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UIMF Member
Utah Valley University
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Parallel event
“Inclusive Student Engaged Learning Model to Empower Women Globally”
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Hello, my name is Cody Conklin. I appreciate the opportunity to speak here today at this highest gender forum of the United Nations. The Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University advocates for mountain women, girls, and families, who are among the poorest and most neglected on national and international levels, to be within the focus of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UIMF does so through a Student Engaged Learning (SEL) approach that encourages students to gain professional skills while addressing real-world issues on local and international levels with faculty serving as mentors.

Because of the UIMF, I was able to learn how to empower women in my community and contribute to SMD by observing International Mountain Day at UVU and a parallel event at CSW 65 in 2021. In addition, I published research regarding COVID-19 and its effects on Sustainable Mountain Tourism. This has helped me understand how disaster preparedness is key to safeguarding the prosperity of women that were among those who experienced the disproportionate impact of the pandemic.

The SEL model encourages me as a non-traditional student, to bring with me my experience and knowledge from outside the university. Working full-time has provided me the opportunity to learn practical skills while working on projects and causes that meaningfully impact society. I am fortunate to experience this in my career as well as in university.

I currently work at a company called BambooHR, an information technology company that provides Human Resource software to small and medium businesses. Their mission statement is simple, “[We set people free to do great work.](#)” This mission statement sets a clear path for the organization as it engages in business and the community. It is a people-centered approach that is key to helping [women globally succeed](#). Company supported my peers at UIMF and my efforts last year to raise funds through service projects by selling oranges. Raised money has been spent partly to fund our participation and advocacy for mountain women during CSW65. Most of these funds allowed UIMF through the service project of the Orem-Lindon Rotary Club to purchase coats and distribute them to children from low-income families at elementary schools in Utah County last December.

I have seen first-hand how this has motivated Bamboo HR to be at the forefront of [women's equality](#), family matters and other issues not only in the business sector, but among local communities as well. It also drives the organization to become a thought-leader as they work with other organizations to promote causes that align with their values. This mission statement has led this organization to receive multiple awards celebrating its achievements with women in the workplace. Recently they received [a top spot in the 2021 Shatter List from the Women Tech Council](#).

BambooHR's example is what the SEL model hopes to achieve with us students as we graduate and enter the workforce. The SEL model is rooted in the hope that you can be an engaged learner wherever you are.

Thank you