

The Honorable Joseph Pitts
68TH session of the Commission on the Status of Women
Side Event

“Advocating for Mountain Women and Girls’ Education through Student-Engaged Learning.”
March 14th, 2024

Dear Ambassador Aida Kasymalieva,

Dear co-hosts and participants of the side event.

It is a great pleasure for me to greet you all from Asbury University, located in Wilmore, the State of Kentucky, at the heart of the Appalachian Mountains. Thank you for the invitation for our students to join you during this important event to advocate for mountain families, women, and girls with the leading role of students from the Bishkek Nomad Rotaract Club and Utah Valley University Rotaractors. I am glad that our cooperation as representatives of mountain communities from the Kyrgyz Republic and the United States is growing.

It is a very important area of partnership for me, further extending programs for political and economic reforms in the Kyrgyz Republic that I was able to support as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and a Co-Chair of the Silk Road Caucus in the U.S. Congress during 1996-2017. Students from Asbury University attended a parallel event hosted by UVU during the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2019. All of us, including my good friend Ambassador Kasymalieva observed the International Mountain Day at UVU last December to raise awareness about the importance of sustainable development for mountain communities.

Asbury University, since its establishment in 1890, is proud to contribute to this joint partnership variety of academic programs that allow our graduates to strengthen the well-being, culture, and heritage of local communities affiliated with the Appalachian Mountains. I also commend your efforts to use this important event to highlight education as a pillar for the “Five-year action for the development of mountain regions.”

Thank you for your attention.