

Reflections on Celebrating the 10th Annual International Mountain Day at UVU



Presenting my speech at IMD.

On December 2, 2019, the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU), celebrated the 10th annual International Mountain Day (IMD). The theme of the celebration—mountains matter for youth—was celebrated by students, faculty, and UIMF partners, who gathered together to discuss how UIMF has promoted the implementation of mountain targets, advocated for women and girls living in mountain communities worldwide, and advocated for UVU’s student engaged learning model at the global level, under the UN 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

Present at the celebration were Dr. Rusty Butler, main representative at the UN for the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (RANS) and Mrs. Wendy Jyang, founder of Utah China Friendship Improvement Sharing Hands Development and Commerce (FISH D&C). These organizations are ECOSOC-affiliated NGOs who have been instrumental in helping UIMF members perform advocacy campaigns at high-level events. Dr. Baldomero Lago, CIO and Vice Rector for Global Engagement at UVU, also spoke at the event.

Also present was Mr. Uday Teki, the founder and CEO of Project Work Groups, which is a company that works to find global sustainability projects related to food security, agriculture, and the environment and provide services and support for such projects. Through his efforts, UIMF is partnering with students and faculty from Brigham Young University, The University of Utah, and Utah State University to advocate for mountain women, SEL, nontraditional students, and the

implementation of mountain targets at the 64th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW64) this coming March.



From left: Viktoriia Bahrii, UIMF member, Samuel Elzinga, UIMF President, Mr. Uday Teki, Project Work Groups CEO, and myself during IMD

At the event, I was honored to be able to speak along with fellow UIMF member and vice president Lacey Meyer to commemorate IMD. I briefed the audience on our successes at the 68th Civil Society Conference held this past August in Salt Lake City, Utah, where we were able to coordinate efforts that resulted in, for the first time ever, language about mountains and education implemented in that Conference's final document. I also spoke on our advocacy plans for CSW64.

I want to thank Dr. Lago, Amy Barnett, and the UVU Office of Global Engagement for helping us to commemorate IMD and to bring Dr. Butler, Mrs. Jyang, and Mr. Teki to our campus to speak on SMD.

Michael Hinatsu, UIMF Vice President