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President

Utah Valley University Rotaract

67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Side event

“Advocating for mountain women and girls’ education through student-engaged learning.”

March 8, 2023

I would like to express my gratitude to the Permanent Mission of the Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations and the Mountain Partnership for allowing us to advocate for mountain women through education by utilizing the student-engaged learning model, or SEL. Utah Valley University's (UVU) SEL model encourages students to work as a group to solve real-world problems with faculty mentoring them.

A distinct aspect of UVU’s model is using student clubs, such as the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU, as simple educational tools for any academic institution to implement through SEL activities at the UN. We also rely on Rotaracts as student clubs of Rotary International, a prominent NGO in general Consultative Status under UN ECOSOC.

The UVU Rotaract club as a part of the UIMF works closely with the Orem-Lindon club along with Utah’s Rotary District 5420 and our district governor, Jose Velasco. Since 2016, UVU Rotaractors have promoted sustainable development for mountain communities in Utah and globally through SEL in addition to our seven traditional focus areas, like education, saving mothers & children, promoting peace, fighting disease, providing clean water, growing local economies, and supporting the environment. Every year, we host events such as UN International Mountain Day and World Polio Day, along with monthly local and national service projects. We have presented at three sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women during 2019-2023. Today we have 22 UVU Rotaractors among 28 students in our delegation. Each year our efforts have been sponsored by two NGOs registered under ECOSOC, Russian Academy of Natural Sciences and Utah-China Friendship Improvement Sharing Hands Development & Cooperation. We hope that next year Rotary International will be able to provide such support too.

Based on the partnership established between UIMF and academic institutions in the Kyrgyz Republic since 2011, Rotaractors in Utah and the Kyrgyz Republic are continually strengthening their ties. Rotaractors from the Group of Friends of Mountainous Countries can join together to make education a central part of the 2023–2027 "Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions", approved by the UNGA in the resolution A/RES/77/172 at the initiative of the Kyrgyz Republic.