

# Presenting at a UN CSW68 as a Woman in Science

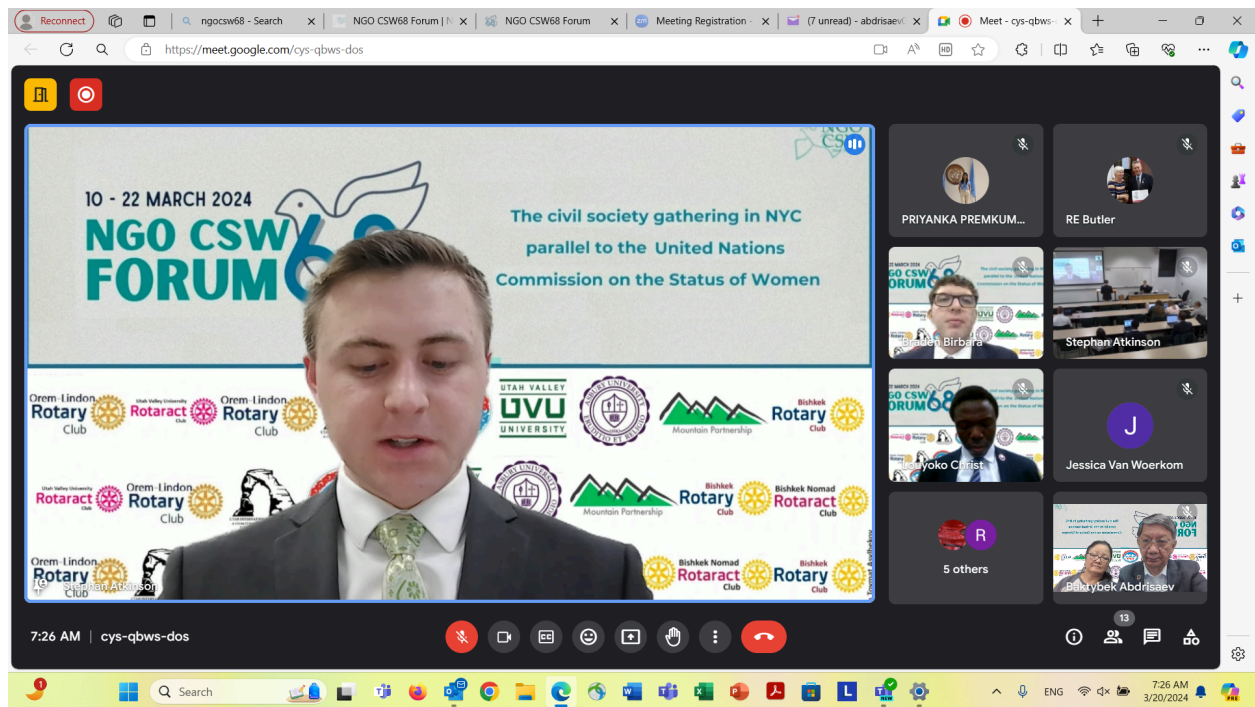
The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the NGO CSW68 Forum website. The page features a navigation bar with links for Home, Forum Agenda/Parallel Events, Virtual Exhibit Booths, Handbook Ad Sponsors, Information Desk, Lounge, Attendees, and Feedback Survey. The main content area is for a virtual event titled "Empowering Mountain Women Economically Through an Inclusive Student Engaged Learning" on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, from 08:30 to 09:45 ET. The event is marked as "VIRTUAL" and includes a Google Meet joining link: <https://meet.google.com/cys-qbws-dos>. Below the event details is a grid of 17 participant profiles, each with a profile picture, name, and affiliation. The participants include students from Utah Valley University (UVU), a faculty member, a researcher from India, and a Rotaract Club member. A "flyer" icon and a "+ Add to My Schedule" button are visible at the bottom of the event details.

| Name                      | Role/Affiliation               |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Baktybek Abdrisaev        | Utah Valley University         |
| Stephan Atkinson          | UVU student                    |
| Janessa- Michelle Purcell | UVU student                    |
| Danielle Keysaw           | UVU student                    |
| Abraham Weisler           | UVU student                    |
| Noah Farnsworth           | UVU student                    |
| Richard Farah             | UVU student                    |
| Braden Birbara            | UVU student                    |
| Jessica Van Woerkom       | UVU student                    |
| Stefanie Camara Manoel    | UVU student                    |
| Thomas Mogensen           | UVU student                    |
| Jinwoo Song               | UVU student                    |
| Handen Torsak             | Utah Valley University faculty |
| Dr. Geoffrey Cockerham    | Utah Valley University faculty |
| Dr. Rusty Butler          | UVU student                    |
| Jacob Alan Burnthorn      | UVU student                    |
| Louyoko Nianza            | Rotaract Congo                 |
| Priyanka Prem Kumar       | Researcher from India          |
| Mary Cisneros             | UVU Alumna                     |
| Dastan Abikov Bishkek     | Nomad Rotaract Club            |
| Ritikaa Gupta             | Mountain Youth Hub             |

## A copy of the page for our parallel event at the website of the NGO/CSW68

Hello! My name is Danielle Keysaw and I had the great opportunity to speak at the United Nations Parallel Event for the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission of the Status of Women on March 20, 2024, hosted by our class, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG), at Utah Valley University (UVU). I spoke about how the student-engaged learning (SEL) model, which is incorporated in many courses at UVU, helped me through my college career and how it

introduced me to the philosophy of decolonizing methodologies. Here, I would like to give a brief introduction about who I am, how I came to be a part of the UNSDG class, and how I decided the topic of my speech.



***A screenshot of the parallel event moderated by Handen Torsak, UVU Student***

I am a full-time UVU student working towards a Bachelors degree in Biology with a minor in Environmental studies. I am also a mother, a wife, and student curator at UVU's Herbarium, a natural history museum. I am currently scheduled to graduate in May of this year, 2024 and couldn't be more excited! In order to finish my minor, I chose to participate in the class UNSDG, of which is taught by Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev, a former ambassador and member of the Kyrgyz Republic executive and legislative branches. With his vast knowledge in politics, Dr. Abdrisaev mentored all of his students, including myself, through the process of speaking at a United Nations event. Because of my degree and background in science, I was different from the majority of the students in class, of which were mostly political science majors. I saw this as an

opportunity to learn more about the political side of sustainability and conservation to broaden my knowledge on the topics and to push myself outside of my comfort zone.

Because of my employment in the Herbarium, the Director-Curator, Erin Riggs, introduced me to the philosophy of decolonizing methodologies. These methodologies were created and written by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, among many other books from indigenous researchers. At UVU, we take this philosophy seriously and have incorporated it into our own philosophy in the Herbarium. This means that we work with research methods that take into account indigenous scientific knowledge and engage in positive and equally beneficial interactions with the indigenous tribes found in and around Utah, building trustworthy friendships. We work to dispel ignorance, remove bias from our research, and create space for alternative knowledge.



**Group photo of our class after our presentation at CSW68**

This knowledge and experience inspired me when I learned I had the opportunity to speak at a UN conference on the status of women. I chose to speak about Indigenous women

because I have learned that they are usually the keepers of knowledge and are responsible for passing down their culture and traditions to their children. Because of them, their families and descendants have lived successfully for thousands of years. The director-curator of the Herbarium is a mentor to me and helped me find the right wordage I needed to convey my message the way I intended it to be received.

Dr. Abdrisaev mentored me on how to present to the UN and how to condense my speech so that I was able to present clearly and calmly in two minutes and thirty seconds. This was a challenge because I had so much I wanted to say and I had to decide what my true message was. After nearly ten revisions and several rehearsals, I felt I was ready to deliver my speech, confidently and relaxed. Knowing hundreds of people with higher degrees, greater responsibilities, and more knowledge than I had would be listening to what I had to say made me a little nervous. I started doubting my significance in the grand scheme of the UN and what it represents. But then I remembered that there have been many women in science, philosophy, politics, and more, that have felt the way I did and they still pushed forward to learn and teach about what they knew needed to be said. This experience has become foundational for me and I will carry it into my future career, striving to contribute alongside these wonderful women and men in science, making western scientific research more inclusive and whole with many ways of knowing.

***Danielle Keysaw, Biology Student at Utah Valley University***