of the Mountain Partnership from North America panel that she was going to head. Members shared ideas about what would be good key points to hit and how everyone could contribute something special from their uniquely different positions that were all dedicated to the same cause. After that she went to multiple meetings, panels and presentations and I followed her when it was necessary. By seeing everyone participate it was easy to note that all of the participants had put much thought and effort into their valuable contributions. It was a great opportunity for all those present at the conference to network and meet new people from all around the world committed to the same purpose of helping people living in the mountains and their families and children.

In between the items on the agenda I was trying to be as helpful as possible by fulfilling trivial tasks while Mia was attending meeting. One of them was printing off and setting up a station where people could sign a petition to make certain mountain ecosystems and peoples affected by climate change are addressed in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - the 21st Conference of the Parties in Paris (UNFCCC COP21). Anyone can sign it that goes on to the web-site hosted at change.org or goes to the Mountain Partnership's Facebook page and follows the link. I also was able to help with one of Mia's presentations in running her power point while she spoke.

Overall, it was a great experience. I never had imagined that this year, as a college student, I would be able to work with dignitaries and high ranking officials around the world in a cause such as this. It was a great to become more familiar the process of how these international conventions and conferences work and what it actually takes to run them while they are happening.

Trevor Williams, UVU student



Mia Rowan speaks at the conference and I help her with power point presentation

Hosting Ambassador of Romania to the United Nations, H.E. Ion Jinga & Mrs. Jinga for the Women of the Mountains Conference

By Matt Murdoch

Matt Murdoch was born and raised in Alpine, Utah. He spent several years living in Portland, Oregon and Argentina. Matt is in his senior year at Utah Valley University (UVU) and will graduate with a degree in Political Science in April 2016. Matt plans to go to law school and pursue JD/MBA degrees beginning in the fall of 2017. In the summer of 2014 Matt completed an internship in Washington DC where he worked on the Senate Judiciary Committee for Senator Orin Hatch (UT-R). Matt currently dedicates much of his time as the President of the Pre-Law Club at UVU, a Board Member of the Foreign Relations Club, as a Cub Scout Leader, and volunteering with the Women of the Mountains organization. In July 2015 Matt married Emily Costello. They currently live in Lehi, Utah.

My wife Emily, and I thoroughly enjoyed hosting Ambassador and Mrs. Ion Jinga from Romania. UVU hosted a Women of the Mountain's conference and invited the Ambassador to the United Nations and his wife to participate in the conference. While I spent most of my time at the conference with the Ambassador, my wife, Emily, spent much of her time sharing some of Utah with Mrs. Jinga. Emily said the following about her experience with the Ambassador's wife:

"Mrs. Daniela Jinga is one of the loveliest people I have ever had the privilege to spend time with. One of the first things I realized about Mrs. Jinga is how supportive she is of her husband. She has attended over fifty conferences at various universities that her husband has spoken at in the last four years! That's more than one conference per month for the last four years... Mrs. Jinga and I attended the conference for her husband's speech and the remainder of the conference on Wednesday. But first... we went on an adventure! Mrs. Jinga loves the mountains and loves farms so we went to Midway and Park City. With all the autumn colors the mountains looked particularly beautiful and Mrs. Jinga declared that our mountains look like the Highlands of Scotland. We started at the Heber Valley Milk and Artisan Cheese farm where we enjoyed samples of the cheese, jam, and fudge. We also enjoyed walking near the cows. Just south of the Heber

Valley farm is Memorial Hill from which you can see a 360-degree view of Midway and Heber. It really is a stunning view. Mrs. Jinga greatly appreciated the beauty and the opportunity she had to be away from the large cities in which the Jinga's have spent most of their time living. Memorial Hill pays tribute to all those in Wasatch County who have given their life in defense of our country from the war of 1812 to present day. Mrs. Jinga commented on the patriotism of our country that she has observed and how impressed she is by it. From Memorial Hill, we went by Jordanelle and a farmer's market in Park City. We had a wonderful time together and I learned much about the history of Romania. This will be an experience I will always cherish. Mrs. Jinga and I have determined to keep in touch, she and Ambassador Jinga have invited Matt and I to visit them in New York City as well as in Romania when they move back."



(L to R) Mrs. Daniela Jinga and my wife Emily Murdoch at Memorial Hill

My wife and I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to escort and shadow Ambassador Jinga. The Ambassador is one of the most intelligent of men I have ever had the pleasure of getting to know. I have no doubt that Romania is well represented in the United Nations. It was a remarkable experience to learn from his experience and vast knowledge of history, diplomacy, law, and a variety of subjects that greatly interest me. It is my hope that Ambassador Jinga and his wife sincerely enjoyed their time here in Utah. I believe that they did. I hope that they will have another opportunity to return to Utah Valley University.

UVU did a tremendous job reaching out to foreign dignitaries like Ambassador Jinga. Each year the university is successfully integrating such dignitaries into various presentations, conferences, and class programs. Here, I highlight a special role in that area of Dr. Rusty Butler, Associate Vice

President for International Affairs and Diplomacy at UVU. He and his colleagues at the office of international Affairs and Diplomacy, like Amy Barnett, brought diplomats to UVU from the United Nations in New York in addition to Ambassadors accredited to the United States in Washington, D.C. As a result, UVU students have great opportunities both to host foreign dignitaries at UVU campus and also to visit diplomatic missions in New York during sessions of the United Nations General Assembly.

As a student, I am grateful for this sort of experience. It has greatly enhanced my education here at UVU. This sort of engaged learning has helped sparked my interest in the Foreign Service. I hope that other students have an opportunity to enjoy similar experiences.



(L to R) Myself, my wife Emily Murdoch, Mrs. Daniela Jinga, and her husband Romanian Ambassador Ion Jinga

Hosting Guest from Nepal during Women of the Mountains Conference

By Aaron Smith

Aaron is from Vernal, Utah. Currently he is a sophomore at Utah Valley University and a member of the organizing committee of the Women of the Mountains Conference. Apart from his full time studies he is currently occupied with an internship at United Way of Utah County. When he's not at school or work he enjoys playing soccer, drawing, and practicing the guitar.



Yankila Sherpa from Nepal during her presentation at the conference

I had the privilege to participate in the fourth international Women of the Mountains Conference that was held at UVU on October 7–9, 2015. During the conference, many speakers provided insight on the current situation of women living in the mountainous regions of their respective countries.

I was honored to be able to accompany and help one such speaker named Yankila Sherpa. She is from Nepal and is a great example of the fortitude and resilience of the women that live in that rugged part of the world. She was a State Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation State and is currently President of a company called Snow Leopard Trek. When I first met her she wanted to do a quick run through of her speech before her actual presentation. We found a room and set to work on making sure that

her PowerPoint would go smoothly during her presentation. By the time she finished with her brief run through it was already time for the other speakers to begin. After listening to several interesting presentations we headed off to the library where Yankila would give her presentation.

We parted ways for a while as I went upstairs to set up her PowerPoint and ensure that everything was ready. Then we met up again and went up to the presentation room. Yankila was the second person to present and it went well. I enjoyed learning about the situation of the women in Nepal and about the organizations that were involved in helping them. The only downside was that the conference was a bit behind schedule so Yankila was not able to go over everything she had prepared. I could tell that she was a bit upset at not being able to finish it because she kept reminding me that she had not been able to do so, and she wished they wouldn't have rushed her through it.

We watched the other presenters and then headed down for lunch. It was delicious and a great treat to see everyone that had participated in the conference in one place. I learned a lot that day, but the part I enjoyed most was that I was able to start a new friendship with a great person from another part of the world. Before parting ways, she gave me a poster of Mount Everest, and a necklace made in Nepal for my mother. Yankila was so sweet to me and I will never forget her. I hope I will have the chance to see her again someday.



Yankila Sherpa and me during lunch

Speaking Russian in the Mountains

By Andre Jones

Currently a student at Utah Valley University (UVU), Andre is studying International Relations within Political Science. As a sophomore, he is the Fine Arts Chair of UVU where he directs events for the 32,000 students on campus. Whenever he isn't doing school work, he is in his office helping students as part of the Student Counsel. In the spring, Andre returned from Russia; he was part of a volunteer program for children learning English while simultaneously taking Russian classes. After becoming fluent in Russian, Andre hopes to pursue an internship at the State Department followed by a master's degree at the University of Utah. In his free time, you can catch him participating in Interfaith endeavors on campus, practicing dancing in the studio, and catching up on sleep.

During the last ten years, the United Nations has made leaps and bounds in its efforts to help end discrimination against women and girls. Created in 2010, UNWomen leads this effort in the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. A strong voice from Utah Valley University's 4th annual Women of the Mountains Conference is being heard around the world declaring the suffering of women and children around the world and calling for action.

To be honest with you, I knew little about advocating gender equality, human rights, and sustainable development before this conference. I am sure many of my fellow students were as naïve as I.



Gulshan Tynystanova, Yankila Sherpa, and Mira Attokurova during the Conference

Thanks to my knowledge of Russian, I was able to translate for two women delegates from Kyrgyzstan. Mrs. Tynystanova and Mira Attokurova traveled from Central Asia to participate at the Business Fair and to establish partnerships with local tourist companies from the State of Utah. I was intrigued by their comments as we drove to the conference at Utah Valley University. Gulshan Tynystanova remarked that our region was beautiful, like theirs back home: “Does everyone here smile?” Mrs. Tynystanova asked. The next day, I watched her presentation describing the struggle of women and children in her mountainous homeland. Was there anything that could be done for her country or others like it?



Mira Attokurova and I during the coffee break

Fellow students and I learned about Kyrgyzstan from Mrs. Tynystanova and her peer Mira Attokurova in an educated and engaging atmosphere. What an incredible experience it was to enable students whom desired to be involved in the world! Engaging in such relationships with inspirational women from other countries will be a never-ending benefit in our journey. We learned first-hand what was happening overseas, and what we could do about it.



Yoga Breakout Session during Business Fair on October 9, 2015

On the last day of the conference, the students and delegates went to work on a service project hosted by the Habitat for Humanity branch in Utah county. This showed that the Women of the Mountains movement wasn't just talk, but action. The value of providing these delegates with first-hand experiences is something the students would never trade. Initiatives were set in motion, petitions were signed, and the Women of the Mountains are one step closer to having sustainable development and greater opportunities.

My Engaged Learning Experience During the Women of the Mountains Conference

By Danny Davis

Danny has been a Student at Utah Valley University for the last 3 years. Originally from California, Danny is passionate about the effects of Climate change. During his time at UVU, Danny's main subject of study has been Political Science with an emphasis in International Relations. Danny considers informing pupils about the effects of climate change as his greatest work at Utah Valley University. While digital media and photography are Danny's specialty, he also enjoys writing about events that help promote understanding. After Danny graduates from Utah Valley University next spring, he will be attending law school to help disenfranchised peoples. Danny Davis, member of the organizing committee, Women of the Mountains Conference.

A lot of amazing and accomplished women, who represent mountain nations from different parts of the world, graced the campus of Utah Valley University (UVU) during the fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC). The WOMC is under the umbrella of the United Nations Mountain Partnership located in Rome, Italy. Our university hosted the WOMC on October 7–9, 2015 and I was fortunate to be a part of the student organizing committee and contribute to the success of the conference. Our team was very happy because this was the first time we were able to host this high level international conference entirely through student efforts. We were also glad we could raise awareness about important gender issues and challenges concerning sustainable development for mountain communities among so many people in Utah and the Rocky Mountain region. WOMC presented a great opportunity to network and get together with many dignitaries, diplomats, officials, experts and scholars from a variety of local, regional, and international institutions. These amazing people from all around the globe had much to teach us.

During the conference I was part of a media team and I worked closely with Jenny Starley, Public Resources, and Fundraising in the WOMC organizing committee. I was in touch with local newspapers and I contacted the Daily Herald, providing their editors with media kit and information regarding the conference.



(L to R): Yankila Sherpa, President, Snow Leopard Trek, Nepal, Mia Rowan, Communications and Advocacy Officer, Mountain Partnership, F.A.O-U.N. and Deann Torsak, Executive Secretary, WOMC during the conference

I am also a member of Utah Valley University Multicultural Student Council (UVU MSC), which is an organization committed to helping historically marginalized groups. Because of my responsibilities with UVU MSC, I was able to photograph the participants who attended different events during the conference. I was excited that many of my photos were later posted on Instagram, Facebook pages, and Flickr pages of the WOMC and were shared later on similar pages within the Mountain Partnership Secretariat in Rome, Italy.

Many women-conference participants brought a perspective to this campus that I feel has been missing. They showed how each individual can make a difference. My interaction with Yankila Sherpa from Nepal especially provided me with a sense of charm and put me in touch with the importance of the individual that had previously been missing. There were many distinguished women at the conference who had accomplished great things, but she helped UVU students feel like fellow colleagues.

Many men also came and spoke at the conference and added to what the women shared. The whole conference was a major success in terms of information sharing. A great education was given about how important it is for all of us to help women and communities of mountain regions sustain themselves and contribute to the economic success and prosperity of their nations. Students and faculty of UVU certainly benefitted from the ap-

pearance of all guests and speakers.



(L to R): Uday Teki, Director of Special Projects, Pioneer Park Coalition, Salt Lake City, and Danny Davis during the Conference

I personally benefited from the conference; facilitation was a great form of education. I was able to help some of the guests around campus and provide for many of their needs. I was also able to advance my knowledge of professional interaction and get acquainted with many important experts in gender and sustainable development issues, sharing the amazing thoughts and ideas that they brought. Personally, this was the highlight of my time at UVU thus far in the experiences I've had here.

Lessons from Moderating the Heritage Panel, Women of the Mountains Conference 2015

By Megan Raines

Megan Raines is studying Political Science and Chinese. She enjoys teaching voice, blogging, and raising her family of ten children.

In October 7-9, 2015, students-members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University hosted the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference, under the United Nations Mountain Partnership. It was the first time that students were given charge to organize the event and it was very exciting for us all.

I felt honored to be invited during summer 2015 to join student organizing committee and to moderate for the Heritage and Family Values Panel of the conference. Frankly speaking, as a single parent of ten children and full-time student at UVU, at the beginning I was afraid that I wouldn't be effective or helpful with the conference, time being a major concern for me. However my conversations with other members of the committee and advisors allowed me to put aside my concerns and doubts. I am so grateful to them for their understanding support and encouragement. It was because of them that I was able to contribute my energy, thoughts and ideas to the WOMC agenda and activities.



(L to R): Second row – Dr. Cholpon Akmataliyeva, Faculty Adviser for the Conference;
First Row: Carolina Allen, founder, Big Ocean Women and Megan Raines during prepa-

My responsibilities were focused on gaining attention and participation at my panel from scholars, experts, women leaders in the State of Utah and beyond its borders. I spent a lot of time sending out a call for papers for the conference to all interested institutions and individuals via social media and personal contacts. Thanks to our meetings with other student organizers and with Deann Torsak, Executive Secretary of the Conference during the months ahead of the conference I learned how to work with correspondence, how to process abstracts, and publish the final papers of the participants, among other things. It was great a experience for me and gave me the opportunity learn from their organizational skills, hard work, and persistence. Advising professors also dedicated time and energy to get to know the students and offer support, suggestions, and encouragement.

I was thrilled during the preparatory stage of the conference to get acquainted with many prominent experts and scholars on women issues, leaders of NGOs from our state and other parts of the North America and overseas. Several NGOs, whom I was able to contact have accomplished many important projects and initiatives with focus on gender equality or other gender issues and even for example attended the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW59) at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 9 to 20 March 2015.



Wendy Jyang, Chairperson, Utah China Friendship Improvement Sharing Hands Development & Commerce, presents at the panel

Meeting the different panelists and becoming familiar with their fascinating life stories, and the unique experiences that they brought to share with our panel was the highlight of my involvement. As moderator of our panel on Heritage and Family Values, I introduced Wendy Jyang, who spoke to us about her agenda as the founder of the NGO registered under the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). She shared her passion for strengthening families and honoring the roles of mothers as an inroad to eliminating poverty globally, but particularly in China. Carolina Allen, founder Big Ocean Women an organization which has also brought its agenda before the CSW59 at United Nations headquarters, followed Ms. Jyang with a philosophical explanation of the Big Ocean Women's goals to preserve and protect motherhood and the underpinnings of maternal-eco-cultural feminist movement. Ms. Allen explained how the ocean became a symbol to her of the quiet but persistent influence that a woman can have on her environment as she observed a wave gently, but repeatedly, wash up against a rock and begin to change its shape. Both women stressed the importance of the individual.

UVU Professor Laura Hamblin followed with an introduction to her website Iraqi Women Refugees: An Oral History Project, which offers a look into the traumatizing life experiences of Iraqi Women. Dr. Steve Emerman from UVU concluded the panel with a fascinating explanation of his studies pertaining to lichen growth on sacred Mani walls in Nepal. His presentation partly focused on the way that local men and women differed in their interpretation of how and whether or not the walls were cleaned. Professor Emerman also explained how the lichen growth helped date historical events like landslides in Nepal.

All presenters also made some suggestions and recommendations based on their presentations, which I summarized and later submitted to the secretariat in order to include it in the official documents of the conference. As the session concluded I felt excited about what we had experienced in the two hours we had together. The panelists each took us on a unique journey to a new part of the world: from China, to the beach in Hawaii, to streets of Iraq, and the mountains of Nepal.

I felt the entire conference was like that; a chance to explore the globe and an opportunity to meet new women-friends from around the world. It was also a great opportunity for us students to contribute to the noble goal of spreading word about gender and sustainable mountain development

agendas of the United Nations among so many people in the state of Utah and Rocky Mountain region.

I am happy that I took the chance to be involved and look forward to the next Women of the Mountains Conference.

Megan Raines, moderator of the Panel on Heritage and Family Values, organizing committee of the WOMC2015

Moderating Education Panel during the Women of the Mountains Conference

by Georgina Wolfgramm

Georgina Wolfgramm, member of the organizing committee of the 2015 Women of the Mountains Conference, was born and raised in Salt Lake City Utah to immigrant parents from the Pacific Island of Tonga. She has always been interested in education, religious activities and how these two things can help society as a whole. Georgina began her university education originally interested in science and the body. She was studying Biology at the University of Utah with a desire to go to Medical school. However, a decline in her emotional health led me to find peace in religion. She decided to serve a mission in the LDS church she, was called to the Washington Spokane Mission-Spanish speaking. While serving many in the Latino community, she became very interested in policy and how to help people around her. Georgina returned home with a desire to help and serve but wasn't sure how. She decided to change her major to Political Science and was now attending Utah Valley University. With a fresh start she got involved with many classes and even a couple student involved activities. She graduated in April of 2016 and have since moved on to pursue an occupation in the legal field. She knows that the education she received at UVU propelled her into a world with many opportunities for progression and learning. Georgina has worked at Robert J Debry and Associates and will begin a new job as a paralegal with Pearson, Butler and Carson in November. She believes her life experiences and knowledge will serve as a great help to students who are studying in the political and legal fields. She believes that one of the best ways to improve society is through education.

Serving on the student organizing committee and as a moderator at the fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC) was a great experience. WOMC was gathered under the umbrella of the United Nations Mountain Partnership on October 7–9, 2015. It was hosted for the first time by students at Utah Valley University (UVU) and by Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU in particular. I was able to learn many new things, meet new people, and gain skills that could only be learned through hands-on and engaging learning.



Diana Chaman Salas from Peru presents her paper during Education panel

As a member of the organizing committee I saw much of the groundwork put into the conference. The events leading up to the conference taught me about networking and meeting new people. I was able to invite different individuals to present at the conference, as well as see how those people help to serve the people in their communities. I was also able to raise some funds for the conference. These communication skills will be a benefit to me in the future as I pursue further education and in meeting career goals.

When the conference finally arrived, I was able to play a part as a moderator on the panel for education of women and children. It was the first time I had ever moderated, but I will admit it was a lot of work. Setting up the room, making sure I had presenter bios, having electronic equipment for presenters to use, and speaking in front of a room was a challenge. However, I gained organizational skills, as well as administrative skills. I allotted time for each presenter and advised them on when it would be their turn to present and when their time was nearing its end. I felt quite intimidated talking to professors, and others-that certainly had more knowledge and experience than me, and I was able to get very good feedback as well as a deeper understanding for each of their views.

Noorani Barkat from Pakistan, who presented at Education panel, helped me to understand that it doesn't matter if you are just one individual, you can still influence and bless many lives in your community. She has helped her community in Pakistan by raising funds for building schools, serving as liaison to families who have women who would like to enter higher education, providing career counseling for women in her community, and

serving the community in small and simple ways. She is a great example of strength and courage, and one who pursues dreams for a great and pure motive, to bless the lives of those in her home country. She certainly taught me and others about using your education to positively influence the lives of others.



Noorani Barkat from Pakistan at the Habitat for Humanity site

It was also worth mentioning how Noorani was able to come to UVU and contribute to the conference. When she submitted the abstract of her presentation to the conference, the student organizing committee took into account her dedication to the helping others and service to mountain communities in multiple ways and decided to help her to come to Orem, Utah from Texas, where she is finishing her graduate studies at Texas A&M. Tony Medina, Vice President for logistics and Protocol of the organizing committee donated his SkyMiles points to cover her air travel and Deann Torsak, Executive Secretary of the conference accommodated her in her own home. As a result, it helped build one more tie with similar minded peers in one of the remote areas of South Asia.

The emphasis on the panel was obviously the importance of educating women and children. Each presenter could describe different reasons for why these things are important, but I felt an overall urgency for a few specific reasons. One of them is to help the community. Each presenter, though their opinions differed, emphasized that the more educated women and children are, the better off their communities. They are better able to use resources, gain independence, teach and learn from one another, and thrive-not just survive.

The other reason I saw the urgency for women's education are the events

that are occurring in the world. The world is progressing rapidly, and if our women and children are not being educated, those societies will fall behind the others. One of the last things I actually realized myself while listening to presentations is that the more educated women are the better they are able to help their children and families. Whether women use their education in an actual career or in the rearing of children, the knowledge they have gained will bless the lives of others as they nurture and raise knowledgeable children who will enter the society to serve and help others. The overall conference was fantastic. The skills and experiences I was able to have will serve me far into the future. I am grateful I was able to participate in many ways and for the people I was able to meet.

Gaining Experience and Promoting United Nations Issues in Utah

By Angie Jackson

Angie Jackson currently lives in Lehi, Utah. She recently graduated from Utah Valley University, with a BS in University Studies emphasis in History and Political Science. She now works for PDC International where she continues her passions in helping people and making the world a better place. Angie spends her spare time playing with her dog Bubbles, reading, and spending time with her family and friends. She is a member of the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at UVU.

The United Nations last year achieved a very important milestone in its activities and agenda when it adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a set of new indicators to measure a human progress for the next 15 years and the efforts of the nations around the world to improve living conditions for their citizens in numerous areas. Implementation of SDGs will require contribution from many people around the world, including from the young adults like me.

Utah Valley University (UVU) involves its students and alumni in different ways with the United Nations (UN) activities. Our students, for example, are active with Model UN programs. Another great opportunity for our students is engagement in advocacy of the initiatives of the UN in sustainability for mountain communities, which UVU has been a part of since 2006. As far as I know, our students and alumni have been active during the discussions of the SDGs by the United Nations since 2013.

I was thrilled to be invited to participate in the International Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC) under the auspices of the United Nations Mountain Partnership the fall of 2015. The conference was hosted by the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF) October 7–9, 2015. UIMF is a coalition of student clubs advocating mountain sustainability and promoting Utah as a model for that. UVU has hosted WOMCs since 2007. However, 2015 was the first time year the conference was organized by students only. This was considered a historical victory for the WOMC, allowing the students to recognize the struggles and everyday heartache the woman in mountainous areas face on a daily basis.

I recently graduated from UVU with my degree in History. Having grown up in the home of Rotarians, I have been able to see first-hand how much people are struggling all over the world. My father, Past District Governor of District 5420, Dean Jackson, has been heavily involved in numerous Humanitarian Projects that have highlighted the need for clean drinking water, healthy food, medical supplies, education, micro-credit lending and much more to people whom would likely die without their assistance.

My father has had a huge influence in my life and has helped shaped me to be the woman I am today. My mother Marly Jackson has also served on multiple Humanitarian projects, making sure that I accompanied her on many of those projects. Those experiences inspired me to reach beyond my small scope of understanding of the world to a greater good, knowledge and compassion for those in needs. Both of my parents have such sweet hearts. They give so much to others and honestly I think they give more time and resources to others than they keep for themselves. Because of their example to me, I always felt a deep commitment to humanitarian efforts around the world. Over the years, I have been afforded numerous opportunities to work with Rotary International on both youth and humanitarian projects locally and worldwide. As a result of those opportunities, I was given the privilege of serving as Rotary Liaison for the 2015 Women of the Mountains Conference.

In addition to strengthening relationships with the Rotarians in Utah on behalf of the Conference I was invited to be part of a group of people that identified and invited prominent women as keynote speakers. During our search I was able to contact and secure the participation of such prominent women, Susan Griffith. Ms. Griffith is the wife of Thomas B. Griffith, a federal judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. In 1995 he served as Senate Legal Counsel, the chief legal officer of the United States Senate.

To be sure I followed protocol, I armed myself with all the pertinent information I needed regarding logistics, and invitations befitting a spouse of the United States Federal Courts. As one may surmise, there were other necessary details to sort out in order to make sure that Ms. Griffith's visit to UVU and participation at the WOMC would be a success. While students were given a major role in hosting this prestigious conference, faculty and other senior colleagues were available for advice and assistance

as needed. Ms. Griffith graciously accepted the invitation and I had the honor of hosting not only her but also her husband during the Women of the Mountains 2015 Conference.

Judge Griffith remarked that this international event might have been the first time he was an attendee with the role of supportive spouse, and not a keynote speaker. It was imperative the conference highlight the unique role of women in mountainous regions and their challenges. Ms. Griffith's role in her husband's career as well as her own, was an important addition to the discussion of the conference. Ms. Griffith is an amazing woman who has brilliantly managed to juggle her own education, career and role as a wife and mother while being in the spotlight with her husband Judge Griffith. Her poise and decorum was inspiring! While being such an accomplished woman she still maintained a down to earth and approachable attitude. In addition to expertly motivating those in attendance, she also accompanied her husband at another event I was able to arrange together with Thomas Hone, another member of the organizing committee of WOMC, prior to her keynote with the UVU Center for Constitutional Studies.



(L to R): Angie Jackson, Judge Thomas Griffith, Irene Marr, Senior Adviser, State Department, Susan Griffith, Yankila Sherpa, President, Snow Leopard company from Nepal and Candra Day, President, Vista 360, from Wyoming after the keynote presentation.

Susan Griffith's Keynote was truly a highlight for me. It was awe inspiring for me to see so such an international community coming together in

unity of goal, to bring awareness of the hardship the woman in mountainous areas face daily. I cannot express how eye opening this conference has been for me and I am so honored to have been a part of it!

I am delighted to have contributed to the WOMC and I am passionate about doing even more to advocate for women and especially the promotion of women's rights among mountain communities around the world. One of the key goals SDGs adopted by the United Nations and gatherings like WOMC engage students and youth in successful implementations of SDGs and the post-2015 agenda of the UN.

2015 Women of the Mountains Conference Experiences: Drafting the Final Document

By Seth Gordon and Rex Linder

Seth Gordon is a senior undergraduate student at Utah Valley University (UVU) studying Philosophy where he is also a member of the Philosophy Club. Seth is currently engaged in an internship as an Academic Advisor for CHSS at UVU and hopes to pursue a career in higher education. Rex Linder is originally from Sandy, UT and graduated from Brighton High School in 2010. After taking two years off of school to serve as a missionary, he graduated in late 2014 with an associate of science degree from Brigham Young University-Idaho. After which he transferred to Utah Valley University. Rex is now a junior at UVU seeking to double major in political science with an emphasis on world politics and in information technology with an emphasis on computer forensics and security. He also is seeking a minor in Chinese. During his time at UVU, Rex helped establish the Secular Student Alliance Club of which he is currently president of. He also is serving as president for the UVU service club Revive Humanity. Halfway into 2015, Rex was asked to become a co-owner of the blog Broad Clarity which writes philosophical articles about current events. His hobbies include hunting, archery, music, philosophy, computers, and politics.

As students at Utah Valley University (UVU) approach graduation, we found ourselves eager to get more involved professionally and practically, so to speak. We were looking for a cause to get involved with outside the classroom that would give us not only an experience, but would also allow us to distinguish ourselves in today's competitive markets. Fortunately, we could find this opportunity in the 2015 International Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC) as members of the secretariat of the conference. WOMC was sponsored by number of international institutions including the United Nations Mountain Partnership and it took place at the UVU campus located in Orem, Utah on October 7-9, 2015. The WOMC was a true model of student engaged learning. As you may or may not know, this year's conference was facilitated by students; members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU. It was truly remarkable to watch the conference unfold, seeing the incredible things that students are capable of, and to be able to be a part of it. Our faculty, and many other prominent scholars and experts throughout

mountain communities, served as advisers guiding us students through the complex process; from raising funds to sending invitations and calls for papers, taking care of accommodation for participants, and many other things. While much effort went into the preparation and execution of the conference, it wasn't until its successful end that the greater part of our work in the conference really began.

Our job as members of the Secretariat was to draft the final document of the 2015 WOMC, compiling thoughts and ideas from the conference participants, including recommendations to the international community on gender issues. In August 2015, Deann Torsak, executive secretary of the conference, distributed the various responsibilities among the members of the Secretariat. Initially four students signed up to work on the final document of the WOMC. However, by the end of the conference only two of us from original group remained committed to do that very important job. We accomplished our task under the guidance of our advisers Dr. Butler, Associate VP for International Affairs and Diplomacy and focal point for the Mountain Partnership at UVU and Dr. Baktybek Abdrysaev, faculty in the History and Political Science Department at UVU and advisor of UIMF. We were particularly impressed and inspired by every participant's level of dedication.

Our responsibilities included many activities important for the success of the conference and for our further professional growth, such as: analyzing similar documents, methodologies, and procedures adopted by other international forums. To achieve a high level of professionalism in our task required us to study additional academic literature, and the United Nations official documents, on different topics of gender and sustainable mountain development agendas. It was important for us also to utilize previous experiences accumulated by our predecessors during the adoption of this document. For example, we drew from the Orem Declaration of Mountain Women and the final document of the first International Women of the Mountains Conference in Utah, which was gathered in March 8-9, 2007.

Drafting the document began by gathering the submitted papers of conference participants and recruiting recommendations and suggestions from them on their expectations of the final document. To ensure maximum accuracy and efficiency, our team divided the different panels between each of our members and studied the information collected before collaborat-

ing to prepare the initial draft of the document before the conference had begun. During the conference, each team member was assigned different sessions to attend, to make certain that all the additional thoughts and ideas outlined by presenters would be incorporated into the developing draft of the document. As a result, we distributed and presented the first rough draft of the final document to all conference participants in a plenary session at the end of the conference activities on October 8, 2015.



(L to R): Jesler Molina, outgoing President of UIMF, Rex Linder, and Seth Gordon during the session to discuss the draft of the final document of the WOMC

For the month or so that followed the conference, we worked very diligently compiling notes and developing the various drafts of the document. In all, we sent out variants of the document to every conference participants three times. Each time the participant were given approximately one week to study it and to make suggestions concerning necessary changes to the language used, to add new ideas, and recommendations, etc. We are so grateful to the many conference participants who actively corresponded with us regarding the document's content and offered helpful and important suggestions. Mia Rowan, from the Mountain Partnership Secretariat, and Dr. Jed Shilling, from the Mountain Institute, were among our major contributors; and from whom we learned how to work on an official document of this caliber. It took close to a month and a half before the final version of the document was adopted by conference participants. That moment was the day of the approval of the document, which was the December 1, 2015. The final document was submitted to the Mountain Partnership Secretariat for further use and distribution among all interested stakeholders around the world. The Final Document is available at the WOMC 2015 web-site: <http://www.womenofthemountains.org/imag->

As students of UVU's College of Humanities and Social Sciences (Seth-Philosophy and Rex-Political Science), we found that our education had provided us with the necessary tools and prepared us for such a task. It was an amazing experience being in correspondence with the various participants in the conference, receiving suggestions and constructive criticism to accurately portray all the presenter's work and the overarching, critical messages of the conference. Our involvement in this conference provided us with invaluable real world experience and skills which include knowledge of bureaucratic processes, working in a team setting, and drafting a professional document, to name a few. We are glad that we could finish the job we started, seeing it through to its successful end. We are very proud of the level of quality we could achieve in this document, which was quite a challenging task for us; requiring a lot of time and dedication, while still juggling our regular school assignments and work responsibilities. The skills we gained here will undoubtedly assist us in our future endeavors.

We thank everyone that participated and contributed to the success of the conference.

Interviewing the Delegates during the Women of the Mountains Conference

By Chase Marstella

Chase was born and raised in Dallas, Texas. He is a junior at Utah Valley University and is currently studying Entrepreneurship. Chase wants to start his own nonprofit organization to help out the less fortunate in third world countries. When Chase isn't at school, he is with friends and family, having a good time.

The Women of the Mountains Conference was held at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah on October 7-9, 2015. Because of my experience working with video equipment and my desire to be involved with this conference, the student organizing committee invited me to participate. I spoke with many delegates and invitees from around the world. I also had the opportunity to attend and film the interviews that were conducted for the delegates. I worked with Jenny Starley, Press-Secretary for the student organizing committee of the conference. It was a privilege to listen to the delegates and invitees. The delegates from the mountainous regions spoke brilliantly about how to sustain mountain life. Every speaker spoke passionately about women's rights and particularly women's challenges in the workplace.

An interview that stuck out to me was with Natalie Wright Romeri-Lewis, Senior Project Associate from Brigham Young University. During the interview, she held up a map of the world that displayed how confident women are in their daily lives, either in the home or out and about, while working, shopping, etc. Not one country showed women who were 100% confident about themselves. A few countries on the map showed women who were 75%-85% confident, but most of the countries showed that women were less than 50% confident in their daily lives.

Women are now CEOs, lawyers, judges, and hold various other prominent positions in our society; there is even a woman running for president of the United States. Yet there are some people who continue to treat women as if they are inferior to men. The United States of America has come a long way, but as a society, we still have a lot of work to do. Women deserve to be treated equally.



Jenny Starley, PR and Fundraising interviews Derek Miller, Executive Director of the Salt Lake City World Trade Center

This conference presented me with a wonderful opportunity to get to know many people from around the world and to learn many skills that will help in my future professional life. I plan to become a United States Senator and hope to help this country move forward, so that we can all be treated as equals.

Helping with Logistics During Women of the Mountains Conference

By Casey Rowley

Born and raised in Provo Utah, Casey went to Orem High School and graduated in 2008. He has been attending Utah Valley University on and off since 2011. Casey married HyunJung Gang, an international student, in 2013. He spent the summer of 2016 in South Korea where he and his wife had a daughter. His major is Political Science with an emphasis in International Relations, and his future plans include finishing his bachelor degree and finding work in the technology industry.

The Women of the Mountains conference held from October seventh to October ninth 2015 gave me the opportunity to be involved in a student and teacher organized event hosted by Utah Valley University (UVU) in Orem, UT. My responsibilities during the Women of the Mountains conference included collecting and organizing presentations, ensuring equipment functionality, helping to ensure that the event schedule flowed smoothly, addressing technical issues as they arose, and trying to help Tony Medina, the Vice President for Logistics and Protocol, and the Organizing Committee with parking. I participated in the event on the seventh and the ninth. Another student, Brian Nielsen, and I split the times that we would be covering support at the conference. I am going to detail my participation in the conference and discuss my experience during the Women of the Mountains conference.



Celeste Mergens, Chairperson of the NGO “Days for Girls,” during her keynote presentation.

The Women of the Mountain conference began in the Reagan Theater at UVU. Things started off a little chaotic. When the program started I was scrambling to get the presentations for the people that were just getting to the Ragan Theater. During the introduction of the program I worked with the technicians in the media box at the top of the theater to get the presentations on their computer. We could have used my computer for the presentations but that would make changing slides during each presentation less natural for the presenters. Giving the technicians the PowerPoints allowed them to easily transition as presenters finished, and also gave the presenters control of changing slides. After Celeste Mergens, the first keynote speaker and Chairperson of the famous NGO “Days for Girls,” spoke about providing young women with essential hygiene products, the Women of the Mountains conference moved to UVU’s library. At this point events split into several panel sessions.

My job moved from the Reagan Theater to the Lakeview room of the UVU library where I helped with the panel session on Economic Issues of Women & Children. Here I worked with a UVU technician named Daniel, and Mary Cisneros, the UVU student and session moderator, to ensure that all of the equipment functioned properly. We used my laptop to run PowerPoint, and after seeing how smoothly presentations went when the presenters had a remote control, I decided to check one out from the library. Before presentations started I was able to get almost everyone’s slides. I did not have time to organize all of them, but having them made things a little smoother. My job during the panel session on Economic Issues of Women & Children was a lot more involved than it was in the Reagan Theater. I helped each presenter get their slides going, made sure they knew how to use the remote to move from one slide to the next, and assisted with technical issues that arose.

I ran into a couple of technical issues at the panel session. The first was a display issue for pictures that were not a part of a PowerPoint, they were meant to be shown after the presentation. I attempted to open and close the program that pictures were viewed through, as well as trying to unplug and plug back in the display port that was connected to the television screens. In the end we were not able to get the pictures up on the screen and we were short on time, so we had to move on. The second technical

issue was the volume on a video being too high. This was an easy fix; a quick adjustment of the volume on my computer put the volume at the right level. Immediately after the high volume problem, we had an issue with the volume of a video being too quiet. I tried to adjust the volume on my computer as well as UVU's equipment. Nothing seemed to work, and we were not able to hear the volume on this video. Though we ran into several issues, the presenters were gracious and were able to continue with their presentations.



Certificate of Appreciation presented to me by the Mountain Partnership representatives for my contribution to the fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference.

At the Conference on the ninth I helped with parking waited outside for people to show up. A van with people pulled up, and thought I was the person they were meeting. I also thought that they were the people I was waiting for, and we walked together for a few hundred feet before realizing we were all going to the wrong place. Eventually we realized that everyone that we were expecting had found their way to Center Stage at UVU. At this point the rest of the day was in full swing, and technicians from UVU were staying through the rest of the conference, so I headed home.

My experience at the Women of the Mountains conference gave me the opportunity to work with students and teachers to make the presentations run smoothly, and helped me to learn how to handle technical difficulties more efficiently. I also got to hear from amazing people from around the

globe about how they are trying to make the world a better place, and it made me proud to be able to help them talk about their work. Overall, the Women of the Mountains was an incredible experience, and I am grateful that I got to be a part of it.

Mitigating Climate Change Impact on Mountain Livelihoods Through Students Efforts

By Darian Hackney

Darian Hackney is currently a sophomore studying Political Science at Utah Valley University. She grew up in South Jordan, Utah and attended Bingham High School. She is very passionate about people and leadership. Learning new things and being involved in the community is very important to her. She is currently learning to speak Russian and hopes to attend law school in the future.

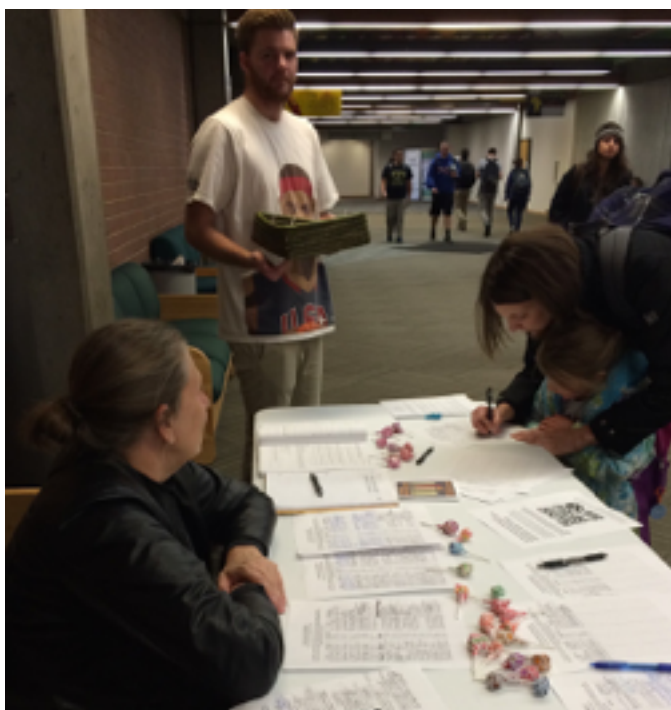
On December 11, 2015 representatives of 195 nations reached a landmark accord on climate change in Paris that will, for the first time, commit nearly every country to lowering planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions to help stave off the most drastic effects of climate change. It was important that during the COP21, also known as the 2015 Paris United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP21), that mountain regions were highlighted. The Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS) under the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO–UN) spear-headed efforts to bring mountainous communities, and the effects climate change has on them, to the forefront of the discussion. MPS asked all interested institutions and individuals around the world to sign a petition requesting that during the UNFCCC COP21 new climate deal, the impact climate change has on mountain people and ecosystems is fully discussed.

Members of Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU), including myself, were able to be part of those initiatives when our university became a member of the Mountain Partnership in 2006, when the relationship was formed between UVU and MPS. It was an excellent opportunity for many of us to get acquainted and contribute to the activities of the MPS, which coordinates the sustainable mountain development (SMD) agenda of the United Nations globally. Students were also able to gain professional skills and experiences on an international level.

Climate change has a serious impact on mountainous regions for a number of reasons. For example, the fact sheet released by the White House states that issues relevant to Utah due to the climate change would be:

agriculture, water, health, ecosystems, and tribes. The Southwest region of the United States produces more than fifty percent of the nation's high value specialty crops; these crops will be damaged if snowpack and stream flow amounts decrease. With a decline in water sources, competition may increase between farmers attempting to irrigate their crops. Dry climates becoming drier will increase the likelihood of fires destroying ecosystems, impacting the people who live in the Southwest region. Decreased snowpack will reduce the amount of water that is available to use, which poses health risks if temperatures rise and the amount of water available is limited.

We were involved in gathering signatures for the petition since June 2015. It became part of the curriculum for my International Relations class when our teacher, Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev, introduced the idea to us. Additionally, he asked me if I was interested in gathering signatures among other political science classes at UVU. I agreed to coordinate those efforts and it allowed me to discover a whole new world of global politics closely intertwined with destinies of people who live in the mountainous state of Utah.

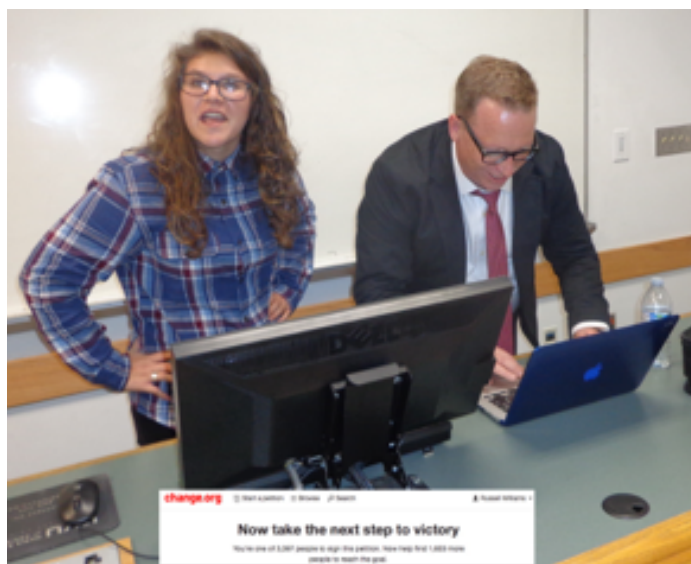


Our team gathering signatures at Utah Valley University.

Many students not only signed the petition, but also approached others to

obtain five to ten additional signatures. Among others, our team included Rex Linder, Jon Thorderson, Danny Davis, Aaron Smith, and Trevor Williams. Petition signing was included in the agenda of the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference that UVU students, myself included, successfully held at UVU on October 7–9, 2015 as a gathering to promote gender and the SMD agendas of the U.N. in North America. Here we worked together with Yanko Dzhukev, who led a campaign to gather signatures through social media (for information, see his piece at: <http://utahimf.org/engaging-mountain-communities-through-the-international-women-of-the-mountains-conference/>). Many dignitaries, and scholars from twenty mountain nations, who attended the conference signed the petition. Student members of the organizing committee led efforts in gathering signatures: <http://www.womenofthemountains.org/images/2015/15-10-18-ORG.pdf>

The more the issues of climate change were discussed, the more we were able to learn for ourselves about the significant impact of climate change in mountainous regions and why it is important to be involved in those activities. Dr. Russell Williams from Memorial University of Newfoundland in Canada came to speak at UVU on “Canada’s Role in Global Climate Change Negotiations” on October 28, 2015 and I asked our Canadian guest to sign the petition. His signature is one of many that I am proud of.



I am standing with Dr. Russell Williams from Memorial University of Newfoundland, in Canada, when he signed the petition.

In addition to our speaker, we set up a booth in the hall at UVU. We were sure that there were many other students passionate about this issue. We were confronted with questions and several arguments. Data from the Yale project on climate change communication shows that in 2014 60% of the people in the state of Utah (57% just in Utah County) thought that global warming is happening. However, the number of my peers at UVU that didn't accept climate change surprised me.



Signatures are gathered by students at Osh Technological University, Kyrgyzstan Under the advice of Dr. Almaz Atabekov (standing).

Students at UVU gathered signatures and support from many partners around the global mountain communities, including former Soviet Union nations. For example, students and faculty at International University of Kyrgyzstan—Osh Technological University and Kyrgyz Technical University—actively contributed to the campaign by signing the petition. Scholars from the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (RANS) have supported our efforts as well; this group is a non-governmental organization (NGO) with Consultative Status under the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). RANS cooperates with UVU in joint advocacy of sustainable mountain development activities since 2010. Together we were able to contribute to the efforts of MPS to gather 6,283 signatures far exceeding the required 5,000.

The COP21 discussion was filled with voluntary climate plans from many countries all around the world. Major global corporations from around the world made their pledges by providing substantial funds in support of

research and development of new technologies based on renewable wind and other sources. This is a large step forward, but there is still a long way to go. Students and youth from around the world can, and must, make their own contribution to this issue through raising an awareness of the importance of climate change, as well as additional funds to mitigate challenges caused by it. It is a goal for them and for students at UVU in particular, to make sure that the effects of climate change are addressed in all regions, while making sure that mountainous regions are not overlooked.



Members of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences.

It Was a True Honor to Host the Women of the Mountains Conference

By Molly Hone

Molly is from a variety of places but she claims San Antonio, Texas as her home. She is currently working towards a degree in Political Science from Utah Valley University with an emphasis on nonprofits and their role in society and government. Molly served as the Cultural Event Coordinator. When Molly is not at work or school she enjoys reading, baking, and spending time her nieces and nephews.

To be a part of the student organizing committee for the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference (WOMC) was a wonderful opportunity for me in order to learn something new and exciting. This summer I started a new job that was close to Utah Valley University (UVU). When I heard that the conference was being held within a couple of months, I headed over to the office of the organizing committee to see if I could volunteer and help out a little bit (emphasis on the little). I really didn't think that I would have much time to help out before the conference.

As soon as I stepped into the offices I was asked to coordinate all the cultural events for the conference. Deann Torsak, the executive secretary, gave me the information about the couple events already planned, and I thought "Okay, I can do this. It'll just be a few calls and emails, right?" Wrong. What ensued over the next 6 weeks were dozens of emails, calls, text messages, numerous visits back to the office of the organizing committee of the WOMC, and hours of coordinating the performers and events.



The first day of the conference dawned bright and early, a little too early in my opinion. I quickly realized that while the hours of preparation were worth the effort, we had a long way to go. I was thrilled and at the same time scared to death that first cultural event on Tuesday evening: a play written by Dr. Nancy Rushforth from UVU that celebrated achievements of Mary Foote, well-known nineteenth-century artist and novelist. Mary Forte described life in early Western mining towns in the United States. The performance consisted of excerpts from Foote's letters, accompanied by a narrative explanation of the sequence of events and was performed by Dr. Nancy Rushforth and her colleague Dr. Kim Abunuara, Associate Professor from UVU.



Christina and Nate Keller, members of the Kellers Family Music Group, perform during the conference

Being flexible was one of the first requirements I learned on the job. A couple of times during the conference we had to make last minute changes to the performances, or changes in venues. What amazed me each and every time were the performers themselves. For example, the Keller siblings, Nate and Christina, who performed during lunch on October 7, 2015 were two of the nicest and most understanding people. We asked them to change how long they would play for and they immediately said yes. The Kellers regularly contribute to the activities of the WOMCs, and had previously recorded several music numbers as part of the UVU video greetings to the participants of the landmark United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Brazil in June 2012 (Rio+20). (see: <https://>

www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmKj46hRhqM). Similarly, the UVU “Cultural Envoy” dance group was asked to move to a different stage less than half an hour before performing, and they not only worked with us, but we’re happy to make the last minute changes.

Each and every time I thought I was going to fall apart and let down my fellow committee members, they were immediately there for me. They were ready to help answer questions I didn’t know, and more importantly, help me to solve problems and the little issues that came up.

Organizing the cultural events required a significant amount of logistical work, and problems naturally came up, such as how to get a piano to the top floor of the classroom building for the Gruppman International Music Institute (GIMI) demonstration? I was almost ready to tell them that we couldn’t make it happen, when Tony Medina, Vice President for Logistics and Protocol of the WOMC Organizing Committee had the brilliant idea of using an electric keyboard. This demonstration was especially important as it was not only the musical performance during dinner on Thursday, but showed how Igor and Vesna Gruppman, two world-known and extraordinary musicians used on-line technologies, like Skype to teach play music kids in Provo, Utah from Rotterdam, Netherlands, where both of them currently live and work. The Gruppman’s work with students all over the world was an important contribution to the conference agenda because of their unique teaching technique,.



Vesna Gruppman teaches student to play violin during Skype session.

It would have been difficult, to say the least, to have been able to pull off the

cultural events without the teamwork of other committee members. Never having had so much responsibility in planning a conference or event, I was terrified going into it. I thought for sure I couldn't be trusted with that of the conference. I have never been more relieved to discover that not only could I be trusted with the responsibility, but I loved the experience. It was so much fun to be a part of the student organizing committee of the conference. Being one of 6 girls in my family, the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference hits home. I want every woman to be raised with the same message that I was: I can do or be anything! Regardless of sex or race! This conference promotes that ideal and so much more. I am honored to have been a part of it.

