



## A MESSAGE FROM THE IASE PRESIDENT

Dr. Renáta Tichá

It has been a little over a month since we successfully closed the 17th Biennial Conference of IASE in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The conference not only enriched us professionally by sharing results of research and practice but also culturally and socially. Our Vietnamese hosts at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Education (HCMC) under the leadership of Dean Nga Hoang and her colleagues prepared a spectacular display of dance and music for us, depicting the history and cultural diversity of Vietnam. We felt at home in this welcoming and diverse country in South East Asia.

The conference was especially rewarding this year as it took place after a time lag caused by the pandemic. While online events have their place and can reach many IASE members around the globe, they cannot replace the in-person elements of ad-hoc conversations, spontaneous exchange of ideas, and friendship-building conversations over delicious cuisine.

The conference in Ho Chi Minh City attracted over 200 delegates from 27 countries, including Vietnam, Cambodia, India, Nigeria, Tanzania, the Czech Republic, Australia, Hong Kong, the USA, and so many more. The conference covered a variety of topics from inclusive education, use of technology, transition to employment, teacher education, Volunteer Service Sites, early intervention, university preparation, community development and so much more. With extra effort from the conference hosts and some technical challenges, we were able (for the most part) to accommodate in-person as well as online participants.

The conference would not have been possible without the HCMC leadership, IASE conference planning committee, IASE board members, and all of the hospitable conference volunteers. So again, a grand thank you to the IASE conference planning committee, HCMC, the IASE board, and conference volunteers for their dedication and tireless efforts over the course of three years. The conference in Vietnam gave us all the much-needed energy and enthusiasm for the year ahead in working with and serving children, youth, and adults with disabilities, parents, teachers, direct support professionals, and others in our respective communities.

Without sharing ideas, experiences, successes, and challenges with our IASE colleagues and friends from many different countries and cultures, our work and service would not have the same energy, creativity, and impact. Let's utilize the conference momentum and keep up the great work as we prepare for the 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial IASE conference in Pilzen in the Czech Republic (Plzeň in Czech) in July 2024.

Enjoy this issue of Annuntiatius with many inspiring stories from the conference, engage in submitting an article to the Journal of IASE (JIASE), become a reviewer for the journal, engage at one or more of the Volunteer Service (VSP) sites, get involved with one of our IASE committees (newsletter, PR, membership, National Chair, etc.) participate in the continuing Virtual Dialogues, and stay in touch. Remember to read more about the conference and check out all IASE updates at <https://iase.org/>.



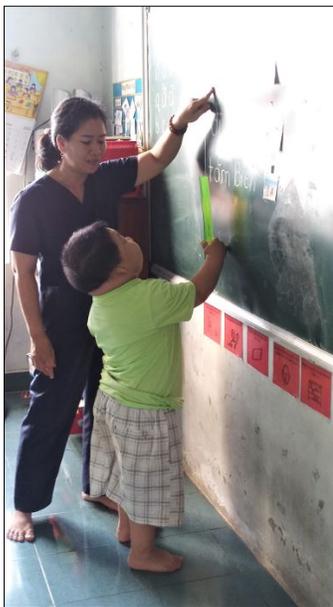
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## VSP SITE VISITS IN VIETNAM July 2022

Dr. Brenda Lazarus

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Before the 17th Biennial Conference, I took the opportunity of being in Vietnam to fly up to Hue to visit our VSP sites with Dr. Iris Drower. The Fund for Genetics and Counseling is the umbrella organization for the programs that we support. First, we went to Future School in Hue City. They serve about 70 children, ages 5-30. We visited several very organized classrooms. They were doing individual activities and had visual schedules posted. Iris noted that things had improved since her last visit which was three years ago (top to bottom photos show individual lessons, visual schedules, and 1-1 classroom work).



They had added a new roof over the recreation area courtesy of a Japanese group that supports them and several colorful murals in the hallways. Ms. Phuong Anh, Assistant Director of the Fund for Genetics and Counseling, showed us all the boxes of supplies and games purchased through our IASE donations. Photos indicate a wide array of materials and educational supplies. I checked these out with the Principal of the Future School. They created IASE donation stickers which they placed on the computer printer and other big items.



Next, we visited Phuong Anh's office which is in a building of the *Fund for Genetics and Counseling*, home to some of the specialists who come to assess children and take care of audiology and hearing aids. This service saves families from having to make an hour's drive to DaNang.

The next day, we drove out of Hue, about an hour, to the town of Nam Dong. There are two more programs that IASE supports out in the countryside. In this area of Vietnam, half of the population is an ethnic minority with the other half being Vietnamese. Many live in more mountainous areas. First, we went to *New Way School*, which is

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located in an old villa. There were two staff members, one being a minority member herself, and 6 children (2 were absent). Most of the parents are farmers and have to be in the fields early in the morning so children are dropped off by motor scooters around 7:30 a.m. and they don't get picked up until 4:30, making a very long day. They were doing a group story when we arrived, sitting on the floor with low tables. A couple of the children cannot walk and some showed evidence of genetic disorders. This is an area where Agent Orange was heavily used and the effects are still being seen. The teachers were happy to receive all the classroom materials paid for with IASE funds. Ms. Phoung Anh explained that these children are not accepted in the local schools and without New Way; they would just be sitting at home all day. The children next did individual activities with the teachers moving around to help. Some could not function without the teacher's help. They were of varying degrees of ability, working on letters, colors, and numbers. They used visual schedules and the materials for each lesson had been pre-arranged in plastic trays for the children.

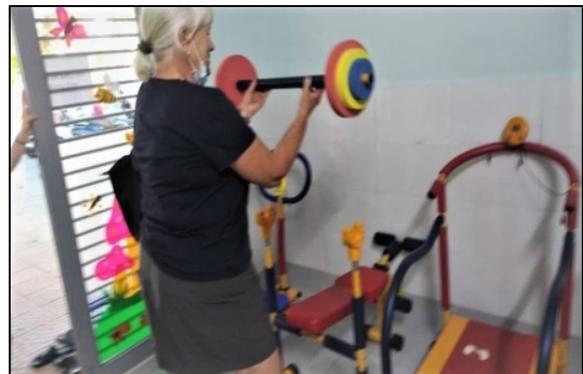


The next visit was to The Organic Farm, also in the Nam Dong region. This is a modern purpose-built facility that houses 13-30-year-olds with developmental disabilities in a residential setting during the week. They return to their homes on the weekend. There are three "house parents" who supervise the site. The teachers are paid monthly by the local school district and also receive a monthly bonus from the local Party government. The residents do their own cooking and laundry, and learn farming skills, like killing and plucking the chickens. IASE donated funds to buy pigs for the farm a few years ago but, unfortunately, they



got some disease and had to be put down, so all they have at present are chickens, a vegetable garden, and several fruit trees. They sell the extra chickens, fruit, and vegetables to the local people. One of the older boys is the chef for the home. He cooks the meals on a hot plate and has a huge rice cooker. The others do set up and clean up. It was lunchtime when we left. Lunch was bok choy, rice, and a piece of fish that had been purchased from the village market.

When we got back to Hue, we visited the Early Intervention Center, also supported by IASE. This Center has been around for a while. Iris noted many improvements here as well. Many of the staff knew Iris and they shared the progress they are making. Parents bring their children to the Center for 1:1 sessions in speech and language, OT, PT, and behavior. Phoung explained that these families can afford to pay fees on a sliding scale. They have added several more classrooms since Iris last visited three years ago. The Physical Therapist was trained at the local medical college and the Speech and Language teacher attended a training course in Ho Chi Minh City. Photos show.... All smiles from the staff and even I checked out the supplies while doing a bit of heavy lifting too!



## Classes and Ms. Quyen, Going Green!



We hired a driver to take us from Hue to Hoi An, our next stop. It took a few hours to get there, but the trip was easy. The next day we were given the hotel van and driver to take us to the Kianh Center in Dien Ban. The owner of the hotel heard where we wanted to go and is a supporter of the school, so they sent us in the van. Mr. Hoang met us at the gate and he and Ms. Quyen wanted to show us the new organic garden that they had built with the help of an environmental NGO in Hoi An. Quyen had been to the USA on a grant with an eco-group. The garden system is quite advanced; hydroponic gardens, fish tanks that filter water that is used to water the crops, and wonderful vegetation everywhere. Being a hot summer day, the younger children were all sitting on a big tarp in the grassy yard with their teachers and doing a lesson. The middle grades kids were doing yoga on the porch and the older kids were shopping at the store next to the coffee shop (closed for Covid), using their money to buy snacks and small items. There are 80 children in the program now and they serve another 10-12 children in their homes who are on the waiting list. Quyen said the teachers get very little pay, but they are loyal and love working there, so they stay. Kianh Center is well-known in the area now and they have hosted and collaborated with several of our other VSP sites; the HCMC University and the Genetic Center in Hue. They are all learning from each other and IASE helped to make that happen.



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## VOLUNTEERING WITH HEART!

Dr. Iris Drower

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Today volunteering is considered an altruistic activity. It is the social glue that holds communities together and makes the world a better place.

Our founder, Dr. Marg Csapo believed that connecting individuals from all around the world, and the ability to spread volunteering efforts and causes without being limited by physical boundaries is one of the guiding principles that inspired her to create the International Association of Special Education (IASE).



IASE believes in providing a more direct and accessible bridge by allowing direct engagement between grassroots organizations, institutions, professionals, students, educators, and volunteers. The platform is there as the bridge that helps to make the journey from one side to the other just a little bit smoother.

With the increasing popularity of volunteering, a lot of academic institutions and workplaces started to encourage their students and workers to engage in volunteering activities. This was set in full motion at our 17th Biennial Conference in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. So under the leadership and host (Ho Chi Minh City University of

Education), Dean Nga and her University team provided volunteers of all ages to inspire and promote tireless work to ensure the inclusion of all those delegates in person and online. Dean Nga's model approach toward volunteerism embodied the principles of equity, reciprocity, shared learning, and mutual benefit.

When individuals are encouraged to get involved to solve problems, then the solutions are more likely to be feasible and long-lasting. Every volunteer provided a lasting impact upon many of our delegates with the ability to change people's mindsets, attitudes, and behaviors. IASE is forever grateful to all the volunteers. For the students... you are the generations of TOMORROW.

Thank you all for creating a more equal and inclusive future for communities worldwide. Thank you for sharing your culture, endeavors, hopes, and dreams. Thank you for your creativity, your songs, your dances, and of course leading us all through the bamboo dance too!



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## IASE CONNECTION BEYOND THE WORK

**Dr. Anne E. Crylen**

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Attending an IASE conference had been on my agenda for nearly 10 years after sustaining my own Traumatic Brain Injury during the first year of my doctoral

program. Literally falling into the world of special education was unexpected and yet I was welcomed with open arms by our colleagues around the world. I had barely been on the ground after relocating to Bombay when I jumped on a plane to Vietnam for this year's event in HCMC which was by far the most outstanding collaborative spark disguised as a conference.

Educators stand out in a crowd no matter what country they come from. Instantly recognizable by their positivity, my solo trip quickly turned into a caravan of kindred spirits. My academic colleagues from the states brought their students with disabilities as a testimony to the power of global field experiences. A small but mighty band of women from Mumbai shared their various ventures to build accessible education for children with disabilities in slum communities. Feeling a bit worried that my work on gathering the voice of families' experience with Autism in Cambodia was dated (5 years), I was elated to meet a new friend who has carried the torch unbeknownst to me with my friends at Rabbit School in Phnom Penh.

Just when I was on my way back to the airport, I stopped at the artisan's marketplace outside the meeting rooms. It was there I was brought to tears of happiness. Looking down at the beautiful rice field hats colorfully painted, I heard the deaf speak. I raised my head to see a man who was apologizing that he didn't speak English and someone was coming. I broke out into the biggest smile as I signed, "I am deaf in my left ear. Hello, my name is Anne." It was the most beautiful moment as the man lit up with joy. We continued to chat and he helped me find the word for the USA over a laugh. In saying goodbye, we both cried having a mutual feeling of being "seen" and "heard". Belonging is

the core of our work in disability. I am an individual with an acquired disability that can be masked and is often overshadowed by my status as an American academic and accomplishments. In the few short days with the IASE community in HCMC, I felt seen, heard, and inspired to connect and further the work on inclusion.

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## SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR IASE COMMUNITY

**Voi Nguyen**

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Thank you for the opportunity to attend the 17th biennial IASE conference. When I was growing up, I dreamed of a prosperous and modern Vietnam where all the student-age youngsters would be able to go to

school regardless of their social and economic backgrounds or physical limitations. The conference has helped me realize that dream.

A daily walk on the busy streets from the hotel to the university where the conference was held, I felt I had traveled through time, from a nostalgic childhood to a promising future. It seemed I walked a circle of never-ending learning and contribution, an experience a good education system would inspire. In that light, and to paraphrase poet Robert Frost, I may say, when I was young, I went to school to age, to learn the past; now I am old, I go to school to rejuvenate, to learn the future.

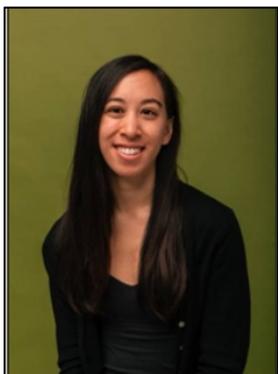
A future Vietnam with a diverse and inclusive education system appears to be well on its way. Listening to in-depth keynote speakers' speeches, participating in breakout sessions, and visiting Thuan An Center for Students with Disabilities made me feel I was also a recipient of the intellectual investment IASE offered. As I now train for my upcoming Berlin Marathon, I humbly realize that I may have joined you on a long, challenging journey to the betterment of the world in which we live. Good luck with your many future conferences and congratulations on the job well done in Vietnam. Finally, the daily lunches, Gala dinner, and auction were all so delicious and lively too!

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## ONE PERSPECTIVE ON BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE WORLDWIDE

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Growing up in the United States as a child of Vietnam War Veteran and refugee parents, Vietnam was close to my mind and heart yet far away from any sense of tangible touch. Like many first-generation Vietnamese families in the Washington, DC area, visiting post-war Vietnam felt like an

imaginative concept overruled by working and learning, to move on and to move up, in American society. One after another, my parents each independently gathered the courage and the cash to return to Vietnam decades after their unrightful departures.

Until IASE 2022, I had not had the opportunity to walk in my ancestral homelands. I am incredibly humbled and grateful that my first steps in Vietnam were by way of an outstanding organization like IASE, which advocates for inclusive education for all. Furthermore, I am greatly appreciative of the IASE community's warm welcome not only to me but also to my father. He, at 72 years young, is a retired Coast Guard civilian whose contributions in the education field stem outside of professional scholarship, the prevailing and arguably narrow perspective with which I am familiar in academia; rather, his perspectives stem from lived, personal experiences that have directly shaped mine.

As my father and I walked the hurried streets of District 5 from the hotel to Ho Chi Minh University, I was reminded of the times when he walked my five-year-old self from my childhood home to kindergarten. My father's *Annuntius* piece reflects on a circle of never-ending learning and contribution within a person's lifetime, and I wish to extend that circle to continual connections across generations. My keynote talk, "Culturally-sensitive and trauma-informed education practices," spoke of the impact of systemic and societal levels of trauma across generations. And

now, I wish to expand on such impacts to call attention to transgenerational resilience.

My parents' pursuit of education beyond the odds has impressed and motivated me. Their college careers at Da Lat University and Minh Duc University were cut short because of the War. I am in awe of my father's determination from arriving in the U.S. without any family to transversing the States and becoming a college graduate. I deeply respect my mother's perseverance in learning English and pursuing higher education while working full-time, eventually earning her bachelor's degree two years before I earned mine. Inclusive educators are sure to thank for cultivating the growth of all past, present, and future students who held histories like my parents. I am privileged to have been part of IASE in visiting schools in Vietnam, as those travels fostered these timeless reflections.

IASE builds an inclusive culture worldwide not only by connecting educators and advocates across the world; IASE also (re)connects individuals to the home within ourselves, a home that comprises societies all around us and generations before and after us. By understanding our intra- and inter-connectedness, we deepen our values of co-creating an inclusive educational culture worldwide. Thank you to IASE for living these values.

Much gratitude,  
Viann Nam-Phuong Nguyen-Feng, PhD, MPH, LP  
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology  
Director, Mind-Body Trauma Care Lab, University of Minnesota, Duluth



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## MANY THANKS & A LOT OF GRATITUDE

Mary Gale Budzisz

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As a young special educator, I met Albert Brigrance at a Special Education Conference. He had just written a comprehensive inventory of basic skills that could be used to assess each student. I was thrilled, then requested that my supervisor at the Milwaukee Public Schools (in Milwaukee, Wisconsin) purchase a copy for me to use with my students. It worked like a charm and I continued to use these documents, which were published by Francis Ferguson, the owner of Curriculum Associates, for all my teaching years.

Fast forward 45 years and I received a phone message from Royce Brigrance. She and her sister Rebecca inquired if I would like to have some of their Dad's materials. They said that "they know it would make Dad very happy knowing his books will be put to good use instead of sitting on a bookshelf."

Throughout the years I have had permission from Francis Ferguson and Albert Brigrance to share the materials with our IASE Volunteer Service Project (VSP) sites around the world. They have been translated into Vietnamese by Dr. Giang and his students in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

The transport of the heavy documents is usually a costly problem... unless you physically go to the site and schlep an extra heavy suitcase filled with the assessment materials. Luckily IASE has a VSP volunteer who travels frequently to our VSP Prosefam site in Barranquilla, Colombia, South America. We have been using Brigrance materials at that site and the new Early Childhood Developmental Inventory from the Brigrance daughters was written in Spanish!! Prosefam Director Luz Estela Navaez put this to use immediately in her inclusive school and community center which provides services to children, youth, adults, and seniors (see bottom photo). She relays her thanks to her students for these gifts. Please visit her website [www.funprosefam.com](http://www.funprosefam.com) or email her [Luz-estela01@hotmail.com](mailto:Luz-estela01@hotmail.com) if you are interested in helping and would like to visit the site.

I filled a red suitcase with various Brigrance materials and friends delivered it to IASE member, Moses Walusimbi in Kampala, Uganda, at the Special Children Special People Project. Moses says "Thank you for being so good to share your Father's books. These are some of the most precious books we have ever read, not common in Africa." The project is a grass-roots community-based organization to rehabilitate, advocate and empower people with disabilities with a focus on children to prepare them for inclusive education. You can contact Moses at [SpecialChildren.SpecialPeople.org](http://SpecialChildren.SpecialPeople.org) or [specialchildrenuganda.org](http://specialchildrenuganda.org). He can be emailed at [Specialchildren.specialpeople@gmail.com](mailto:Specialchildren.specialpeople@gmail.com)

IASE appreciates all the volunteer hours, gifts, and materials that do make a difference in the lives of our special people. I am happy to do my little part... but it is truly the gracious and altruistic people who make this all happen for the betterment of fragile and vulnerable lives.



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## MARGO CSAPO SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

### Dr. Zandile Nkabinde

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Two IASE members were awarded the Marg Csapo Scholarship to help with their funding for the 17th Biennial Conference in Vietnam. The scholarship provided five nights of lodging and the conference registration fees. This year we had one delegate in person and the other online.



Our first awardee was Dr. Anupriya Chadha from India. Dr. Anu is no stranger to IASE. She has been a member for 25 years! She is our National Chair from India as well as one of our VSP sites. I had the privilege of introducing her and all of her accomplishments at our 17<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference in Ho Chi Minh City. She is currently working as a Chief Consultant at the National Level for Inclusive Education for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which is the Education for All Campaign (EFA), a program under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. Dr. Chadha has been instrumental in planning and policy-making, preparing modules and material, and training teachers and parents on Inclusive Education. Her efforts have led to the enrollment of over 2 million special children in regular schools and it is to recognize this achievement that she was bestowed with a National Award by the Hon'ble President of India in 2007. Dr. Chadha did her BA (Honors in Psychology, and then went to do her Masters from the University of Wisconsin USA, she thereafter did her Ph.D. from Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi in the area of children with attention problems.

Dr. Chadha has also worked as a National Level Consultant on a WHO assignment for the National Programmes and has evaluated many programs on inclusive education throughout the country. Besides, she has also undertaken many UN assignments- UNDP, World Bank, UNESCO, etc. Thanks, Dr. Chadha for your ongoing dedication within the field as well as your long-standing membership support.



Our second awardee was Mr. Elia Dyitege, (online winner) from Tanzania. Elia is a communication officer for Connect Autism Tanzania (CAT) and is the Founder and Director of the Mountain of Joy Foundation in Arusha Tanzania (see next page for more details about the organization). He is no stranger to IASE. He has published updates on his organization in our newsletter. Many of us met him during our conference in Tanzania in 2019. The non-profit organization that he works for was registered in 2015. This organization aims to improve the quality of life for children, youth, and adults with autism and other challenges. CAT believes that individuals with disabilities should enjoy the same equal rights as everybody else. Thanks, Elia for your online participation and your work in the field.

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## MOUNTAIN OF JOY

Arusha, Murieth, Tanzania

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Mountain of Joy Foundation is a non-government organization that has been doing a tremendous job to educate local communities in Tanzania about people with cognitive disabilities living in challenging environments to reduce stigmatization and discrimination hence promoting equality and fighting for their rights.

Among other activities done by MJF, it also aims to make sure people with Autism and other cognitive disabilities are identified, valued, and given equal chances in both educational sectors and job opportunities to sustain their socio-economic sphere at least by making them able to attain their meal through the sweat of their labor. The organization's overall goal is to promote community awareness and advocate for people with autism, through education, seminars, events, and media campaigns.

The organization has managed to achieve its second quarter activities as a part of creating awareness and advocating for people with Autism. Activities include celebrating World Autism Awareness Month, hosting an awareness seminar for local leaders, meeting with the Arusha District Officer, hosting tourists from the Netherlands, and meeting with parents of youth with disabilities to promote understanding and awareness.

### WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

Mountain of Joy foundation in partnership with Rithisha Sanaa, Afya passion, Sakata, and other organizations in Bagamoyo Dar es Salaam has celebrated world autism awareness month at Mwambao primary school Unit in Bagamoyo Dar es Salaam. Our organization was represented by our founder and Chief Director Mr. Eliya Dyitege who

was among the guest speakers of this event. The education provided at the event arose awareness among people who believe that disability is like a disaster within society.



*World Autism Awareness Month in Dar es Salaam*

### Successes:

- ✓ The MJF built a cooperative relationship with the government on supporting people with special services like those with autism and other cognitive challenges.
- ✓ The organization gained popularity through interacting with society members and other stakeholders who participated in the event of world autism awareness.
- ✓ Strengthening cooperation between government officials with the organization
- ✓ Achieved to educate some parents about children and young adults with disabilities.

### Challenges:

- ❖ Lack of funding to support MJF Programs.
- ❖ Lack of awareness in Tanzanian local leaders about people with cognitive challenges.

### Way Forward:

- Donor and sponsor who could fund MJF projects
- Negative cultural practices should be abolished through civic education and human rights skills
- More awareness among local leaders, parents, youth, and traditional leaders should be strengthened.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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**AUTISM HEARTS FOUNDATION**  
Developing Awareness, Education & Access

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[www.autismheartsfoundation.org](http://www.autismheartsfoundation.org)

**Overview:** Autism Hearts Foundation (AHF), a 501 (c)(3) public charity founded in 2008, is engaged in developing awareness and education, primary prevention research and treatment, and inclusive recreational opportunities for individuals affected by autism spectrum disorders. In response to the growing needs of San Francisco and Bay Area, and the Philippines families and practitioners, particularly within the Filipino and broader communities, Autism Hearts Foundation (AHF) was founded for working in collaboration with partner organizations and advocates committed to building and strengthening capacities and expanding access to much-needed services for individuals living on the spectrum. In collaboration with partners, affiliate organizations, cross-sector agencies, and individual advocates from multiple disciplines, Autism Hearts Foundation is dedicated to maximizing the potential of individuals with autism spectrum disorders to learn, develop, function independently, and participate in the full range of social and cultural activities for an improved quality of life.

**Advocacy:** A Message from our Founder  
Dr. Erlinda Borromeo

*As individuals struggle with the confusion and disorder that marks a world within the spectrum, nothing replaces the loving guidance of one's parents, and for the luckier ones – the steady presence of grandparents. As a grandmother of a child with autism, our family was no stranger to the pain and disillusionment that individuals go through upon discovering that a loved one with ASD will struggle with lifelong challenges including communication, and social skills among others.*

*Determined to help my own family and others like ours, Autism Hearts began in the Philippines and led us to the United States, where we continued to search for information, programs, therapies, and advocacy.*

*While AHF's mission and vision of improving the quality of life for every person with autism and their families, was initially motivated by our family's challenges, my grandson's amazing developmental progress has given me hope and inspired our family to bring encouragement to others, in continuing to address the growing needs of our communities – and beyond!*

### **Programs and Services**

#### **1. Parents/Caregiver Skills Training Program:**

In collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO) & Autism Speaks (NY), Autism Hearts Foundation offers training for parents and caregivers in the delivery of services/therapies in their homes to their children with autism. The World Health Organization Caregivers Skills Training – developed in collaboration with Autism Speaks – is a practical and culturally adaptable training program to foster the social and communication skills of children with autism and other developmental issues, with a special focus on families in underserved communities. The program trains Master Trainers and Facilitators, who in turn train parents and other caregivers to use scientifically proven strategies for promoting child development, reducing disruptive behaviors, and strengthening their coping skills.

**2. Seminars & Workshops:** Yearly seminars/workshops for Professionals: Teachers, Social Workers, Nurses, & others to raise awareness, understanding, and current studies/treatments/therapies of autism.

**3. Art Therapy Program:** Fashion Arts Autism Benefits (FAAB): Children identified with Autism are among those that face serious challenges in learning and developing skills. Their ability to function as self-sufficient adults is seriously jeopardized if no opportunities are given to them to flourish, function independently, and achieve full meaningful lives.

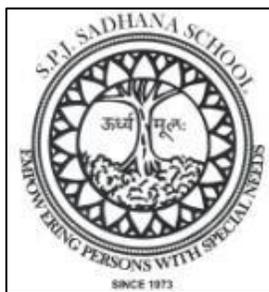
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**SPJ SADHANA SCHOOL**  
**July 2022, Mumbai, India**

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[www.spjsadhanaschool.org](http://www.spjsadhanaschool.org)

The month of July began with a very important celebration for students and teachers. The beautiful and meaningful occasion of Gurupurnima was celebrated on 13th July 2022, with a Special Assembly performance by the Wood Art and Handicraft Department. The noble role played by teachers and staff members were acknowledged through Guru Vandana, by way of an event called 'Sadhana Parivar Awards. Here the teachers were felicitated for their hard work and special effort during virtual school from 2020 to 2022. The new staff members were welcomed with the "Naya Sadasya Category Awards'. The volunteers and care workers were also appreciated with gratitude for their selfless service at SPJ Sadhana School.

On the Sports front, our students are preparing intensively for competition at the Special Olympics International level for World Summer Games 2023 in Germany. Two of our students from the Office Procedures Class, Vaidehi Jain and Vama Doshi, have been selected to participate in the Special Olympics Bharat, Basketball National Championship held at Rajiv Gandhi Indoor Stadium, Puducherry, 8-13 July 2022. They have attended the Special Olympics National Coaching and Training Camp-cum- Selection Trials for the forthcoming World Summer Games to be held in Germany in 2023.

A student from the Visual Arts and Crafts Class, Adithya Pillai, was selected to participate in the Special Olympics Bharat, Roller Skating National Championship held at Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, 11-16th July 2022. He has attended the Special Olympics National Coaching and Training Camp-cum-

Selection Trial for the forthcoming World Summer Games. We wish all our budding sportspersons success in their endeavors!



In the field of Art, our students have done us proud. 14 students of the Visual Arts Class and the Pre-Vocational Class participated in the Annual Art Competition organized by "Splash", an initiative of the Concern India Foundation, on 20th July 2022, at Coomaraswamy Hall, Prince of Wales Museum, Kalaghoda, Mumbai. We are happy to report that one of our students, Lokesh Mamania, won the 2nd Prize, and was given a Certificate of Honour.

On the academic front, we are happy to report the publication of two articles, by the Principal, Ms. Fionika Sanghvi: "Trails of Hope: To Teach is to Touch Lives Forever" and "People of Determination: Advocating for the Special Needs Section of Society"

We were happy to receive recognition for the achievement of one of our students, Aryaman Kumar, during his internship at Welspun One-Logistics Parks. Aryaman has designed the letterhead as a part of the Graphics Designing Course he is pursuing. He has received a bouquet of chocolates and a letter of appreciation from Welspun, the company where he is enrolled for an internship. This appreciation is also an endorsement of his efforts and training at SPJ Sadhana School. We reproduce below the letter of appreciation from his parents. Such recognition is indeed very heart-warming! Thus the month of July 2022 brought celebrations and recognition for our students and our teachers.

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## IASE GENERAL MEETING

July 12, 2022, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

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### **Board Members Present:**

Renata Ticha, President; Gulnoza Yakubova, President-Elect; Zandile Nkabinde, Past-President; Iris Drower, Treasurer; Rachael Gonzales (Voting for Pavan) Membership; Kalynn Hall Pistorio (voting for Omoke), Web; Brenda Lazarus, Secretary; Nga Ti Hoang (Voting for Josue), Extended Board.

We have a quorum. This meeting is now online.

**Guests:** Approximately 24 people besides the Board members were present at the meeting.

The meeting was held as part of the 17th Biennial IASE Conference. The meeting was called to order at 3:55 p.m. by President Renata Ticha.

The Minutes of the 2019 General Membership Meeting in Tanzania were available for review. Zandile Nkabinde moved and Iris Drower seconded the minutes.

### **BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**PRESIDENT:** Renata Ticha presented a brief report and explained that she just became President in January 2022. She expressed gratitude to all delegates for attending the conference since it was postponed from 2021 due to Covid-19. She expressed her belief in membership in this organization due to its commitment to working with underrepresented countries and volunteer service. Iris moved and Zandile seconded her report.

**PAST PRESIDENT:** Zandile Nkabinde explained that she had set up 8 Virtual Dialogues during Covid to keep members engaged with IASE. She also served on the conference planning committee and the conference selection committee for the next conference site. Brenda moved and Rachael seconded the report

**PRESIDENT-ELECT:** Gulnoza Yakubova apologized for the delay in the Conference proceedings but

explained that they would be sending them out to all delegates as soon as the final edits were completed. The Board decided to give the local delegates more time to have their papers edited to APA style for publication. Zandile moved and Rachael seconded the report.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Rachael Gonzales introduced herself as the person who is sending them reminders to renew their membership. Encouraged those present to renew or join IASE and reviewed the benefits of membership. As of June 10, 2022, we have 330 members from 32 countries. Brenda moved and Zandile seconded the report.

**TREASURER:** Iris Drower stated that IASE has \$13,706.68 in the checking account, \$18,861.26 in the VSP account, and \$6,284.07 in the Marg Csapo Scholarship Account. Operating Budget is \$149,165.79 for a Total: 188,017,80. The 501(c)3 Internal Audit will be due in 2022. We are working with Chase Bank to streamline all accounts into some interest-bearing accounts.

**JOURNAL PUBLICATION:** Renata Ticha explained that the journal comes out once a year, with the occasional double issue. Most members receive the electronic journal but a few hard copies are sent to libraries and some individuals who have requested them. She explained that the editors sometimes work with authors for 2-3 years to get their articles into publication quality. Journal issues can be found on the IASE website. Brenda moved and Gulnoza seconded the report.

**GIVING/VOLUNTEER SERVICE:** Iris said we currently have 13 sites in 6 countries. Sites are in Columbia, Guatemala, Malawi, India (several), Tanzania (several), and Vietnam (several). She delivered \$37,376 to the sites before Covid-19, but only \$3000 during Covid due to travel limitations in the past two years. The application to become a Volunteer Site is on the Website as well as the application to be a Volunteer. Volunteer skills are matched with the needs of the sites as expressed in their Wish List to the VSP Committee. Kalynn moved and Zandile seconded the report.

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**WEBSITE:** Kalynn explained that the old website has merged with a new provider (Vista-print) in the past year. She is still working with them on moving over some of the features from the old site. She is responsible for providing updates and posting newsletters and journal publications. Zandile moved and Iris seconded the report.

**BOOK PUBLICATION:** Iris gave a verbal report as Virginia MacEntee was not present. Ginny and Mary Gale continue to work on the publication, but Covid-19 social distancing has made their work more difficult. The book is to be a history of the Volunteer Service Project sites. Moved by Brenda and seconded by Gulnoza.

**SECRETARY:** Brenda outlined her job responsibilities and said she had set up the Zoom Virtual Dialogue session links, and Board Meeting links and has worked on the Mentor Project with Rachael and Gulnoza. Zandile moved and Kalynn seconded the report.

**NEWSLETTER:** Gulnoza reported as the new editors were not present. She requested members to send in articles about the conference for the next edition. Iris moved and Zandile seconded the report.

**NATIONAL CHAIRS:** Zandile gave the report for Beatrice who was not in attendance. There is a need to have more National Chairs. National Chairs share information about national inclusive and special needs education events in their region and recruit new members. Brenda moved and Iris seconded the report.

**LOCAL COMMITTEE CHAIR:** Nga thanked everyone for attending, sharing, and understanding the challenges the committee faced. She felt that not everything was as good as necessary, especially the online portion. She thanked the IASE members of the Local Committee: Rachael Gonzales, Craig Goldsberry, and Daniel McCarthy, and the Board Members for their support.

**AUCTION CHAIR REPORT:** Zandile thanked participants for bringing items for the silent and live auction and thanked the university for their

warm welcome and for a performance that was “out of this world”.

**NEW MEMBER WELCOME:** Zandile gave a presentation on what being a member of IASE has meant to her and why people should join IASE and/or retain their membership. IASE was founded in 1985 and over 50 countries are represented by the membership. She shared the Mission and Vision of the organization and urged those present to get involved with the organization through its many committees and to run for board positions in the future.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2024 CONFERENCE SITE:** Renata introduced Jan Siska who will be the host representative for West Bohemia University in Pilsen, Czech Republic. He shared a brief video of the university and the Pilsen area. It is located near Prague.

**OPEN ITEMS FROM MEMBERS:** Daniel McCarthy noted that there were few related service professionals and few K-12 teachers in attendance and suggested that the organization needed to have a larger, more inclusive conversation. This could be helped along by expanding our reach. He plans to make a connection with the social work organizations he belongs to. Iris thought the idea had merit and suggested we form a new committee to take up Daniel’s suggestion.

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m. by Renata. Zandile moved and Gulnoza seconded the adjournment of the 2022 General Meeting of IASE.

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## TREASURER’S REPORT

Dr. Iris Drower  
as of August 15, 2022

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Account	Amount
Checking	\$4,893.84
VSP/Giving	\$14,861.76
Marg Csapo Scholarship	\$7,504.27
Operational Savings	\$146,650.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$173,910.41</b>

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## IASE MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Rachael Gonzalez

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**New Member Experiences:**  
*By Belle P. Khuu, Ph.D., MSW, MPH*  
(pictured with Dr. Zandile Nkabinde, IASE Past President)

I'm a postdoctoral associate at the University of Minnesota Institute on Community

Integration (ICI). My areas of research interest are at the intersections of critical disability and health disparities among marginalized and underserved populations. I was so excited to be able to join International Association for Special Education (IASE) recently! Though I have been a part of many organizations, it was through hearing from Renáta, the current IASE president, that I became familiar with the organization's multitude of activities. I was amazed by the vital work that IASE was doing in their collaboration, providing technical assistance, and various types of support in many countries. Imagine my surprise and delight when I saw an organization that combined my area of personal, academic, and even research interests! I share the mission and vision that IASE holds in raising awareness and centering the welfare of children and families with special needs worldwide. I also wish to work collaboratively with other education researchers and organizations worldwide to promote the interests of children and families with special needs (Photo left to right Dr. Zandile Nkibinde, Past President, IASE, and Dr. Belle Khuu).

As many might already know, this year's IASE (2022) biennial conference was in HCMC, Vietnam. As a Vietnamese American in the diaspora, I was honored to be surrounded by many excellent and dedicated Vietnamese teachers and researchers. The conference was a thrilling experience as the opening performances brought back many beautiful childhood memories. I also found it to be

an incredibly stimulating space to exchange ideas on global issues and insights into the state of special education in various parts of the world. It also allowed me to reconnect with my birth country and enjoy my dad, sister, and nieces' warm embrace for a few days. Moving forward, I continue to seek out mentorships and research collaborations and deepen our existing interconnectedness to create equal economic, political, and social rights for the most vulnerable to the strongest among us. Let's connect and work together to build and ensure an inclusive society for all!



**New Member:**  
*Lucy Evans*

My name is Lucy Evans. I have worked at the College of Education and Human Development, Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota for many years as a Financial Professional/Grant Research Financial, my current focus being in Grant Research.

My involvement with IASE began only recently, as one of the Principal Investigators on a grant. I worked with, Dr. Renata Ticha, the President of IASE, and this grant required an individual who could support and/or volunteer with numerous activities of this conference. I received department approval, as this was my first conference, and fulfilled my desire to become more involved with the disability culture. I was born with a disability that I worked very hard to overcome and successfully did so. By joining IASE and participating in this conference I also added to the development of my professional career path and provided my speaking and understanding of the Vietnamese language to assist others.

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## 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)