



**GAGE**  
Business Consulting  
& Government Affairs

Organizing Committee of the Second International Conference  
"Women of the Mountains"  
Utah Valley University  
800 West University Parkway, Orem Utah 84058

Dear Ambassador Baktybek Abdrisaev and Dr. Rusty Butler,

It is my honor to greet the participants of the **2<sup>nd</sup> Women of the Mountains International Conference** to be held March 8-9, 2011 at Utah Valley University (UVU) in Orem, Utah.

I am a proud native of the State of Montana where I grew to love and respect the unique traditions, cultural heritage and sense of pride that comes with living beside nature's most humbling symbol of strength and perseverance. The mountains of Montana are filled with people who understand the difficulties and joys of living in some of the worlds' most beautiful and harsh environments. In 1997, I had the distinct honor of leading a Congressional Delegation across the Torugart Pass, a mountain border crossing between China and Kyrgyzstan. That was an experience I still cherish today and it led me to several business endeavors that I am still involved in that part of the world.

As you know, life in the mountains is not the easy. We are united in the understanding of the great effort it takes to produce livestock, crops and raise families in high altitudes. It is because of this bond that we can all call ourselves part of a global mountain community.

I am pleased to know that UVU is leading the effort to promote this global community to mobilize the best and brightest from countries around the world. By mobilizing leaders from mountain communities, we can create a unified voice to promote the most urgent needs of mountain families, women and children.

I know that the first conference, hosted by UVU in 2007, was praised by the Secretary General of the United Nations for its ability to create a regional network of interested parties to promote sustainable development for the people and institutions in the American Rocky Mountains. The Secretary General mentioned in particular that this conference directly resulted in increased exchanges between educators, legislators, and a greater cultural understanding between the North America and Central Asia. I could not agree more.

By building relations between the mountain people of the United States with those from the rest of the world is an extremely important endeavor. It is especially important when you focus

unique difficulties faced by women, children and families. By working together to grow these bonds, we can improve living conditions, share cultural knowledge and work together to bring long-lasting peace and prosperity to our lands.

I wish you complete success in your endeavors and I am looking forward to work with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Leo A. Giacometto', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Leo A. Giacometto