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Chief International Officer of UVU's Officer for Global Engagement
67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women
Parallel event
"Inclusive Student Engaged Learning Model to Empower Mountain Women Globally"
March 6, 2023

I am honored to speak today during the parallel event as part of the 67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. As a tradition, our office collaborates with the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences led by my personal friend and predecessor, Dr. Rusty Butler. Another leader is Wendy Jyang, President of the Utah China Friendship Improvement Sharing Hands Development and Cooperation. My greetings also to Dr. Jay DeSart, Chair of the UVU History and Political Science Department, who is a strong supporter of this model. This is the sixth session of the Commission in which the UVU student delegates advocate for mountain women by hosting either a side or a parallel event in addition to submitting a statement together with two mentioned non-governmental organizations.

Our team is led by students, members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU. Our office is proud to contribute to the extracurricular student engaged learning (SEL) model, which distinguishes UVU together with its dual mission. As you can see from this event, students, including non-traditional learners, host this event as a group effort, by advocating for the mountain women cause and at the same time learning new skills necessary for professional development. Their teacher, Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev, serves as mentor. The model encourages students to handle everything for this visit starting from raising funds, to logistics, protocol, and putting together an agenda, to name a few. They have invited us to contribute to their presentations.

On August 26-28, 2019, UVU co-hosted with Salt Lake City the 68th UN Civil Society Conference, the first time when an UN conference was held in the USA outside its NY headquarters. UIMF members were able to include language urging for sustainable mountain development in the preamble of the Outcome Document of the conference. Student delegates also contributed to the first international academic Conference "Why it Matters" on sustainable development goals which UVU hosted during October 5-7, 2023 in partnership with the Civil Society Unit and the Academic Impact Initiative of the United Nations Department of Global Communications. We wish similar successes to our students at CSW67 with their noble goal of advocating for mountain families, women and girls.

This delegation has 28 students and 22 of them are UVU Rotaractors. We hope that for the next time we could have during a similar parallel event at least one Rotaractor from each of the Group of Friends of Mountainous Countries. This will allow us 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.