

**Dr. Rusty Butler**  
**Main Representative to the UN for the**  
**Russian Academy of Natural Science**  
**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**

On behalf of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (RANS), I am honored to participate with the delegation from Utah Valley University and Orem Rotary at this parallel event. The Academy is one of only 142 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in General Consultative Status, which is the highest standing with UN ECOSOC. Since 2016 the Academy and UVU have jointly promoted three mountain targets adopted for implementation of the Sustainable Mountain Development agenda within the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since then, we also support efforts of members of the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at UVU to advocate for mountain women and families during sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and other fora of the ECOSOC.

Through an inclusive, student-engaged learning (SEL) model students, especially non-traditional learners gain professional skills by addressing real-world problems of mountain communities, as a group, with faculty serving as mentors. UIMF members as Russian Academy representatives reported UVU’s contribution in support of mountain women by co-hosting with the Academy a parallel event every year since 2018 during the 62nd - 66th sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Written statements of the Academy highlighting the UVU SEL model and the state of Utah as a model of sustainable development have been distributed as official UN documents during those fora.

During the 2018 High-Level Political Forum of ECOSOC on sustainable development, the Academy was selected among only seven NGOs worldwide to

speak during the general debates. For the first time ever, this allowed three UVU students time to make oral statements about challenges experienced by mountain communities during the Ministerial Forum on July 19, 2018. The triannual United Nations Secretary General's Report on Sustainable Mountain Development [A/74/209], from July 22, 2019, highlighted for the first-time advocacy efforts of UIMF and the Academy during CSW62. Today's event provides more than 20 UVU students a unique opportunity to raise their voices in support of mountain women and girls. I sincerely wish them and all of you success in pursuing this noble goal.