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UTAH INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN FORUM,
A COALITION OF STUDENT CLUBS AT UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY

Mountain targets implementation through the student engaged learning model

Fifth Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership
Mountains under pressure: climate, hunger, migration
11-13 December 2017; FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy
Co-curricular problem-based learning (PBL) pedagogy implemented at UVU since 2008;

Students take maximum responsibility for their learning by being placed in cooperative groups to address practical aspects of SDGs implementation;

Faculty serve as mentors by delegating power to students:

Students gain professional experiences by advocating the Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD) agenda until 2015 and currently by implementing mountain targets
The UVU Model

- The model developed by UVU as a co-curricular initiative implements four major principles of the PBL model in the following ways:
  1. as a problem to deal with, students learn the importance of advocacy of the UN SMD agenda at local, regional and global levels;
  2. as learning vehicles, students work jointly through the student clubs;
  3. as club advisors, faculty guide the processes of students learning;
  4. as a final step in learning, students practically implement assigned SMD advocating initiatives.
Implementation of the SDGs through problem-based learning

- The Model UN
  - educational simulation and academic activity in which students and youth can learn about diplomacy, international relations, and the United Nations

- The UVU Model
  - engages students in contribution of initiatives, resources, and funds to the practical implementation of the SDGs, and in particular mountain targets
  - engages in mountain targets implementation both youth and non-traditional or adult students
Non-traditional students

- older than 25 years
- working part- or full-time jobs
- often financially challenged.
- represent more than 30% of college undergraduates in the USA
- possess a wide range of professional experiences important for the implementation of SDGs
Utah Valley University:

- Is the largest undergraduate school in the State of Utah with tradition of vocational training since 1941.
- Contributes to one of the most successful models of sustainable mountain development in the United States
- Is a member of the Mountain Partnership since 2006
- Focuses on the implementation of three recommendations of the UN General Assembly Resolution “International Year of Mountains, 2002”:
  - to encourage institutions to join MP;
  - to make contributions to the SMD advocacy of funds and sustain initiatives established during celebrations of the UN International Year of Mountains in 2002;
  - to celebrate International Mountain Day on December 11.
As SMD Advocacy, UVU:

- Hosts International Women of the Mountain Conferences, now a major grassroots event in North America to promote UN gender and SMD agendas since 2007;
- Implements the student engaged model by establishing the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU since 2011;
- Hosted Permanent Representatives of more than 20 nations accredited to the UN to advocate for adoption of mountain targets among SDGs during 2013-2015;
As advocacy of the mountain targets during 2013-2015:

- Students participated at the UN Open Working Groups on SDGs in New York;

  UVU student Jesler Molina makes a statement during the 6th session of the UN OWG on SDGs in New York on December 11, 2013

- Contributed to a social media campaign of the Mountain Partnership titled “Keep mountains in the SDGs”, contacting over two hundred-fifty NGOs globally, UN ambassadors, and governments with requests to support the mountain cause;

- Collected more than 2,000 signatures from 6,283 gathered by the MPS globally, to ensure that mountain issues were included to the agenda of UNFCCC COP21
Who we are -
We are a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University created in 2011. We focus on advocacy of gender and sustainable mountain development agendas of the United Nations in State of Utah and North America through student experiential learning.

Our Purpose -
1) Raise awareness of mountain sustainability topics.
2) Bring the public into contact with international guests and foreign dignitaries.
3) Bring communities together to recognize their shared mountainous heritage.
4) Offer students a chance to make connection that will benefit them as they move into their careers.
The main goals of the conferences are:

- to mobilize communities in North America to contribute to the promotion of gender and sustainable development among mountain communities worldwide;
- To continue traditions of the “Celebrating mountain women” conference in Thimphu, Bhutan, 2002
The fourth international Women of the Mountains conference was hosted for the first time by students as an engaged learning initiative.

The United Nations Secretary General’s report on sustainable mountain development A/71/256 from July 29, 2016 featured the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs as a:
- Host of the event; and
- Contributor of recommendations for implementation of SDG#5, target #6.6 an targets# 15.1
As implementation of the UN Resolution “International Year of Mountains, 2002”, students:

- Raised from local sources and contributed to the SMD advocacy $250,000 since 2007;
- Celebrate the International Mountain Day every year since 2010 to raise awareness about SMD among students and local communities
Through a partnership with RANS and Utah China F.I.S.H.& D.& C., the UVU students participated at the 60th (2016) and 61st (2017) sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, UN headquarters, New York.

Main goals of the visits were to report about students contribution to the UN gender agenda by hosting WOMCs since 2007.
UVU and the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (RANS) collaborate on SDGs related to gender equality, health, education, poverty eradication, sustainable mountain development, among others, since 2008.

RANS is an NGO in general consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 2002 – one of only 136.
Major statements made by RANS at the UN which highlighted UVU model of student advocacy of mountain women during the: