



**From Mountain Development to National Security:
UVU Becomes a Member of the United Nations DPI**



(L to R): Andre Jones, Foundation Ambassador, receiving a certificate of thanks during the UN International Mountain Day event

Utah Valley University hosted the International Mountain Day on December 6, 2017. Students from all backgrounds gathered to listen to experts in various areas regarding United Nations initiatives from the Mayor of Orem to the Director for Global Engagement at UVU.

I was invited to participate in the event and to be recognized for my engaged learning efforts the past two years with the Utah International Mountain Forum. Former Ambassador from the Kyrgyz Republic to the United States and Canada, Baktybek Abdrisaev, presented me with a certificate of accomplishment and involvement. It caused me to think back to my involvement with the International Mountain Forum at UVU. I am thankful to people like Ambassador Abdrisaev and others at UVU who have provided engaged learning opportunities for students like myself.

This year I am studying with the Center for National Security Studies at UVU, which helps students to find internships and jobs in the field of national security and to prepare for a career in the realm of public service with the U.S. government. My first semester at UVU, I was given the opportunity to escort two female entrepreneurs from Central Asia and translate Russian to English for the 4th International Women of the Mountains Conference here on campus. This was such a unique experience, especially for a young student like myself – I had only been at the university for 3 months!

Attending the International Mountain Day, where Utah Valley University became an official member of the United Nations Department of Public Information, was a once in a lifetime experience. It was celebrated by international and local students and community members alike. I was impressed at how far the students here had come and how many had contributed to the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations through their academic

work. It was a proud day for students involved in the United Nations initiatives and national security initiatives alike.

I feel comfortable graduating this amazing institution knowing that students will be exposed to the engaged learning initiatives of the Utah International Mountain Forum. Combined with the efforts of the Center for National Security Studies, I believe that UVU will provide the next generation of foreign service officers, peace corps officers, and U.S. ambassadors.

Andre Jones, Foundation Ambassador, Center for National Security Studies