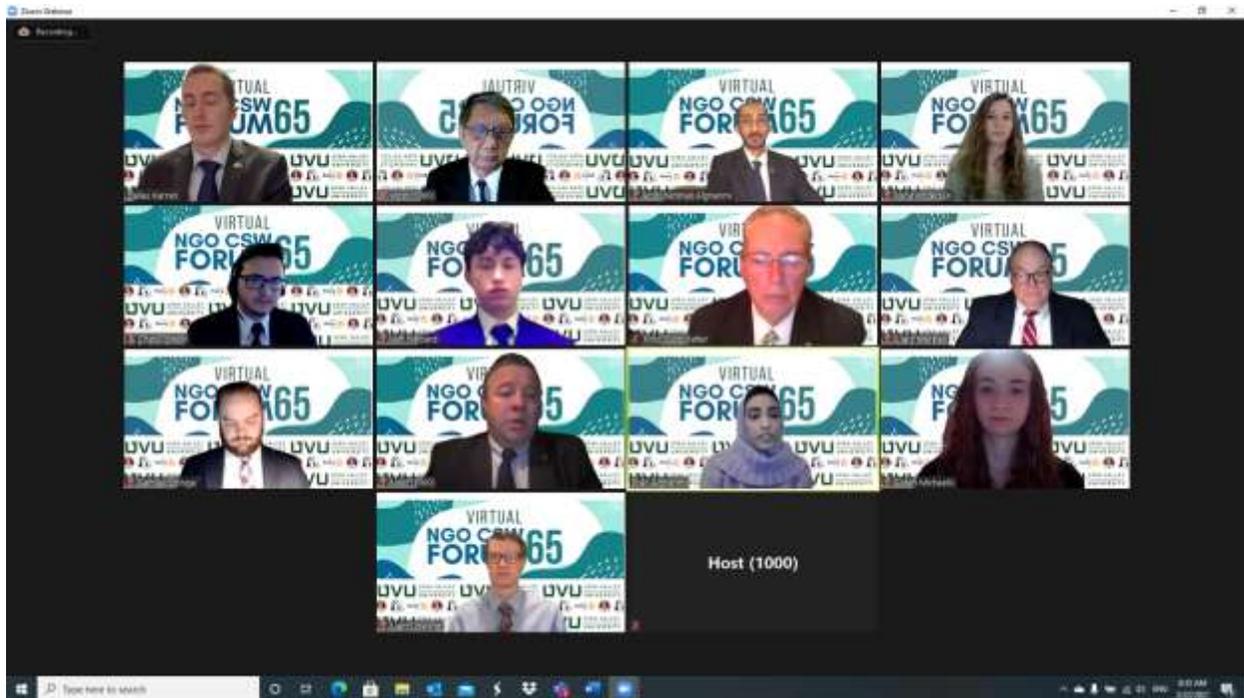


## *My Participation at the sixty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women*



### *Participants of CSW65 2021*

As a woman who is originally from the Sarawat Mountains in the West of Saudi Arabia, it was a pleasure for me to participate in the sixty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and together with my peers from Utah Valley University (UVU), host a parallel event on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021. First and foremost, I would like to take the opportunity to thank Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU, the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, UVU office of Global Engagement, and our mentor Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev for giving my peers and I the opportunity to be a part of this global event to advocate for women and girls particularly from mountain regions.

During the parallel event, I highlighted the activities that I was able to do with the UIMF under the Student Engaged Learning (SEL) approach, which I was able to learn and been involved in since my enrollment as an international student at UVU. SEL encouraged and motivated me to

work with other students and members of the student club as a group to solve certain real problems and to learn some new skills and advance with my profession. What is important for SEL, is that our teacher usually has to be not directly involved and helps us just by mentoring. I liked this very much because I found out that my other peers know a lot and could share that knowledge with me. And I can also teach them some of my skills. This provides the chance to learn and benefit mutually.

Since the Fall of 2018, I have had an opportunity to be a member of the Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD) club, which is part of UIMF and through SEL to be involved in particular with the numerous activities of the Orem Rotary club. My peers at UIMF and I advocated for SMD by hosting the International Mountain Day (IMD) observations on December 11th as declared by the United Nations. [During the 10th IMD](#), at UVU on December, 2nd, 2019. I introduced keynote speaker Mrs. Wendy Jyang, Founder of Utah China F.I.S.H. D&C, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). I was impressed by the activities of her NGO with UIMF at CSW63 and was glad to see how she assisted our participation at CSW65 as well. Similarly, during [the 11th IMD observation](#) at UVU, I was responsible to prepare the event for broadcasting via zoom and to introduce one of presenters, Anna Mahalak, Youth Engagement Manager for UNA-USA. As part of our advocacy for SMD, we also have [hosted Congressman John Curtis \(R-UT\)](#) through a virtual meeting, and discussed with Congressman Curtis the obstacles that mountain people are suffering such as economic development, and climate change. I was also glad to contribute to UIMF members efforts to celebrate the [United Nations Day](#) on 24th, October, 2019. As a Rotaractor, it was important for me to commemorate [World Polio Day](#) and contribute to the [fundraising campaign](#) by selling oranges. We Rotaractors, raised more than \$1,000 to help children from needy families in Utah County.

It's important for me personally to support and speak up for mountain women and girls who are experiencing numerous challenges both from underdevelopment and climate change, since I am also originally from a mountain community in Saudi Arabia. Due to that, I strongly believe that mountain women and girls need help and support from all of us and they have to be in the focus of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



*Byan Alghanmi speaks during CSW65, UIMF member*

In my statement, I also shared some of my results of comparative research focused on the mountain women and girls situation in the Middle East and Iran in particular, which shows that almost every mountain community shares similar problems with providing a sustainable way of life for their families, women and girls. This event at CSW65 and my previous activities through SEL as a UIMF member provided me not only a variety of new skills and experiences but also strong incentives to continue my personal efforts as a UVU graduate in Criminal Justice to contribute to the improvement of lives of mountain women and girls.

*Byan Alghanmi, UIMF member*