

Statement
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UIMF President
Utah Valley University
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 everyone, my name is Dallas Karren, and I am the current President of the Utah International Mountain Forum, (UIMF), a coalition of student organizations at Utah Valley University. Our coalition is proud to host today's event to advocate for mountain women and as our contribution to the observation of the [*International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development, declared by the United Nations General Assembly last December.*](#)

This UN document acknowledges that, “despite the progress that has been made in promoting the sustainable development of mountain regions and the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, the prevalence of poverty, food insecurity, social exclusion, environmental degradation and exposure to the risk of disasters is still increasing, particularly in developing countries, and access to safe and affordable drinking water and basic sanitation as well as to sustainable modern energy services continues to be limited.”

It has been my great honor to watch our students work together on various initiatives with focus on the advocacy of mountain communities over the past year and the results of their efforts as they hosted this event together today via the Student Engaged Learning (SEL) model. SEL encourages students to work as a group on certain practical issues and learn professional skills while university faculty mentor them in that endeavor. Through months of collaboration by using the SEL model, student members of the UIMF have been able to teach each other and students and faculty of Osh Technological Institute in the mountainous Kyrgyz Republic, as well as Snow College in Utah, how to jointly not only handle logistics and preparations for this event but also their own presentations advocating for the mountain women and girls to be in the focus both of the CSW66 and 2020 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We express thanks to our sponsors such as Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Utah China Friendship Improvement Sharing Hands Development and Cooperation, two nongovernmental organizations in consultative status with U.N. Economic and Social Council, Utah Valley University, Osh Technological University, and Orem-Lindon Rotary club for their continued support and the efforts of all UIMF members and other individuals that made today such a success.

This event, hosted by UVU students through the SEL model demonstrates why UIMF was highlighted for mountain women advocacy by the United Nations

Secretary General's Report on SMD in 2016 and 2019, the only student group globally, and how through SEL our coalition became a full-fledged contributor to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with a special focus on mountain communities, families, and women.

Thank you for your attention. We will now open the floor for questions.