

# Annuntiatu

## International Association of Special Education

The 14<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference in Wroclaw, Poland, June 21-25, 2015

### President's Message

By Iris Drower

Improving the world one child and one community at a time resonates throughout this May issue. At the forefront you will find our 14<sup>th</sup> Biennial Co-chairs Dr. Jim Chapple and Dr. Gosia Sekulowicz, finalizing plans for our June conference in Poland. Our treasurer, Steve Leitz, has been busy processing conference registrations from delegates around the world. In addition, he has been working on our website, too! Dr. Morgan Chitiyo and his editorial team have been compiling our conference proceedings. Our National Coordinator, Dr. Shamani-Jeffrey Shikwambi, has been working with our nine National Chairs to promote IASE around the globe. Congratulations to our most recent National Chair Dr. Tolulope Eni-Olorunda from Nigeria. Finally, behind the scenes our Volunteer Service Coordinators, Mary Gale Budzisz and Dr. Marg Csapo, have shown no bounds as they continue to help in the effort to expand our service to our twenty sites through our Volunteer Service Project (VSP). Kudos go out to all of our members who have given their time to volunteer. Thank you all for your commitment to our organization and endless hard work.

As members, you have the vision, knowledge, wherewithal and the experience to help us pave our way into the future. You are truly our greatest asset today and tomorrow, and we could not accomplish what we do without your support and leadership. I ask you to stay engaged, be proactive and help us shape the future of IASE. I believe the future is bright for IASE and I look forward to the day when every community around the world knows about IASE.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our conference. Enjoy the workshops and the opportunities to network. Take full advantage of this beautiful location in Wroclaw, too!

---

### The Conference is Coming!

By Jim Chapple

The 14th Biennial Conference of the International Association of Special Education is only days away and we hope that you are planning to attend! This year's conference will be held at the University of Lower Silesia in the beautiful city of Wroclaw, Poland. I know that you will find the program, the conference facility, the hotels that have been selected and the food of Poland a rare treat. Let me highlight some of the features of this year's conference.

A major focus of IASE is our Volunteer Service Projects on which we are working throughout the world. At this year's conference we have dedicated room 108 at the University of Lower Silesia as the "Volunteer Service Project" home. As you peruse the program, you will find a number of sessions by people who are in charge or have volunteered at these sites highlighting the activities taking place in each location. The room will house many displays and items for sale from the volunteer sites for conference participants to view and purchase. You will not want to miss visiting this location.

The program has been finalized and we have over 238 sessions which include 30, 45 or 60 minute lectures, many multiple presentation, round table discussions and poster sessions from 35 different countries around the world. You will not want to miss any of these interesting, professional presentations highlighting the work or research of our

presenters. Once you receive your conference materials, be sure to spend some time making a conference schedule of sessions you would like to attend. The three keynote speakers and the four "Invited Showcase Sessions" I highlighted in the last newsletter will give us important information on many aspects in the field of special education.



From left: Gosia Sekulowicz, Iris Drower, and Agens Sekulowicz preparing for the upcoming IASE conference

Tuesday morning will kick off with our **IASE General Membership Meeting** conducted by IASE President, Dr. Iris Drower. The meeting will begin at 8:00 am in the Aula Lecture Hall. This will be a time for us to learn of the work and tasks completed during the past two years by the organizations leaders and committee chairs. Two exciting events at this meeting will be the announcement of the 2016-2018 IASE officers and the location of the 2017 15th Biennial IASE conference location.

The local arrangements committee has been busy securing amazing conference materials, including a fabulous conference bag, fliers, maps, and a "gift" for each delegate. Wroclaw is full of wonderful places to explore, delicious food, and very hospitable and gracious people. Be sure to check with our volunteers around the university conference site if you have questions or need assistance.

Don't forget your donations for the Silent Auction to be held each day of the conference as well as the Live Auction at the conference Gala on Tuesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, at the Centennial Hall. This is an opportunity to bring something that represents your homeland to donate. All proceeds from the auctions will benefit the Marg Csapo Scholarship fund.

The Gala will be held at the Centennial Hall, a short distance from the hotels. Bus transportation will be provided to and from this event. Look for details in the conference bags about how to get to the Gala. That evening we will be eating traditional Polish cuisine and enjoying the B.O.B Trio Band and the theater group, Mask, an Occupational Therapy Workshop from Caritas of the Archdiocese of Wroclaw. The evening will conclude with a beautiful lightshow at the Centennial Hall grounds.

The 14th Biennial conference is going to be a memorable event from the Opening Reception to the closing session, so plan on being there for the entire event! Check [www.iase.org](http://www.iase.org) for more information.

---

## Manyara National Park Trip

By Liz Willis and Zamda Shaffi Mkiti

What does it take to bring a smile to a child's face? The International Association of Special Education Volunteer Service Project provided the opportunity to find out when four students and two staff members of the Jaffery Academy Special Needs Department were privileged to visit the Manyara National Park. Irene and Sebastian, owners of Soko Adventure and Safari Ltd. in Arusha, Tanzania, teamed with IASE to provide a van and guide to introduce the group to their own local animals...close up! Elephants, lions, flamingos, giraffes, and more! And, yes...there were lots of smiles.

The students are receiving work experience in Arusha at McMoody's Restaurant and the Pick & Pay Supermarket. They have spent about eight years at Jaffery Academy and now are generalizing their skills in the community.



Students and staff from Jaffery Academy SEN prior to departing on their trip to Manyara National Park. Kneeling in front from left: Gift, Ladi and Nancy. Standing from left: Physiotherapist Liz Willis, Jordan, Photographer Chester, SEN Deputy and Job Coach, Zamda Shaffi Mkiti, and Head of SEN Swaleha Mohamedali

The trip was educational and exciting for our students. They gave remarks such as "Look, monkeys can carry their babies on their chest." And "Wow, elephants can cross the road by themselves." The students behaved well throughout the whole journey. They reminded each other of the rules of maintaining the environment of the park, they respected each other and socialized with each other and also with their guide. The drive home was full of special recollections of what we had seen together.

We are all grateful to the IASE, to Jaffery Academy, and to Soko Adventure and Safari Ltd. for this chance to visit Manyara National Park. We hope that this is an experience that encourages families to involve their children of all abilities in their community.

## IASE Member Volunteers Needed for Tanzania University!

Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKUMO) has an enrolment of 1350 students and is located in rural Tanzania near Lushoto in the Usambara Mountains. Professionals and academics in the area of Special Education who can **commit to a minimum four-week stay** are needed between September and June.

Volunteer contributions can be made through:

- instruction of teacher education courses (can be shared with a colleague, each staying for five weeks)
- supervision of thesis research at the Master's level
- curriculum development at graduate and undergraduate levels.

These are four main curricula streams:

- Speech and Language Disorders
- Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Cognitive Disabilities and Autism Spectrum

For more information about SEKUMO, see: <http://www.sekomu.ac.tz/>. For information about becoming an IASE volunteer, go to <http://www.iase.org/> and click on Volunteer Service.

## Congratulations to Vimukti Shanta Girls School

By Marg Csapo

Vimukti is one of our Volunteer Service Project sites. It opened in January 2004 with 32 girls from the worst slum in Jaipur located in the state of Rajasthan. Going to school for the girl child is becoming more acceptable. It beats the alternative of working in a match factory at an early age or begging on the street to help support the family.

At this time, 400 young student voices say "Thank you" to IASE members for the 150 pairs of warm leggings for the older girls as the nights and the mornings are pretty cold during winter months. As a treat for all, the IASE GIVING FUND paid for a picnic at the zoo! The funding assistance covered the cost of seven buses needed for transportation, entry fees, and a refreshment for everyone. This big event was held in February.

The Grade IV girls, Laxmi, Archana, Sapna, Anita, Sonu, Neetu, Nibita, Mausam, Pushpa, Tamu, Teena, Yandana, Kusum, Tanu, Radhika, and Roya wrote: "I love to go to school. Our teacher is wonderful. She motivates us to learn and we all love her. When I grow up I will be a teacher." Police officer and doctor were the other choices given.

You should also know that all Grade X girls passed the public examination for open schools. Did you know that for 10,000 Rupees a year (approximately 190 US dollars), you can sponsor one of these young scholars? This amount buys a school uniform, a pair of shoes, a school bag, school supplies and a glass of milk with a banana every school day.

## THANKS FROM NOZUWAN

Mohammad Imam Hossian Chowdhury, Chief Executive Officer of NOWZUWAN in Chittigong, Bangladesh, sends his thanks to IASE for all of the items he has received from the IASE GIVING Fund. These educational materials will go to the new Disability Resource Center in Patiya. Classes started at this new center in January 2015. Plans are to add more classroom space as this center is developed.



Nozuwan students enjoyed learning about the new school materials

## Treasurer's Report

By Steve Leitz

As of April 30, 2015, IASE had expended \$1018 of its 2015 General Fund Budget of \$27,115 or 4%. Additionally, \$35,194 of a budgeted amount of \$56,050 (63%) has been expended from VSP dedicated account.

Account balances are as follows:

- VSP Dedicated Account = \$20,856
- Marg Csapo Scholarship Dedicated Account = \$9157
- General Fund Savings & Checking = \$283,061

Total IASE Accounts balance = \$313,074 (includes conference registration fees)

## Applications Invited for Website Administrator

IASE is looking for a member to fill the position of website administrator. If interested, please submit a letter of interest with your background and skill set. Email the letter to Iris Drower at [iris.drower@asu.edu](mailto:iris.drower@asu.edu) or post to PO Box 2159, Mesa, AZ 85214 AND to Steve Leitz at [stevenleitz@gmail.com](mailto:stevenleitz@gmail.com) or post to 8220 67th St. Ct. N.W., Gig Harbor, WA 98335.

## Look at Me, See My Abilities, Not My Albinism Condition

By Bonface Ophiyah Massah



Being white in a majority of a black society is not easy. Parents, community and the environment need to accept us; no mocking, bullying and discriminatory names. I do realize that my case is not different from many persons with albinism, hence I would always fight for our rights and consistently lobby and advocate for equal human rights and respect of the law, regardless of our abilities.

As a person with albinism, I have come to realize that I can do what others can, if the environment is inclusive of my unique needs and life style. Throughout my young years, I did not mind or consider the way I look. It had nothing to do with my appearance. I know this was part of my childhood but it has helped me to look at myself with strength till now. I have the energy to say I can do it, growing up in a family with all the love and acceptance from my dad, mom, brother and sisters. Being a third-born child with albinism in the family meant that my parents already had experience in raising children with albinism. I was not the strange 'thing' as others call it in the family, but I was a bouncing baby boy.

Now grown up and happily married, I feel I have the ability to help others and fight for my own rights and respect in society. My interest has been focused on contributing to promotion of human rights through policy advocacy and implementation of best practices. Growing up in a community where my parents and the community loved me so much because of my albinism has made me realize the need to promote human rights and create an inclusive society in particular for persons with albinism. The love and support I received from those around me in my family, at school, workplace and society has made me develop a positive attitude towards attaining my goals and career development. I believe that through an awareness of disability rights we can build a community of trust, where persons with disability can enjoy their rights like all citizens and make their own life choices. The recognition of these rights will help others to address the diversity needs of the different types of disabilities.

As a disability advocate, I have learned that even those who we think are educated and understanding, and expect them to support us, often forget and ignore us. They look at inclusion of albinism as an issue of a lesser priority; hence we are left out from development initiatives and targeted services. These are the negative attitudes and level of ignorance that has led to persons with albinism being marginalized and vulnerable. For instance, sexual rights of women with albinism are ignored due to their disability, and they therefore suffer silently from domestic violence. Young girls with albinism not only suffer from abuse, but it also affects their self-esteem and aspirations in life, like marriage and education.

Human rights inequalities among person with albinism have led to the lack of specific supports and materials that meet basic human rights. For example, lack of information about health and education has contributed to increased cases of severe skin cancer, HIV/AIDS, lack of access to gender and reproductive health services, inaccessible education and learning materials, e.g. large print learning materials for students with albinism and low vision.

The current practice of killings and kidnappings of persons with albinism is a result of stigma that is attached to our disability and that in turn disadvantages and restricts our participation as persons with albinism in society. This issue is more pronounced when society, government and other stakeholders take little or no account of our impairment, hence exclude us from mainstream activities. These killings are also largely a consequence of society's negative response and lack of sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of persons with albinism. Our right to life though granted in the various legal and human rights instruments seem not to be taken care of as evidenced by the recent cases of murders and kidnappings of persons with albinism. This trend has had the effect of limiting the participation of people with albinism in particular activities, children dropping out of school, and women and men not participating in development programs in our communities due to fear for their lives.

The challenge before us as an association of special education is to sustain and double our efforts to raise awareness among the various sectors of society of the rights of persons with albinism. This would facilitate a paradigm shift from perceiving persons with albinism as useless or a curse and would give us recognition that we are human beings with abilities to contribute to national development.

Malawi has made a number of constitutional provisions in its fight against discrimination of persons with disabilities in the Republican Constitution and progressively developed policies and legislation towards the provision of adequate access to education, health, employment, and other public social services for persons with disabilities. Examples include the National Policy on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (2006) and the Disability ACT 2012 and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Despite all these national efforts, persons with albinism continue to find it difficult to access basic services in the areas of health, education and employment.

Communities and the government do not afford adequate time and resources to advocating for our rights. It maybe because they think everybody understands us as we are visible 'WHITE SKIN' due to our albinism condition. However, to develop good governance for sustainable human development, persons with albinism like other groups of persons with disabilities must be involved in all decision making stages from the family to national levels. More than 4% of Malawi's population is composed of people with disabilities, which includes those with albinism; hence we must have equal opportunities to participate in the public decision-making processes. It is important to realize that God does not give us favors because of the disability we have, but we need to develop a positive attitude, not the victim's attitude, that will lead to perseverance, optimism and keep us going to enjoy all aspect of life. My brothers and sisters with albinism need to be reminded that we are loved and have worth and value no matter how turned around or despairing our life appears at this moment in time. We must be proud of who we are, our abilities and appreciate our beauty to realize that we will not feel like this forever. We are God's image created with a purpose to love and change the lives of others to achieve true inclusion.

*Bonface Ophiyah Massah, is a Disability Advocate with the Association of Persons with Albinism in Malawi (APAM) bonmassah@gmail.com, albinismassociationmw@gmail.com.*

---

### Conference Site Selection for 2019

If you are interested in hosting the 2019 IASE Conference, please visit [www.iase.org](http://www.iase.org) home page and review the ten criteria listed. Then develop and submit a proposal by August 1, 2015. Please send your proposal to Dr. Iris Drower, IASE President, P.O. Box 2159, Mesa, Arizona, 85214, USA or email your proposal to : [iris.drower@asu.edu](mailto:iris.drower@asu.edu).

---

### Journal of the International Association of Special Education (JIASE)

The editorship of the JIASE is currently changing hands. Please, be patient with receiving reviews for your submissions. Big thank you to Dr. Morgan Chitiyo for his hard work. We look forward to working with everyone in the upcoming months and years.  
Drs. Dalton and Tichá

---

Renáta Tichá  
104 Pattee Hall  
150 Pillsbury Drive SE  
Minneapolis, MN, 55455, USA



**Renew Your IASE Membership**

**Please print information clearly:**

**Name:** Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_

**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 \_\_\_\_\_ Cheque (Payable to IASE, US funds)

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

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

**Signature of Cardholder:** \_\_\_\_\_

**By Mail: IASE Treasurer**

Steve Leitz  
8220 67th St. Ct. N.W.  
Gig Harbor, WA 98335, USA

**By Email:** [stevenleitz@gmail.com](mailto:stevenleitz@gmail.com)

If you have special needs that require the journal or newsletter to be sent to you electronically, please note that here.  
IASE membership runs from January 1 through December 31 of each calendar year.