International Mountain Day Observation at Utah Valley University

12th International Mountain Day observation event on December 1, 2021, at Utah Valley University 9UVU) was very impressive not only because of the information presented regarding tourism within mountainous regions such as Utah and Kyrgyzstan, but also because of the display of cooperation and partnership between Utah Valley University students and the Osh Technological University as well as the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences. It is truly a wonder to see groups from all over the world working together to improve their way of life in the mountains because even though they are all so far apart they still face the same challenges and struggles in the mountains as everyone else that lives in similar regions.

Presenters and participants of the event at UVU

I was particularly impressed with Dr. Butler and all of his accomplishments during his time at UVU and the fact that he is still working to improve the lives of people all around the world. He spoke on his goals and his more recent projects before moving into the tourism of mountainous regions such as Utah and the different tourist attractions boasted by the state. I was interested to see the different elements of tourism and how the mountains can at some times be a burden for certain infrastructure projects but also be an incredible asset within the tourism industry. Utah is one of the most popular skiing destinations in the world and people will travel from extremely far in order to participate in winter sports at the many ski resorts here.

One thing I noticed about Kyrgyzstan was that most of its attractions centered around cultural sites and natural beauty such as at Ala Archa National Park which I have actually been lucky enough to visit. It is an incredible park and is one of the must see locations of Kyrgyzstan. It seems to me however, that the biggest issue Kyrgyzstan is facing is accessibility from the rest of the world. When I visited, it took a long time and it wasn't easy to actually get there from the United States. Between that and fear of instability in the regions surrounding the country it makes it difficult for Kyrgyzstan to capitalize on their beautiful country.

Barrett Thompson, UVU student