

**MY CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPERIENCE AS A SPEAKER AT CSW 70 PARALLEL
EVENT**

“Raising Justice Awareness of Mountain Women Through Student-Engaged Learning”

UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY

On Tuesday, March 10., 2026, I had the opportunity to participate in a parallel event for the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70) titled “Raising Justice Awareness of Mountain Women through Student Engaged Learning at UVU. The event took place from 10:30 am to 11:45 am, although I arrived earlier at 9 am to rehearse and prepare with my fellow peers. This experience was both academically meaningful and personally impactful, as it allowed me to contribute to a global conversation on gender justice and the challenges faced by mountain women



Screenshot of the Parallel Event Participants on March 10, 2026

During the event, I introduced myself as Angie Macias, a Political Science major with a minor in Leadership in NGOs at UVU. I briefly shared my background to establish a connection between me and the topic. Since I am a mountain woman myself from Honduras. This personal link was able to strengthen my credibility. Allowing my perspective to seem greater and giving authenticity to my contribution. My main talking points focused on the importance of the SEL model and how it empowers students to recognize and address inequalities affecting rural communities. I explained

that SEL encourages students to engage in advocacy, policy discussions and academic research to challenge systemic injustices.



Angie Macias Speaks at the Event

I also presented aspects of my research on Armenia, where mountain women face significant limitations in educational and institutional access. These challenges are often shaped by geographic isolation and deeply rooted traditional norms. By highlighting these issues, I aimed to demonstrate how similar patterns of inequality affect mountain communities globally while also speaking about the importance of awareness and student led activities. The event also led to contributions from my classmates who focused on different countries and perspectives. Other participants were Natalie, Amish, Ana, Sophie, Christ, Roland and many more. Listening to my peers was also a valuable experience since it allowed for me to see the issues mountain women face in other regions. Sophie's statement stood out me to the most because of the connection we

share in class. She also supported me throughout the presentation process by helping me work through doubts and questions. Which allowed me to feel more confident in my presentation.



Group Photo After the Event

Reflecting back on this experience, I gained a much deeper understanding of the value of SEL and the impact student voices can have on global conversations. This opportunity was especially meaningful to me because I am a mountain woman from Honduras. Growing up with this background has shaped how I understand inequality especially when it is about access to education and opportunities. Personally participating in the event made me feel honored and excited, I also felt a sense of pride. Being able to present in a setting connected to the UN was an experience I was not prepared for this semester. I felt a strong sense of responsibility to represent my work, my background, and my community throughout it all. I also felt so supported by my peers, their collaboration and willingness to help created a great environment where I felt confident.

To wrap this up, this event was a powerful learning experience that I will never forget. It was a prime example that SEL can create opportunities for meaningful impact on a large scale. This experience will continue to carat me through my education and future.

Angie Macias - Utah Valley University Student