

Our contribution to the 68th UN Civil Society Conference in Salt Lake City.



Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University contributed to the 68th United Nations Civil Society Conference (68UNCSC) in Salt Lake City, Utah during August 26-28, 2019. Two of us as UIMF members participated at the conference as well and assisted with hosting a workshop and a poster session.

On August 28th, 2019, UIMF members hosted a workshop about advocating for mountain women and girls since 2011 in the State of Utah and at the UN. Several presentations focused also on UIMF efforts to have a language about mountain women and girls to be included in the final documents of the different UN forums on sustainable development and in the current 68UNCSC as well.



Mr. Sam Elzinga, UIMF President, moderates a workshop

Mr. Sam Elzinga, the president of UIMF and a moderator of the workshop introduced presenters and their focus on promotion of a sustainable development among the mountain communities around the world.



Mr. Kurmanbek Dyikanbaev (first from the right) speaks during the workshop

The next speaker was Mr. Kurmanbek Dyikanbaev, the President's Representative to the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan. Guest from Kyrgyzstan argued the importance to highlight the mountain communities in final document of 68UNCSC due to the fact that they are affected negatively by climate change and migration. Mr. Dyikanbaev also emphasized that the mountain communities have to be in the focus of the U.N. Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. Other presenters included Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev, a faculty mentor of UIMF, and Dr. Ross Butler who spoke about contribution of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences to the promotion of mountain communities at the UN; Dr. Alexander Stecker and Dr. Sara Ulloa, who reported about hosting the international Women of the Mountains Conferences; and Mr. Jesler Molina, past President of UIMF, who spoke about contribution to the adoption of the mountain targets by the UN. Student presenters during the workshop included: Mr. Michael Hinatsu, the Vice-President of UIMF, who spoke about advocating for mountain women and girls at the UN; Mr. William Gum-Causey, a member of UIMF, who spoke about sexual abuse among Native American women and girls. As the final speaker, Ms. Rebecca Bindraban, the editor-in-chief of the Youth and the Mountains

journal, presented the 2018 and 2019 issues of the journal, which highlighted student's advocacy activities at all levels.

We were able also to contribute to the efforts of our colleagues at UIMF to host during the 68UNCSC Ms. Julie Kofoed from the UN Compact, who advised us how to work at ECOSOC level with diplomats from different nations in order to have language about mountain women included in the final documents of the UN.



(L to R): Michael Hinatsu, UIMF Vice President, Hazim Alshanbari, Abdulrahman Alghanmi, William Gum and Ms. Julie Kofoed at the 68UNCSC

It was such a great experience for us to be part of the 68UNCSC and to gain professional skills and experiences by interacting with so many people from around the world.

Abdulrahman Alghanmi, and Hazim Alshanbari, UIMF members

