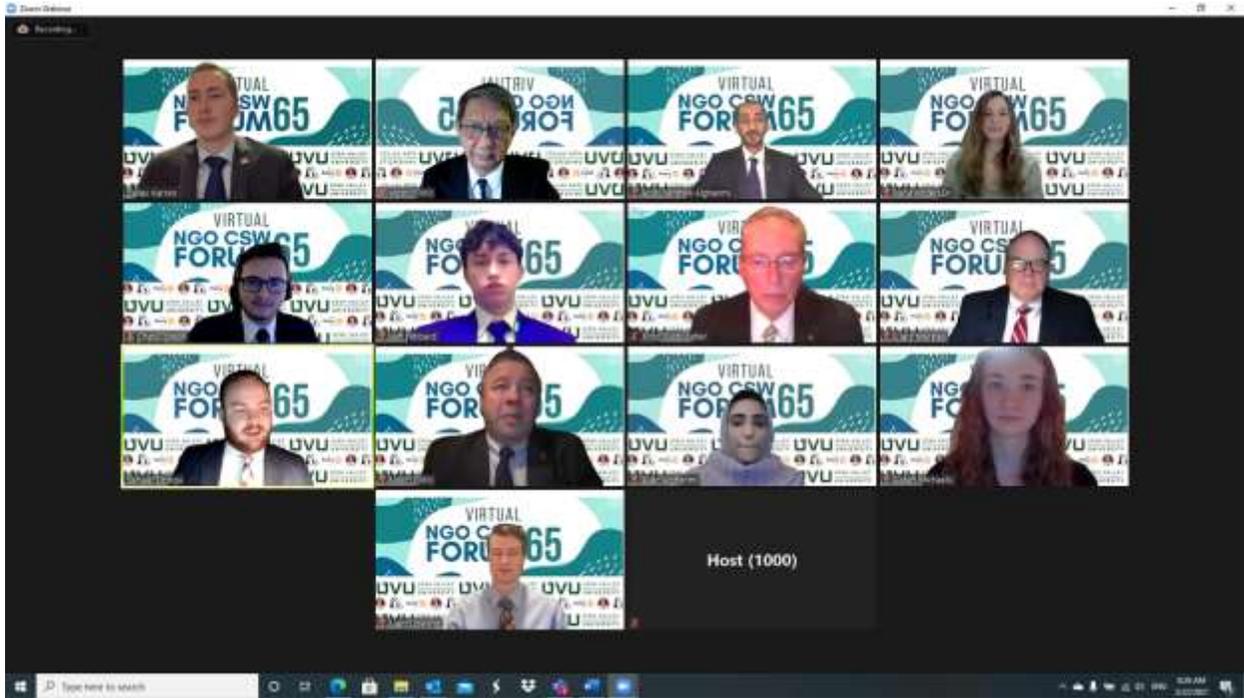


My Reflections About CSW65



Participants of the parallel event on March 22, 2021

On Monday, March 22nd, 2021 members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU), hosted a virtual parallel event at the 65th Session on the Commission of the Status of Women to advocate for mountain women and girls. We also specifically highlighted the role student engaged learning (SEL) plays in our successes when advocating for mountain women and girls. This event we hosted in particular was special for me, as it is the last major event I participated in as the president of the Utah International Mountain Forum.

For this event, we had speakers from both UVU and the local community discuss the role SEL can play in advocating for mountain women and girls. The event was moderated by Mr. Dallas Karren, the vice president of UIMF. After Dallas's opening remarks, Dr. Baldomero Lago, UVU's chief international officer, spoke on the role UVU plays in advocating for student engaged learning at other bodies of the UN. After Dr. Lago, Dr. Rusty Butler, the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences representative to the United Nations, spoke about the role his NGO plays in partnering with UIMF to provide a forum for students to engage in multilateral dialogues at the UN. After

Dr. Butler's statement, Mr. Clark Merkley, the past Orem Rotary President, spoke on partnerships between Rotarians in the State of Utah and UIMF through UIMF constituent club Rotaract and how Rotary promotes Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD). Following Mr. Merkley's remarks, I spoke on my role in UIMF and how we can coordinate student activism to support the SMD agenda.



Samuel Elzinga speaking during the event

After my remarks, other students began speaking. Mr. Abdul Alghanmi spoke on his research on SMD and how it relates to his home country of Saudi Arabia. Following Abdul's presentation, Ms. Byan Alghanmi spoke on gender equality in the mountains of Saudi Arabia and Iran. Her paper garnered some interest from our presentation participants. Following Byan, Ms. Yana Andersen, the president of Rotaract, spoke about the role Rotaractors at UVU play in contributing to the SMD agenda, including fundraising and providing direct services to kids. Following Yana, Mr. Cody Conklin spoke about how companies can support students in the SMD agenda. After Cody, Mr. Liam Dowling spoke on his research regarding the Republic of Georgia. After Liam, Mr. Jeff Hibbard spoke on his research on Nepal. After that, Ms. Sarah Michaelis, a recent UVU grad, explained how UIMF helped her get a job. Following this, Dallas delivered his closing remarks.

The event was a great success, and I am so glad to be leaving UIMF in such capable hands. UIMF has brought me countless opportunities during my time at UVU, and I am so happy that the club will continue to help students through the SEL model after I graduate.

Samuel Elzinga, President, UIMF