

# Happy International Women's Day

MARCH 15, 2016 EDITOR

## **Happy International Women's Day**

Throughout March 1-8, 2016, the students and faculty at Utah Valley University celebrated International Women's Day.

It was phenomenal that this year UVU was able to dedicate an entire week to the International Women's Day celebrations.

As a member of the organizing committee, I was proud to help contribute to another highlight of women's role in life, modern society, and in the state of Utah in particular.

As student at UVU, I know from my own experience how challenging it can be for many women to grow professionally, and at the same time be able to work and take care of our families and children. I have four children of my own, including a boy with autism, and I help my husband operate our small construction business while studying fulltime at school.



***(L to R): Darian Hackney, UVU student, Deann Torsak, Leslie DeeAnn Mower and Danielle Butler celebrate International Women's Day at Utah Valley University***

There are too many problems that exist in the contemporary world that women have to face. Yet, when I see women like Barrington Jones, who was honored at UVU on March 1<sup>st</sup> or Leslie DeAnn Mower, co-founder of *Neways* company who are able to be mothers and successful business women, in addition to be generous philanthropists, I find myself wondering: "What can I do in order to make a difference both in the life of my family and other families in the state of Utah and beyond?"

Additionally, I find myself inspired by other women such as Becky Lockhart, the late Speaker of the Utah House of Representatives and Dr. Danielle Butler, Chairperson of the International Women of the Mountains Conference, which has become a major international

event regularly hosted at UVU in order to promote gender and family issues in the State of Utah and globally.

This last year I was able to contribute to the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference under the umbrella of the Mountain Partnership, a part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The conferences for the first time ever was hosted by students. It was extremely successful and a great example how undergraduate students can handle a high-level United Nations event in the same way that professors and experts in gender studies do.

Another crowning achievement for me was becoming the first recipient of the scholarship which bears Rebecca Lockhart's name for students who minor in Constitutional studies. It gave me more energy and a greater desire to dedicate myself to helping advocate for family issues in our state and globally.

Recently, I also participated at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. along with the members of the U.S. Congress and President Obama. There were many inspiring women there as well. Having never been to our nation's capital before; attending the National Prayer Breakfast was an amazing opportunity for me to see many of our national treasures while getting to meet many fascinating people. It was a joy to be able to represent Utah Valley University at the breakfast and the subsequent activities that occupied my time there.

I am extremely grateful to the UVU faculty who allowed me to be actively engaged in so many educational opportunities. I would also like to use this opportunity to express my special appreciation to Dr. Rusty Butler, Associate Vice President for International Affairs and Diplomacy at UVU, who retires next week. Dr. Butler and his wife Danielle Butler's leadership and support in student's engagement in global affairs and in founding and sustaining Women of the Mountains Conferences since 2007 has made a significant difference in future careers and professional lives of so many students at UVU and in the state of Utah.

Happy International Women's Day to everybody

***Deann Torsak, executive Secretary of the WOMC (2015)***



***(R to L) : Deann Torsak Presents Certificate of Appreciation from the Food and Agriculture of the United Nations affiliated Mountain Partnership to Dr. Rusty Butler, Associate VP at UVU with Kiersten Dumas, member of the organizing committee of the WOMC***