

Volume XXXXI, Issue 1,
February 2025

Annuntiatu

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION



International Association of Special Education

Fostering a Global Exchange of Ideas and Information



President's Message

Daniel McCarthy

By way of Introduction, my name is Daniel McCarthy and as of 1/1/25 I am now the newly elected President of IASE for the 2025-2026 term of office. I am a retired special education teacher and school social worker (MSW, PPSC, LCSW).

I have been an active member of IASE as the Interim President Elect, including participation on the conference committee for the 18th Biennial Conference just completed in the Czech Republic and as a presenter and attendee at our other previous international conferences in Alicante, Spain; Magamba, Tanzania; Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and most recently, in Pilsen, the Czech Republic.

As the new President, I want to share with you my hopes for our IASE organization for the next several years, including our next conference which to be the 19th Biennial Conference to be held June 15-19, 2026, and hosted by the Royal Thimphu College (RTC) located in Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan.

**INSIDE,
WE ALSO
TALK
ABOUT:**

VSP Updates

Membership
updates

Treasurer's Report



President's Message continued

First, I want to acknowledge the previous President, Dr. Renata Ticha for her leadership and the entire Board of Directors for their efforts to insure that IASE continues to be a relevant and important voice for special education students and their families across many borders.

My hope is that during my term of office that we can continue to grow as an international voice for special education, inclusive education and the support services that ensure that all students have a place and presence in all our schools in all our nations.

My goals for IASE are to improve our communication within the organization and within the international community by improving and updating our website which is so important as a platform for information and discussion within our international community.

To improve our services, we need to improve our revenue from membership, Biennial conferences and other sources which need to be developed to increase our international presence and membership to at least 500 and strengthen 3 of our important IASE initiatives:

- 1) The Volunteer Service Project (VSP)
2. The National Chairs Project
- 3) Virtual Dialogues

Communication is very important: Our IASE Board meets 4 times during each calendar year. In 2025, we are scheduled to meet on 2/22, 4/26, 8/23 and 11/15. If there are any issues, suggestions, requests or agenda items that you, our IASE members would like the Board to discuss, please email our Board contact information which can be found on our [website](#) under About Us/Leadership/Board of Directors.

Our organization would not be able to function and grow without members who provide the dedication and passion that our field of practice requires. The best to all and thank you for your continued participation and membership in IASE. Please respond with comments to Daniel McCarthy, IASE President:
DanielRNM@comcast.net

All About Ronnie

*By Mary Gale Budzisz with
Moses Walusimbi*

Ronnie at 7 years old



Our newest IASE Volunteer Service Project site is truly a special place. The Special Children Special People Organization is in the process of being developed in the village of Mpigi, which is about a one- hour drive west of Kampala, Uganda. Let's backtrack a bit....to 2018.

Serendipity does seem to be the catalyst for the creation of our VSP sites. I was planning my first trip to Uganda to visit the Mountain Gorillas.....and received an email out of the blue from a young gentleman named Moses who explained that he was struggling to create an inclusive school to serve the needs of very special children. His quest intrigued me and the possible visit dates worked into my travel schedule. Thus, I arranged a driver to find Moses using his directions, but lacking a physical address...around the curve, near the church, under a mango tree...but we did locate the little house that sheltered 23 special students. The main Welcome Committee was Ronnie. He came bounding out of the front door, with a big broad smile, lots of 7 year-old excess energy, wearing a T-shirt with LAUGHLIN emblazoned across his chest and gave us the warmest reception in the heart of Africa. It never dawned on me that he was missing a whole left arm and that his right arm was very short and severely deformed. But the name on his shirt did resonate with me, because Don Laughlin and I went to High School together in Owatonna, Minnesota and he developed the town of Laughlin and built the famous Riverside Casino. It is located on the Colorado River in Nevada, USA. Ronnie was certainly emblazoned in my mind....

Moses shared with me that Ronnie had been abandoned by his father, dropped off at his grandmother's home who was elderly and could not support him, and finally was referred to the Special Children Special People (SCSP) Organization. He worked within the occupational therapy department and mastered the activities of daily living and eventually was placed in a mainstream classroom which only lasted for one week. He was rejected because of his uniqueness.

All About Ronnie continued

Early in December of 2024 I had the pleasure of introducing Iris, the IASE VSP Coordinator, to Ronnie in his new setting that Moses has provided for him. We were able to attend the end of year event entitled “Speech Day” at which time the parents and community members are invited to enjoy the students’ presentations, dances, singing, and speeches. It was glorious to see everyone dressed in colorful and culturally appropriate attire recognizing the learning acquired by the students throughout the school term.

Moses has created a long range inclusive plan for regular and special children with goals to be achieved within his community setting. Our IASE VSP has been able to help meet some of his goals. We have purchased chickens and goats for the children to raise. Also we donated funds to set up a small playground with fun items which are used by all of the children. Eva Moesli and her family from Switzerland have been very supportive during the last seven years by funding necessary projects. They paid for the construction of the first building, digging the water source, and providing the water tower. Also with a grant they provided funding for the implementation of a microfinance program to empower parents to learn financial literacy and begin income-generating activities.

There are many wishes that need funding, such as: floor tiles in the dormitories, creating an outdoor shelter for community training and relaxation, surveillance cameras for monitoring, kitchen upgrading, uniforms, creating a library of books, games, teaching tools and other activities. If you would like to donate to Special Children Special People you can do so via our IASE website at <https://www.iase.org/donate-now> Uganda cannot host crowdfunding accounts, hence Eva Moesli has organized a fundraiser campaign to help complete a new building on site. You can donate by visiting <https://www.gofundme.com/f/special-children-special-people-scsp> or scanning the QR code below.



Ronnie has grown up.....and his leadership is evident. He can be seen helping in many ways, always smiling, organizing, setting up equipment, and dancing. When you go to volunteer at SCSP please get Ronnie on your dance card.

Left: Ronnie enjoying the new playground swing at the Special Children Special People Campus located in Uganda.
Right: QR Code to visit the Go Fund Me campaign



A visit to Sankalp (Delhi, India)

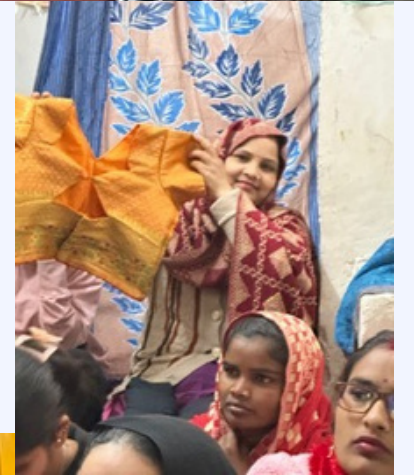
By Brenda Lazarus, PhD



In early February, I had an opportunity to visit our Sankalp VSP site in New Delhi, India. I emailed Dr. Anupriya Chadha, director of the program. She invited me to visit the Early Intervention classes (started in January 2022) and the Sewing Program for women (started in April 2022). My first stop was with the youngest children (2-4). There were 20 in the class divided amongst two teachers: 2 1/2-4 year olds had 12 children, 4-6 year old classroom was 8 children. The children come from a poverty area nearby and the goal is to get them ready for public school by age 6. They learn in Hindi and English. They showed off their skills with numbers, body parts, letters, colors, and nursery rhymes. The older children (5-6) were in the next room with a teacher and an assistant. Some of them came over and recited their multiplication facts. They have some educational materials and play equipment that they store in a small closet and bring out after the lessons are over. They integrate children with disabilities into the classes as they are identified, informally. Currently, there is one girl with physical disabilities, one boy who is visually impaired with speech and language issues, and a brand new nonverbal girl that Dr. Anu feels has autism.



Our next visit was to another nearby location, again, very small classrooms in an old building. This is the home of the Women's Sewing Program that serves women from the poor neighborhood where the school is located. There are 10 women in each new batch and 40 have gone through the program so far. They sit on the floor and have to share sewing machines as they only have seven now. The women showed off their projects with obvious pride: dresses, blouses, kurtas. There is one teacher who teaches them how to use the machines and to create patterns. Dr. Anu provides the backing for the patterns and the women bring their own fabric. Some of them have been able to make a little money by making items for neighbors. IASE has provided funds for sewing machines. They need more.



In addition to the programs I visited, there is a large after-school program (started in 2018) to teach students from grades 5-9 computer skills. About 170 children are in the program. IASE has provided funds for some of the laptops, but they need more.

If you are traveling for professional or personal reasons, I recommend visiting any of our sites. You would need to contact the site supervisor to make arrangements. I took some school supplies and candy for the children. It would be worth your time to see how our IASE funds are helping to make a difference.





**Sponsor a New Member and
Make a Difference**

IASE continues to reach out to members around the world as we spread the word of what IASE has to offer. Part of this comes from the generosity of our membership. Here is an opportunity for you to sponsor a new member and become part of their lives. If you would like to support fellow special educators from developing economy nations to become members in our dynamic association, we encourage you to use the donation button on the membership page. For \$20 you can sponsor a new member. \$100.00 will pay for five new members. Click on the sponsorship button to sponsor one member. Click on sponsor members for more than one sponsorship. Thank you for your support. For more information, go to [membership](https://www.iase.org/membership) <https://www.iase.org/membership> or contact our Membership Chair, Dr. Rachael Gonzales rgonzales@csus.edu



Rachael A. Gonzáles. Ed.D
Membership Chair

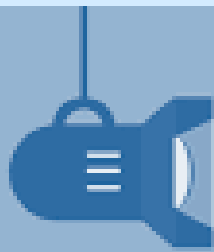
IASE is only as strong as our membership

THANK YOU to all who continue to work towards the improvement of quality of life and service delivery for all individuals with special needs in an inclusive environment. A special **THANK YOU** to IASE members who have graciously supported other individuals from developing economy nations to become IASE members.

As 2025 is before us remember to renew your IASE membership. You do not want to miss the **Annuntiatius**, our quarterly newsletter and the annual Journal of the **International Association of Special Education** along with other information about IASE such as participating in the Volunteer Service Projects, the 2026 conference in Bhutan and future webinars.

Current Membership: 334
2025 Membership Goal: 500

Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



I am Eric NIYIKIZA M. from the Republic of Rwanda, and I have been a member of IASE since 2020. I volunteer with the Tiberias Initiative for Children (T.I.C-Rwanda), a registered charity dedicated to supporting children with disabilities in Rwanda. T.I.C-Rwanda (www.ticrwanda.org) also provides socio-economic support to the families of these children.

I am pleased that my membership in IASE has been extended, and I deeply appreciate IASE's commitment to sponsoring the membership of individuals from low-income countries who may have limited financial means.

"My goal is to continue working to support children with special educational needs and to promote the work of IASE. In fact, I hope to see more members from Rwanda join IASE."

In collaboration with T.I.C-Rwanda, we are excited about the possibility of establishing an IASE Rwanda branch and working together to further the mission of IASE.



Treasurer's Report

Checking: \$5,566.58

Marg Scholarship: \$7,893.99

VSP: \$20,004.53

Operating Savings: 142,720.68

Total available balance
\$176,185.78



Renew and Join IASE Today!
To join IASE, contact Rachael
Gonzales, email: rgonzales@csus.edu
IASE Membership

Please print clearly

Surname:		First name:	
Address:			
City:		State/Province:	
Postal code:		Country:	
E-mail:			

*Membership type	US	(check applicable)	Name	Amount
<i>Institution</i>	\$70			
<i>Regular</i>	\$50			
<i>Sponsorship</i> 3 or more sponsored individuals – please state number here and attach details in page 2 below. Thanks)	\$20 /person		(Name and email of sponsored)	
			(Name and email of sponsored)	
<i>Student</i>	\$20			
<i>Developing economy</i>	\$20		Please refer to website for qualifying countries.	
<i>Marg Csapo Scholarship</i> (Donation)	\$ _____			
Total				

PAYMENT DETAILS:

VISA Master Card Discover Authorized.net (Please follow link on the website @ www.iase.org)	Name of Card holder (print): Credit card number: Expiry date:	Cheque Payable to: IASE Treasurer US funds Send membership form to: IASE Treasurer US funds PO Box 2159 Mesa AZ 85214
Billing Address:		

Details of 3 or more sponsored individuals

Name of sponsored individual	Email address

IASE's builds on current and historical strength to attend to her mission statement of reaching out to the wider international disability community. The following information that you provide will make a difference to our outcome as an IASE team and is greatly appreciated.

Name of member:-	Country :
------------------	-----------

Subject	Check level of participation	✓	Please specify where appropriate
Active participation	Research		
	Practical		
Profession (please check only 1)	Academic		
	Education		
	Therapy		
	Support service		
Area of interest (check NOT more than 2)	Policy/management		
	Specific disability		
	Transition / occupational		
	Social / Community		
	Advocacy		
	Communication/behavior		
	Others		
Interest for participating in IASE programs	Presentation		
	Sharing /Observing		

Effective 28 June, 2017 IASE is implementing rolling membership dates. This means that an individual new membership will be effective for a year after payment is processed. Membership renewal will work similarly: membership will be extended for one year provided a renewal is processed before the membership expires. If a renewal is received after the membership has expired, the new expiration date of the membership will be one year after the renewal.

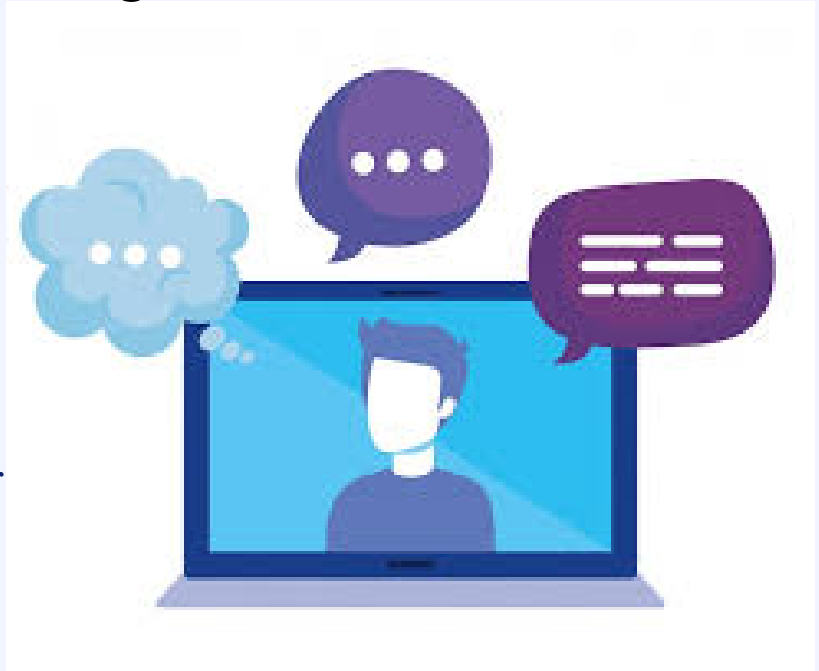
Join Us for a Virtual Dialogue

There will be a virtual dialogue with three National Chairs on March 29th at 9 am EST United States. The dialogue will feature John Oyundoyin, Nigeria; Ashleigh Molloy, Canada; Anupriya Chadha, India on the current state of special education in their countries. More information forthcoming through email and the website.

Newsletter Updates

By Samantha Riggleman

If you have any resources, stories, and pictures for a resource corner in future editions. Please email any additions to the newsletter to my email: srigglem@sju.edu.



Stay Up to Date

Visit the website: <https://www.iase.org/>



Save the Date

What: 19th biennial IASE conference

When: June 15-19, 2026

Where: Royal University of Bhutan