

## Statement

### Alex Jessop

Utah State University student  
67<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women

#### Parallel Event

*Empowering Mountain Women through Inclusive Student-engaged Learning Educational Initiative*

March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Good Morning. My name is Alexander Jessop. I am a junior at Utah State University. The student engaged learning (SEL) model allowed our student delegation to work jointly on preparations and implementation of this visit with faculty mentoring us. And thanks to SEL, I will speak today about a remarkable champion of international women's rights who passed away exactly four years ago, on International Women's Day: my grandmother Danielle Butler.

Dr. Butler was the last of a remarkable quartet of extraordinary mountain women who helped create and co-chair the inaugural international Women of the Mountains conference in 2007. They were: The Honorable Judy Martz, governor of the State of Montana; the Honorable Olene Walker, governor of the State of Utah; Elena Bonner, widow of Nobel Laureate Andre Sakharov; and Dr. Danielle Butler.

These women pioneered the Women of the Mountains conferences to advocate for mountain families, women, and girls. Subsequent Women of the Mountains conferences were held in Utah and Peru.

Although fragile from cancer, Dr. Butler carried on the tradition of her ancestors who over 150 years earlier settled the mountainous Great Basin area in Utah and Colorado with its harsh climate, lack of water, and mountain terrain. She lived and acted on what would become the Sustainable Development Goals.

Dr. Butler was the Honorary Consul of the Kyrgyz Republic in Utah, traveling many times to that great nation to work with women and children. Also, she volunteered many times in the US and Canada as the local president of the world's largest women's organization, the Relief Society. For her selfless service she was awarded the title of Honorary Professor by the International University of Kyrgyzstan. I am one of her 37 grandchildren. Every year since 2017, part of her legacy has been our student participation through a SEL at the sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women.