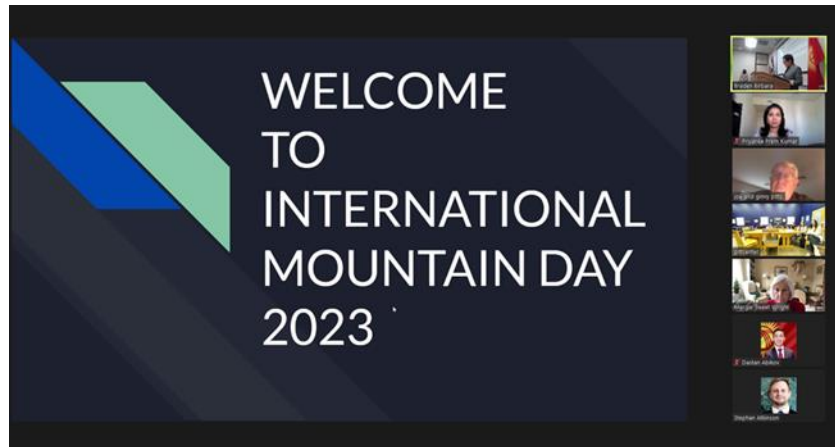


## International Mountain Day at Utah Valley University Reflection



*The world seems a bit smaller now.* I had this thought multiple times while listening to the Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations, Ambassador Aida Kasymalieva, and other presenters at the International Mountain Day celebration at Utah Valley University on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023. It was a surreal moment to meet an individual who does extensive work to make the world a better place. You can tell Ambassador Kasymalieva is passionate about her job and the issues Kyrgyzstan is facing. I found it very inspirational to hear her story and experiences. I'm grateful we have people like her, who help connect the world through collective action and collaboration of ideals and morals.



### **Ambassador Aida Kasymalieva speaks at Utah Valley University**

I also enjoyed the other parts of the International Mountain Day (IMD). IMD was observed for the 14<sup>th</sup> time at UVU by members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU. It showed me the importance of advocacy and student-engaged learning (SEL). SEL at UVU encourages students to resolve jointly, as a group practical problem with their teacher mentoring them to do that. In Utah, we are blessed to live in a mountainous region. Not

only does it hold profound beauty, but it also is environmentally beneficial to Utah. It was fascinating to hear about the sustainable development that the Kyrgyz Republic is doing. Their people are embracing the place they live and diversifying at the same time. I think that is a great model for Utah to do as well.

I'm grateful for such initiatives as International Mountain Day and UIMF. These programs facilitate learning and communication will be beneficial for many years as well. I'm grateful to be a student at UVU, and to gain opportunities to learn and be engaged in my community.

*Noah Farnsworth, UVU student*