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66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women
Parallel Event
“Inclusive Student Engaged Learning Model to Empower Mountain Women Globally”
March 21, 2022

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. As head of the delegation and proud mother of 5 kids, I welcome you all to our parallel event. This event is hosted and run by students - members of the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University, Osh Technological University in Kyrgyzstan, Snow College. We jointly advocate for the cause of sustainable mountain development (SMD) in the State of Utah and globally.

Mountain communities are already some of the most neglected and impoverished regions globally. Climate change has further pushed these regions into unlivable conditions. Having grown up in the rural mountains of Utah, I have seen the hardships mountain communities must overcome. Access to water is one of many constant worries, with the livelihoods of many mountain peoples resting on adequate snowpack and favorable spring weather.

As a member of UIMF, I am able to learn and advocate for SMD alongside my peers by hosting international events, participating in service projects and fundraisers, just to name a few through the student-engaged learning (SEL) model at UVU. The SEL encourages students to work inclusively as a group on practical issues with a faculty member serving them as a mentor.

UIMF also encourages students to learn how mountainous Utah has become one of the best in the nation economically. Utah has a strong

history of women who have had to develop practices to overcome the dry, inhospitable climate of the western United States through hard work, combined with a dedication to the needs of our family and community.

. In 2007, several prominent women leaders such as Human rights activist Elena Bonner, the first female Governor of Utah, Olene Walker, The first female Governor of Montana Judi Martz, past director of the Mountain Institute Dr. Jane Pratt, and the Honorary Consul of the Kyrgyz Republic for the State of Utah, Dr. Danielle Butler, hosted the first International Women of the Mountains Conference. In 2015, the 4th WOMC was hosted by UIMF members via the SEL Method.

Since 2017, UIMF has advocated for SMD through SEL at every session of the Commission on the Status of Women and has been highlighted in the 2016 and 2019 United Nations Secretary General's Report on SMD for the advocacy of mountain women, the only student group to have this honor in the world.

It is my special privilege to further introduce our speakers today.