

# ANNUNTIATUS

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION



## A MESSAGE FROM THE IASE PRESIDENT Dr. Renáta Tichá



As many of you, I am still thinking about our conference in Pilsen, with so many friends and colleagues, new information, Czech food (and beer 😊) and culture, and a new way forward to support and

include children, youth and adults with disabilities in education and community living around the globe.

Appreciating the fact that this was the first time IASE has had a conference in my native Czech Republic, I would like to thank the conference organizers at the University of Weste Bohemia under the leadership of Drs. Šárka Káňová and Jan Šiška; wonderful conference volunteers; outstanding keynote speakers, Sue Swenson from the US, Dr. Tobias Buchner from Austria and Dr. Girma Berhanu from Sweden; and all of the delegates from across the world for sharing their knowledge and experience.

The conference Gala Dinner took place in a unique historic venue in Pilsen, Měšťanská Beseda, and we certainly did justice to its ambiance!



Hearing from many delegates at and after the conference made me appreciate the uniqueness of IASE as an organization where we know each other by name and always look forward to catching up.

We can now take the new information and energy from Pilsen to our work in schools, universities, NGOs, and elsewhere, and share the enthusiasm in our respective countries and regions. Stay tuned for the upcoming Virtual Dialogues, the journal (JIASE), and updates from the Volunteer Service sites and from National Chairs.

We have a new board of directors coming in starting in January. I would like to thank the current officers for their commitment to IASE, especially during the conference year. We will soon begin planning the 19th IASE Biennial Conference in Paro, Bhutan.

Stay updated on the upcoming IASE happenings at <https://iase.org/>. Sign up for the IASE blog (<https://www.iase.org/blog>). Reach out to us with any questions.

Wishing you a lot of enthusiasm for the upcoming months,  
Renáta

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Renáta Tichá, PhD, IASE President  
University of Minnesota, USA

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## Upcoming .....19<sup>th</sup> BIENNIAL IASE CONFERENCE

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Mark your calendars for our next Biennial IASE Conference. We will be heading to Bhutan in the [Summer of 2026](#). Stay tuned for the dates! Get involved now! For more more information feel free to contact Daniel McCarthy [DanielRNM@comcast.net](mailto:DanielRNM@comcast.net)



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## **Engagement, Collaboration and Reflections from our 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference in the Czech Republic**

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The 18th Biennial conference gave delegates a chance to exchange their valuable knowledge and experience regarding disability and education from different

perspectives. Esteemed scholars and experienced practitioners engaged with participants to share their current work, highlight preferred resources, facilitate breakout sessions, and deliberate on their newest ideas in the field. Furthermore, the conference drew over 200 participants from 34 countries worldwide.

Moreover, in partnership with the University of West Bohemia, IASE brought together a wide range of research and case studies from around the globe in simultaneous sessions. The event also offered numerous networking and publishing opportunities, providing a rich and meaningful platform for engagement.

This year's conference was highlighted by the outstanding keynote speakers who delivered engaging speeches at both the Opening and Closing Plenaries. Furthermore, a number of presenters in our breakout sessions were individuals with intellectual disabilities, offering insightful and inspiring addresses, presentations, and artwork that brought a new perspective to current issues and the conference's main theme of 'Supporting Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities Across The Life Span.'



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## Collaboration

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*Supporting Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities across the Life Span – that was the central theme of the 18th annual international conference, which took place in Pilsen from June 27 to July 1.*

The IASE 2024 Conference was organized by the International Association of Special Education (IASE) in collaboration with the Special and Inclusive Education Unit at the Faculty of Education, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen. *"We are greatly honored to have had the opportunity to organize such an important event. We believe that this conference will contribute to the development of special education and support international cooperation,"* said Pavel Mentlík, Dean of the Faculty.

Participants from 32 countries around the world also had the opportunity to visit several special schools and Disabled people's organizations in Pilsen and its surroundings, providing delegates with an insight into practice in the Czech Republic. Excursions to schools and organizations took place the day before the official start of the conference, on June 27, with significant support from UWB students, who guided a total of eight groups of delegates and provided them with interpretation services.

The opening ceremony was held on Friday, June 28 at 3:00 PM. The Dean of the Faculty of Education and the Rector of UWB gave the opening speeches. There was also a cultural interlude featuring performances of both classical music and Czech folk songs by students from the Department of Music Education and Culture, as well as a

performance by the band Hazband from Zbůch.

Individual presentations were given on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. The program included lectures, workshops, and panel discussions that provided space for exchanging experiences and establishing new professional contacts. *"The aim of the conference was to create a diverse and welcoming platform for sharing research results and examples of good practice in the fields of special education and social work. One of the main goals of the conference was to support international cooperation in special education,"* said Šárka Káňová, the conference chair and head of the Special and Inclusive Education Unit.

In addition to lectures and round table discussions, participants could look forward to exhibitors from schools and non-profit organizations who presented their projects and activities. The conference also featured art exhibitions by young people with disabilities from the Czech Republic, Singapore, and the USA, such as "My Life" (students involved in the research project PEDAL), "I Hear in Color" (Martina Květová), "Years of the Demon, Spirit of the School" (Michael Bednář), "My Pilsen, My City" (students with intellectual disabilities), and the "Traveling Photo Exhibition of Children with Autism" (Ngo Procit).

The conference concluded with a gala evening on Monday, July 1, at the Měšťanská Beseda in Pilsen, where the Cimbálová muzika Trnka performed. The event also included an auction, with proceeds going to support schools with students with special educational needs. *"Thanks for organizing the entire event goes to staff and students of the Department of Education but also to the Department of Music Education and Culture, the Department of Mathematics, Physics and Technical Education, the Center for Physical Education and Sports, and the Center for Lifelong and Distance Learning at UWB,"* concluded Pavel Mentlík.

Photos from the event are available in the faculty's shared online gallery: <https://eu.zonerama.com/fpezcu/Album/11659928>

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## Reflections

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### **Reflecting on the Inclusion Collection: A Journey of Artistic Evolution from Minnesota to the Czech Republic**

*By Nik Fernholz, Director of Art for All: The Stephanie Evelo Program for Art Inclusion at the University of Minnesota*



As the IASE conference concluded on July 1, Dr. Šárka Káňová, Dr. Masha Černíková, and I took a moment to reflect on the profound impact of the Inclusion Collection. This exhibition, featuring works from Minnesota to the Czech Republic, highlighted the rich diversity and depth of the artists' experiences.

Our journey began with the installation of the "My Life" exhibit at Café Restaurant Kačaba, a central hub in Pilsen that serves not only as a café but also as a rehabilitation program co-founded by Dr. Káňová. This exhibit was particularly meaningful for her, bringing the work of international and local transition students to her home city. The multi-medium pieces, created by five transition students from Minnesota schools, vividly depicted their real-life experiences during transitional phases. The exhibit was simultaneously displayed at the University of West Bohemia, ensuring its presence throughout the conference.

The conference's visual identity, featuring a striking depiction of Pilsen's cityscape, set a vibrant tone for the event. A field trip from the spring with young artists to documented landmarks like The Great Synagogue and the statue of Spejbl and Hurvínek looking out onto Republic Square. Dr. Káňová carefully installed these works onto stained-painted

canvases, which will now grace the new offices of the Faculty of Education on campus of the University of West Bohemia.

Working alongside Dr. Masha Černíková, an artist deeply committed to inclusive art, was a highlight. One particularly moving moment was meeting the large family of Martina Květová, a young artist who began her creative journey in March 2022. Her vibrant acrylic paintings, inspired by music and created to her own rhythm, invite viewers into her imaginative world.

Another standout artist was Michal Bednář, who participated in the first rendition of "My Life" in 2023 and showcased his first solo exhibition at the conference this year. His work, reminiscent of professional street art, is raw, gritty, and beautiful. Through drawings, paintings, texts, and collages, Michal narrates his artistic and personal growth, with his dedication to ceramics and literary endeavors evident in every piece.

The *Inclusion Collection* has not only showcased diverse artistic expressions across



borders but also underscored the global impact of inclusive art practices. As we look back on the conference and the exhibitions, it is clear that these artistic journeys have fostered cross-cultural connections and deepened our understanding of creative evolution. We eagerly anticipate future collaborations and continued dialogue in the realm of artistic inclusion.

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## Personal Reflections

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“The conference's final day was exciting and unexpected. During the official closing, the International Association of Special Education—who had organized this conference—suddenly presented me with an elegantly designed award. Additionally, there were new acquaintances, even more international contacts, and amazing emotional support for Ukraine at the farewell dinner. At a charitable sale, items created by kids and adults could be purchased and by anyone in attendance. The most costly group included soft toys imported from Ukraine and people with disabilities. They will be taken home by a stunning delegate from Singapore who will tell them about the blind children of Kharkiv. And I'll bring back a little bit of the warmth and international support I've received here.”

*Dr. Olga Telna, Professor Kharkiv Academy for Humanitarian and Pedagogical Studies, Ukraine.*



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Education and becoming members. The conference was truly lovely and inviting.”

*Dr. Wendy Murawski, Professor at California State University, Northridge*

“The participants were so involved and attentive. After my presentation, I felt even more enthusiastic and excited.



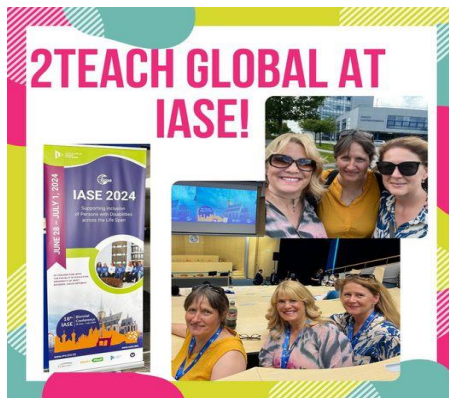
Finally, I was thrilled to have gained a new fan - a lovely young student from the University of West Bohemia who admired my presentation style. She believes that all teachers should teach like me, as if they were performers. It's such a flattering compliment! I am truly grateful.” *Dr. Sumita Chakraborti-Ghosh, Professor at Tennessee State University*



“Prague and Pilzen were both breathtaking and the locals were incredibly welcoming and friendly. I would encourage

anyone to consider it as a travel destination. Most importantly, I had a fantastic time with my friends Bea Zumwald and Cristina Sacara-Gulløv! To my fellow special education colleagues, I highly recommend joining the International Association for Special

“IASE has my sincere gratitude for supporting our projects and giving me the chance to go the esteemed conference in the Czech Republic. Both our organization and the kids we serve have undergone radical change as a result of this support. Without even mentioning our volunteer site in Uganda, your kindness has allowed us to improve our overall services for children with special needs, grow our programs, and improve our educational resources. These events have provided transformative knowledge and insights. I conversed with professionals around the world,



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shared ideas, and returned with creative methods to improve our programs. We are so appreciative of your support, which is the foundation of these enlightening experiences.”

*Moses Walusimbi, Programs Director, Special Children, Special People, Uganda*



Membership  
Dr. Rachael A. Gonzales

Let us *Celebrate* the success of IASE’s 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference at the University of West Bohemia, Czech Republic, June 28-July 1, 2024.

We had representation from over 32 countries sharing their *VOICES* to advocate for the educational, legal and community rights of individuals with disabilities to be fully included in educational and community facilities and programs.

The conference was a great success because of each one of you. One of the exciting events that took place during the conference was members such as Elia Dyitege seen in this picture wearing his traditional Tanzania dress meet his sponsor, Nikki Murdick. I also had the privilege of meeting Dr. Josephine Oranga from Kenya, whom I sponsor.

If you would like to support fellow special educators from developing economy nations to become members of our dynamic association, we encourage you to sponsor a new member by clicking on the \$20.00 DEconomy button under Online Membership.

<https://iase.org/membership>

IASE membership is a great way to share your personal experience, training, professional interest, and models of educational delivery with other members from different countries. With the added membership of 42 individuals who became IASE members during the conference our total membership increased to 370.

Invite your colleagues to become an IASE member. If you are already a member, remember to renew your membership to stay abreast of IASE events. I send out renewal reminders a year from when you first joined IASE. Each IASE member receives a certificate of membership that you can make a copy for your personal file.

The next IASE conference will be in Bhutan, summer of 2026 so get ready for another rewarding conference with colleagues from around the globe.



Nikki Murdick, her husband, myself and Elia Dyitege

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## Dr. Marg Csapo Scholarship Awardees

By Dr. Carolyn Lindstrom



It's been an honor to work with and learn more about such a bright group of Scholarship Awardees. We had eight attendees from six countries. You have inspired us all!

Featured from right to left (top), Moses Walusimbi, Uganda; Nadiia Datso, Ukraine; Claudia Viviana Contreras Girón, Guatemala; Dr. Olha Telna is also from the Ukraine

Right to left (bottom row.) Dr. Josephine Oranga, Kenya; Dr. Le Thi Minh Ha, Vietnam; Dr. Nga, T. Hoàng, Vietnam; Elia Dyitege Tanzania; and Scholarship Chair, Dr. Carolyn Lindstrom.

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## Special Recognition

Many thanks to our IASE President, Dr. Renata Ticha; Secretary, Dr. Brenda Lazarus; and Past President Dr. Zandile Nkabinde for their tireless efforts. We are proud of you!



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## IASE MINUTES FROM OUR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

JUNE 30, 2024,

PILSEN, CZECH REPUBLIC

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Board Members Present in Pilsen:

Renata Ticha\*, President; Daniel McCarthy\*, President-Elect (interim); Zandile Nkabinde\*, Past-President; Brenda Lazarus\*, Secretary; Iris Drower\* Treasurer; Rachael Gonzales, Membership (Voting for Pavan); Carolyn Lindstrom, National Chairs Co-Chair (Voting for Josue),

We have a quorum. President Ticha explained the voting process. Reports will be given orally but approval will be from any member present.

Guests: Approximately 25 people besides the Board members were present at the meeting.

The meeting was held, in person, as part of the 18th Biennial IASE Conference.

Meeting called to order at 17:11 p.m. by President Renata Ticha.

The Minutes of the 2022 General Membership Meeting in Vietnam were available for review. Anne Crylen moved and Zandile Nkabinde seconded the minutes.

## BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**PRESIDENT:** Report moved by Zandile and seconded by Carolyn.

**PAST PRESIDENT:** Report moved by Carolyn and seconded by Rachael. Zandile told those present why she likes IASE better than other organizations. It is a grass roots organization. She expressed appreciation for the support she received as the "Covid President".

**PRESIDENT-ELECT:** Report moved by Zandile and seconded by Craig Goldsberry.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Report moved by Daniel and seconded by Zandile.

Rachael reported that we currently have 350 members representing 38 countries.;11 libraries and a number of new members from Czech Republic as a result of the conference. She encouraged members to sponsor those from developing countries for an additional \$20 to their membership. She sends out email reminders when your membership is due and encourages members to respond right away. Mary Gale Budzisz recognized Rachael for her work on getting the rolling membership process going.

**TREASURER:**Report was moved by Zandile and seconded by Daniel.

Iris reported the following in our accounts.

\$11,748.16 (Checking account)
7,806.89 (Marg Csapo Scholarship Fund)
13,448.56 (VSP fund)
152,258.05 (operational savings)
<hr/>
\$185,261.66 (total)

**SECRETARY:**

Report was moved by Zandile and seconded by Craig Goldsberry.Mary Gale commented that the minutes of all meetings are to be sent to the Board within 30 days of the meeting. Renata said that Brenda has always gotten the minutes out in a timely fashion.

**JOURNAL PUBLICATION:** Report was moved by Zandile and seconded by Anne Crylen.

Renata announced that she is looking for new reviewers. She explained that the journal gets a lot of new authors and consulting editors need to work with them; several edits are often needed. There was a question from the audience about the Conference Proceedings. Renata said that Brit Ferguson worked hard as editor and there are over 60 proceedings. The

proceedings were sent out to members prior to the conference.

**NEWSLETTER:**

Report was moved by Daniel and seconded by Carolyn.

Iris introduced the new newsletter editor, Dr. Samantha Riggelman of St. Joseph University (Philadelphia). They will work together to get the next edition out during the transition.

**GIVING/VOLUNTEER SERVICE:** Report was moved by Zandile and seconded by Daniel.

Iris stated that we currently have 11 VSP sites in 7 countries, 1 approved site (in Tanzania) is pending a visit by a member. 3 sites have been moved to Sustainable; SEKOMU (Tanzania), Ho Chi Minh City University (Vietnam), and Santa Maria Clinic (Vietnam). Craig Goldsberry was introduced as the Vietnam site Representative. Moses Walusimbi was introduced as the director of the new site in Uganda.

**NATIONAL CHAIRS:** Report moved by Daniel and seconded by Zandile.

Carolyn reported that there are currently 10 Active National Chairs. Some National Chairs participated in the Virtual Dialogues. There will be a session for National Chairs today. The new coordinator of National Chairs will be Samantha Mrstik starting in January.

**WEBSITE:** Kaylynn's written report moved by Brenda and seconded by Iris.

Currently we are working on updating the website and streamlining the navigation as the website host has migrated the site twice in the last few years resulting in redundancies and broken links. In the last two years the conference pages have been updated with information about the last conference in Vietnam and information about the conference in 2024 in Pilsen. A new the membership area and blog were created on the website resulting



in members being able to receive updates via email.

**BOOK PUBLICATION:** Report moved by Daniel and seconded by Rachael. Mary Gale gave an oral update on the progress of the book which was spearheaded by Ginny MacEntee. Iris will assist them to finish the project.

## **BUSINESS**

### **NEW OFFICER ELECTION**

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** Zandile announced the new offers and said they would take over for a 2 year term beginning in January of 2025.

President-Daniel McCarthy  
President Elect-Carolyn Lindstrom  
Secretary-Rudia Kihura  
Treasurer-Iris Drower  
Members-At-Large: Tejal Kothari (India),Jan Siska (Czech Republic) Josue Niyokwizigirwa (Brundi)  
Past President- Renata Ticha

### **SILENT AND LIVE AUCTION**

**UPDATES:** Daniel gave update on silent auction. We made about \$300 and both the Live Auction at the Gala and silent auction funds will support scholarships for the Marg Csapo Fund.

### **2026 CONFERENCE SITE**

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** The Kingdom of Bhutan will be the host country for the 19th Biennial Conference, Paro University. (The site video will be shown at the Closing Session on July 1.)

### **ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR:**

1. Mary Gale brought up that the cost of entry visa is high for Bhutan. Renata explained that they have special visas for educational conferences. She has travelled there 3 times.
2. Daniel McCarthy asked people to think about how they can share IASE with their

organizations. He said that he has heard many attendees say that they is the best conference they have attended.

**ADJOURNED-**Meeting was adjourned at 18:00. Zandile moved and Rachael seconded the adjournment  
Respectfully Submitted, Dr. Brenda Lazarus

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## **EVALUATION RESULTS**

### **18<sup>th</sup> BIENNIAL CONFERENCE**

### **DR. BRENDA LAZARUS, IASE SECRETARY**

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At the closing session of the IASE 18th Biennial Conference in Pilsen, Czech Republic, attendees had an opportunity to complete an electronic conference evaluation. Thirty nine delegates completed the evaluation. Overall, 64.1% said they were Very Satisfied and 35.9% were Satisfied with the conference. Delegates were Very Satisfied (69.2 %) with the conference facilities; 76.9% were Very Satisfied with the registration process. Twelve of the respondents (35.1%) attended the Pre Conference Site Visits and 23 (62.2%) did not attend.

The Conference Site visits were held before the conference for the first time as the schools in Pilsen were closing for summer holidays the next day. (Note: Many delegates attended the site visits who did not complete the evaluation.)

Overall, attendees were Very Satisfied (74.4%) with the Friday Opening Session. 56.4% were Very Satisfied with with the lunches and breaks although several wished there had been more vegetarian options. The Closing Gala ranked Very Satisfied (64.1%) by the respondents. Attendees ranked Network opportunities Very Satisfied (71.4 %). The Keynote Speakers were ranked Satisfied by between 61.5%-79.5%. Twenty eight of the respondents learned of the conference because

they are IASE members, 5 people found the conference on the IASE website and 6 listed “other” as their source of conference awareness.

We thank the attendees from the USA, India, Vietnam, Australia, Indonesia, Canada, Czech Republic, Singapore and the Ukraine for taking the time to complete the evaluation. 69.2% of the respondents indicated an interest in volunteering for the next conference or for being on one of the Board committees.

We received many good suggestions for our next conference. These have been shared with the pertinent Board Members.

If you attended the conference and did not have a chance to complete the evaluation, but would like to be involved with the Board committees or help with the next conference in Bhutan, please reach out to one of the Board Members with your interest. We hope to see you in Bhutan for the IASE 19th Biennial conference in Summer 2026.

- Newsletter Committee ( review articles, publications and events);
- Biennial Conference Committees;
- Volunteer Service Committee;
- International Journal Reviewers

For more information on how you can serve feel free to contact <mailto:dririsdoug@gmail.com>

## TREASURER’S REPORT

**Dr. Iris Drower**

as Of August 20, 2024

Account	Amount
Checking	\$7,843.86
VSP/Giving	\$11,503.40
Marg Csapo Scholarship	\$7,893.21
Operational Savings	\$157,265.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$184,506.12</b>

## BECOME PART OF OUR IASE COMMUNITY



Looking for Volunteers to serve on the following IASE Committees:

Would you like to join a committee?

- Virtual Events (panel of speakers, interactive discussions);
- Mentor Support Committee (support students through mentorship and work on advance degrees);
- Election Committee (work with past president in organizing annual election)
- Membership Committee (identify ways to increase membership and engagement across the globe);

Thanks to our amazing volunteers!



Kuddo’s to our 911 operator Dr. Jan! You can now rest that special red phone!





## Renew and Join IASE Today!

To join IASE, contact Rachael Gonzales, email: [IASEMembership@gmail.com](mailto:IASEMembership@gmail.com)

**Please print information clearly:**

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State / Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Dues:**

Regular: \$US 50 \_\_\_\_\_ Regular/Sponsor: \$US 70 \_\_\_\_\_ Student Membership: \$US 20 \_\_\_\_\_

Developing Country: \$US 20 \_\_\_\_\_ Institution: \$US 70 \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person sponsored: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail of person sponsored: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of person sponsored: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to Marg Csapo Scholarship: \$US \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed: \$US \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Information: \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ Master Card \_\_\_\_\_ Discover

Online Payment Authorized.net (Please follow link on the website @ [www.iase.org](http://www.iase.org))

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Cardholder (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque (Payable to IASE, US funds)

**Please send your membership form to:**

**IASE Treasurer**

PO Box 2159

Mesa, AZ 85214

USA

E-mail: [irisdoug@cox.net](mailto:irisdoug@cox.net)

**IASE operates on a rolling membership year; you will be invited to renew your membership one year after joining. All other membership inquiries contact: [iasemembership@gmail.com](mailto:iasemembership@gmail.com)**