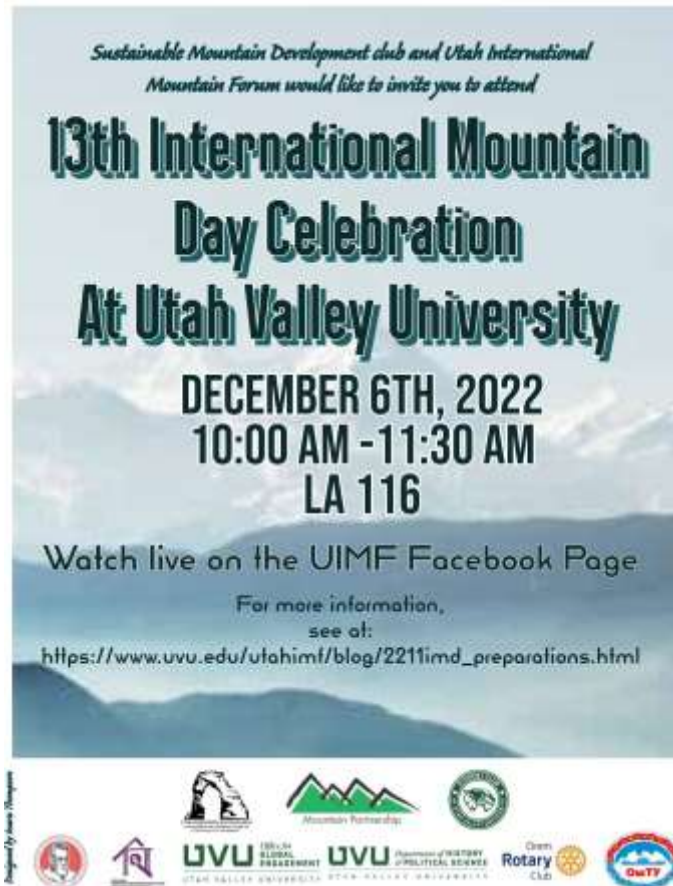


My Participation in the International Mountain Day Celebration December 6, 2022



The Sustainable Mountain Development club and the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU) hosted the 13th annual International Mountain Day celebration on December 6, 2022. The theme chosen was defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as “Women move Mountains.” The event was hosted by students - club members through a student engaged learning (SEL) model. Under this model students work together as a group on resolving an important practical problem while their teacher serves them as a mentor. Therefore, UVU students, based on a prepared task list, selected assignments related to agenda planning, provision of protocol, logistics, media contacts among others.

For the event a total of 5 individuals were chosen to speak on the theme. The speakers were Dr. Baldomero Lago, Chief International Officer at UVU, Dr. Rusty Butler, Main Representative to the United Nations, Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, a non-governmental organization in

general consultative status under ECOSOC, Jokodu Jada (Winnie), Political Science/Global Politics Student, UVU, myself, and Priyanka Prem Kumar, Research analyst - Sustainable Food systems, AI for Rural, India. Scholars, professionals, international students, and me a native of Utah.

The preparation for my participation began in 2015 when my Mom, Deann Torsak participated in the Women of the Mountains conference and in 2016 the Mountain Day celebration. During these two conferences my family had the privilege of hosting two women from Pakistan who taught me remarkable lessons of tolerance and working hard to help individuals. It was from these experiences that I spoke about women moving mountains and impacting my life in a profound way. After being asked to present at the celebration it took hours of preparation and working the UIMF presidencies, so my 7-minute presentation would flow smoothly with the program of the event.



It was wonderful to speak about something of significance, a subject that is near and dear to my heart, and that I am passionate about. Though there were relatively few at the celebration I hope

the remarks made by the other speakers and I had an impact on the individuals present. The changes that so many of us are looking for in the world will occur as individuals' hearts are changed and then they help others have the same change of heart.

For this opportunity, I would like to thank my fellow students Stephan Atkinson, President of the Foreign Affairs Club at UVU, Rachel Welker, Vice President of the Foreign Affairs Club at UVU, Alitha Thompson, UIMF President, and Joshua Kooyman, President of the Sustainable Mountain Club at UVU. They organized the entirety of the event and made sure all the necessary things were in order for those of us who were to present.

Handen Torsak, member, Foreign Affairs Club at Utah Valley University