

Statement
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Student of Utah Valley University
69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women
Parallel Event
“Empowering Mountain Women through Inclusive Student-engaged Learning
Educational Initiative”
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Good morning, my name is Jacob Burnthorn and I am a Political Science student at UVU. It is my honor to speak today in support of communities, families, and women, especially those from mountain areas worldwide. In my time at UVU I have seen firsthand the importance of community and how it is shaped by the environment.

Mountain regions face many unique challenges in developing robust economic industries and political institutions. These challenges compound the issues already faced by women. Education has long been a tool that helps address the challenges faced by mountain nations, provides opportunities for women, and fosters strong institutions. However, mountain nations often find that emigration can undermine the benefits provided by investing in educational institutions.

To help reduce the impact of emigration, UVU has found it important to invest in non-traditional students. These students, often older with families and jobs, can struggle in the educational environment. However, these students often have a breadth of life experience and are deeply rooted in their communities. This greatly expands the availability for education to those who might otherwise be excluded, especially women with children or jobs. This can greatly enrich all students' educational experience, creating a sense of community and belonging. Empowering non-traditional students through the student-engaged learning model both creates more opportunities for women to receive an education and reduces the impact of emigration on educational investment.

As students become more engaged with their communities and remain in their nation post-graduation, this will help to foster the growth of civil institutions and economic development. Additionally, these local graduates with a deep connection to their community will better understand local needs and value the sustainable development of their nation.

Thus, I urge you to include the unique struggles of women in mountain nations as a vital part of CSW69. Their struggles represent the issues of mountain development and how that has contributed to the uneven progress in women's rights. Further, I ask that you consider the importance of non-traditional students and a student-engaged learning model as tools to help reduce this disparity. Thank you.