A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Christa van Kraayenoord

I am unable to write this myself as I had a bad fall and damaged the radial head in my elbow and ligaments of my right arm. Following an operation where the radial head was replaced and ligaments repaired I am now wearing a brace, which means I cannot type. Being incapacitated in this way is a new experience and learning to dictate to Angela, our Assistant to the President, for this message in the IARLD Updates is slow work for us both.

There have been some new changes to the Executive Board.

Carol Goldfus has been the Chair of the Publishing Committee for a number of years but has recently resigned. I would like to thank Carol for her work as Chair of this committee especially around setting up of the IJRLD. I wish to announce that Associate Professor Annmarie Urso will become the Chair of the Publishing Committee immediately and will continue in this role until the current term of the Executive Board expires on the 31 December 2017. David Scanlon, Editor of the IJRLD has worked with Annmarie previously and Annmarie has been an active reviewer for the IJRLD.

Diane Bryant who has been Secretary for the Academy has resigned in order to dedicate herself to her new role as President-Elect for the Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD). I would like to thank Diane very much for her work as the Secretary in particular attending to keeping the Minutes of the Executive Board Meetings and the Business and Think Tank Meetings. In addition,
Diane has held responsibility for the IARLD website and for liaising with the webmaster. In her capacity as the Secretary, Diane has worked extremely hard for the Academy and has been very responsive to email requests and other matters related to the IARLD sent from the President’s Office. I wish her well in her new role. I am delighted to announce that Professor Evelyn Johnson will be the new Secretary of the IARLD from the 1st July 2015. Evelyn will attend the Executive Board meeting at the IARLD Conference in Vancouver.

I also welcome as the new Vice President for Members and Associate Members, Assistant Professor Anna (Anya) Evmenova. Professor Linda Siegel, our Vice President Elect, and current Conference Chair, has many tasks at present and, therefore, Anya responded to an earlier email to all members offering to take on this role. As we are always looking for new members and associate members, please send applications with the Personal Data Form to aevmenov@gmu.edu

You will have received information about the 39th Annual Conference of the IARLD. I am sure that everyone is looking forward to the conference and the rich programme that will be on offer. Our host, Professor Linda Siegel, is looking forward to receiving many registrations, and I would like to encourage you all to attend.

Finally, we have been spoilt this year in Australia to have had and to have in the future visits from a number of international researchers in the area of learning disabilities. I recently attended a seminar by Professor Louisa Moats, Vice President of the International Dyslexia Association. Her presentation coincided with celebrating the association, Learning Difficulties Australia’s 50th year. Her seminar was entitled “Language, Learning and Literacy: Improving practice, delivering results”. Later on in the year we will have a visit by Professor Joe Elliott, from Durham University. Joe will be discussing his controversial book, “The Dyslexia Debate”. It’s wonderful that we have the opportunity to hear speakers with such diverse views around learning disabilities. In addition, students who attend such seminars become aware of the diverse views and the complexity of our field. Such awareness means that we become conscious again that there are no easy answers in our field.

If any members have matters or ideas that they wish to raise with me about the Academy, please contact me directly at the IARLD Office iarldoffice@uq.edu.au I am always ready to listen to your ideas and comments.

Kind regards,
Christa van Kraayenoord.

April 2015

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fellows Report: Asha Jitendra, Chair

The Fellows’ Committee is comprised of Asha K. Jitendra (Chairperson), University of Minnesota, U.S.A.; Lee Swanson, University of California, at Riverside, U.S.A; and Che Kan Leong, University of Saskatchewan, Canada.

Since the last report in August (2014), we have accepted one new Fellow:
Dr. Virginia Berninger, Educational Psychology, Learning Sciences Human Development, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA. Dr. Berninger was nominated by Elaine R. Silliman.

**Members and Associate Members Report: Anna (Anya) Evmenova, Chair**

The Members and Associate Members’ Committee is comprised of Anya Evmenova (Chair), George Mason University; Cesare Cornoldi, University of Padua, Italy; Kevin Chung, the Hong Kong Institute of Education, and Lidija Magajna, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The committee has accepted four new members since January of 2015: Douglas D. Dexter, Penn State University (nominated by Charles A. Hughes); Jennifer Samson, Hunter College of the City University of New York (nominated by Wendy Cavendish); and Michael Grosche, University of Wuppertal, Institute of Educational Sciences, Germany (nominated by David Scanlon); & Carla Colomer, The Jaume I University, Spain (nominated by Judy Wiener).

**Student Member Report: Henry Reiff, Chair**

The Student Members’ Committee is Henry Reiff (McDaniel College), Vice President for Student Members.

We are delighted to welcome Apryl L. Poch as a student member. April is a third year doctoral candidate in the Department of Special Education at the University of Missouri – Columbia and was nominated by Dr. Delinda van Garderen. A former high school special education teacher, April has jump-started her career as a researcher during her doctoral studies. She has published two articles in scholarly journals and has another on the way in *Teaching Exceptional Children*. She has seven chapters or articles in preparation and has worked on several grant projects. She has focused much of her research on decreasing drop-out rates of high school students with learning disabilities and is committed to pursuing this topic, among others.

Hilary Scruton has also joined us as a student member in the IARLD. Dr. John McNamara noted, “how she engages with complex academic material always coming to an understanding that is well in advance of most graduate students. Hilary is also an exceptional researcher. She excelled in her work as a research assistant and graduate thesis student on my current longitudinal research project aimed at identifying young children at-risk for learning disabilities.” Hilary has submitted two articles for publication and has made numerous presentations to professional organizations. She is partnering with the Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara to design, implement, and measure the effects of a literacy program, *Reading Rocks*, through which she has been awarded two national scholarships from Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and Ontario Graduate Scholarship.

Welcome to our new student members. We look forward to adding many more throughout 2015.

**Treasurer’s Report: Margaret Pierce**

We are currently processing the incoming payments for the 2014-2015 academic year's dues. Thank you very much to those of you who promptly submitted your payment! If you have yet to do so, please visit our website at [www.IARLD.com](http://www.IARLD.com).

The annual dues structure is:
Fellows/Members: $120
A message by the Academy Historian Brian Bryant

Let's All Take a Stroll Down Memory Lane!

As IARLD’s Historian, I have been charged with updating our organization’s past. One important aspect of our organization has been our conference and, since Dr. Cruickshank’s death, the William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer. Thanks to Doris Johnson, Peter Rosenberger, Paul Gerber, Susan Vogel, C. K. Leong, John Hagen, and countless others, along with documents that have been forwarded to me, I have been able to piece together the list below. If anyone has additional information, including corrections, please forward them to me at brbryant@austin.utexas.edu. Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation.

Also, if you have particular memories of your conference activities that you would like to share with our membership, feel free to share them with me at the same email address. I'm compiling a scrapbook.

1980: Utrecht, the Netherlands (Co-Chairs: Luc Stevans & J. Kok)
1981: June 1-3: Ann Arbor, MI; Conference Chair: John Hagen
1982: Missing
1983: Free University of Brussels (Chair: Marianne Klees)
1984: Greece in conjunction with the 2nd World Conference on Dyslexia) (Host: George Pavlidis)
1985: Oxford University (Chair: Neil O'Connor)
1986: Phoenix, AZ (Chair: Dr. Drake Duane)
1986: October 23-25: Evanston, IL (Chair: Doris Johnson)
1986: Gow School, Buffalo, NY???
1987: June 16-17: Chania, Greece (Held in conjunction with the Third World Conference on Dyslexia); Chair: George Pavlidis; Distinguished Lecturer: Dirk Bakker
1988: February 4-6: Los Angeles, CA (Chair: Barbara Keogh)
1989: October 1-6: Prague, Czechoslovakia (Chair: Zdenek Matejcek)
1989: June 1-3: Ann Arbor, MI: Joint Conference on Learning Disabilities (Chair: John Hagen)
1990: Missing
1991: Cincinnati, OH?
1992: March 17: Amsterdam, The Netherlands (Welcome: J. de Wiit)
1992: Cincinnati, OH (Chair, Robert W. Keith)
1993: October 7-8: Boston, MA (Chair: Keith Stanovich, Peter Rosenberger?, William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Drake Duane)
1994: Cruise Ship, off Norway – in conjunction with the Norway Dyslexia Association (Chair: Ivar Bjørgen? William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer Unknown)
1995: Phoenix, AZ (Chair and Lecturer unknown)
1996: October 11-12: Dearborn, MI (Chair: Richard Galpin, Steve Russell; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Peter B. Rosenberger)
1997: September 21-22 (21st): Thessalonica, Greece (Chair: Dr. George Pavlidis, William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Dirk Bakker)
1998: September 4-5 (22nd): Padua, Italy (Chair: Prof. Cesare Cornoldi; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Keith Stanovich)
1999: (23rd): Williamsburg, VA (Chair: Paul Gerber; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Paul Gerber)
William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Doris Johnson
2002: (26th): Washington, DC (Chair: Diane Sawyer; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Susan A. Vogel)
2003: (27th): Bangor, Wales (Chair: Prof Victor van Daal; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Tanis Bryan)
2004: (28th): Ann Arbor, MI: (Co-Chairs: Prof. John Hagen and Prof. Addison Stone; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: H. Lee Swanson)
2007: (31st): Bled, Slovenia (Co-Chairs: Marija Kavkler and Marjorie Montague; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Pol Ghesquièrè)
2008: (32nd): Toronto (Chair: Prof. Judith Wiener; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Lynn Meltzer)
2009: (33rd): Wellington, New Zealand (Chair: Prof. James Chapman; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: William E. Tunmer)
2010: (34th): Miami, Florida (Chair: Prof. Marjorie Montague; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Janette Klingner)
2011: (35th): Taipei, Taiwan (Chair: Li-Yu Hung; Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Daniel Hallahan)
2012: (36th): Padua, Italy (Chair: Daniela Lucangeli & Cesare Cornoldi??; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Thomas Scruggs) (twice, the first one organized by Prof. Cesare Cornoldi of Padua University);
2013: (37th): Boston, MA (Chair: Lynn Meltzer); William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Rosemary Tannock
2014: (38th): Vilnius University, Lithuania (Chair: Rasa Barkauskiene; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Heikki Lyytinen)
2015: (39th): Vancouver, BC, Canada (Chair: Linda Siegel; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer: Sharon Vaughn - invited)
2016: (40th) Austin, TX, The University of Texas (Co-Chairs: Diane Bryant, Brian Bryant, Judy Voress, Stephanie Al Otaiba; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer TBA)
2017: (41st) Brisbane, Queensland, Australia (Chair: Christa van Kraayenoord; William Cruickshank Memorial Lecturer TBA)

Please note that in 2016, several of us will be hosting the conference in Austin, Texas. We'll have more information forthcoming (e.g., dates, locale), but please place it on your MUST DO list.

Best wishes,

Brian R. Bryant, Ph.D., IARLD Historian

**GOALS WITHIN THE IARLD**

To increase the *visibility, impact, and sphere of influence* of the Academy by:

1) Increasing our membership through ongoing membership drive initiatives.

2) Encouraging *IARLD* Fellows and Members to list the *IARLD* as an additional affiliation on all publications in journals, books, and newspapers.

3) Encouraging *IARLD* Fellows and Members to list the *IARLD* as an additional affiliation on all conference presentations.
The annual IARLD Conference will be held in 2015 in Vancouver, Canada at the University of British Columbia.

Vancouver is a vibrant and cosmopolitan city on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, surrounded by the majestic Coast Mountains. There are a number of cultural attractions, walking trails with spectacular views for both casual walkers and adventurous hikers, and many beautiful beaches within the city. The University is in the middle of a temperate rain forest and is surrounded by the sea. There are also many superb options for vacations outside of the city before or after the conference to cater to the interests of those who want to spend time in the mountains or the ocean, or both. Vancouver is also a port from which Alaskan cruises begin. For more information see [http://www.hellobc.com](http://www.hellobc.com).

In July, the daytime temperature is between 20 and 25C (70-75 F) although it can be cooler at night. I guarantee no rain if everyone brings an umbrella. If anyone forgets an umbrella, I am not responsible for the consequences.

The conference will take place on July 8 and 9, 2015, with local tours and activities, as well as the Executive Board meeting arranged for July 7.

**Registration Fees (Canadian dollars, currently @ .78 US dollar)**

Registration includes breakfast, lunch and refreshment breaks on July 8 and 9 and a wine and cheese reception on July 8. Vegetarian and gluten free options will be available. It would be very helpful if participants would register as soon as possible.

**Conference Dinner**
The conference dinner will be held on July 8 at the Enigma Restaurant, near the campus. The price includes a 3-course meal, taxes, gratuity, and a choice of wine, beer or soft drinks. The price is $65 (Canadian dollars). Vegetarian and gluten free options will be available.

**Conference Accommodation**

Excellent and reasonably inexpensive rooms are available on campus in the Gage Tower standard suites. The hotel is very close to the conference meeting rooms and activities.

Guests are also welcome to contact the Reservations Office at (Toll-Free in North America) 1 888 822 1030 to make a reservation. Please mention that you are attending the IARLD Conference 2015.

**Preconference Tour**

Visit the spectacular Museum of Anthropology on the campus. The Museum of Anthropology, the Musqueam First Nation, and the Museum of Vancouver have partnered on a groundbreaking exploration of an ancient landscape and living cultures. Check it out at [www.moa.ubc.ca](http://www.moa.ubc.ca).

We have arranged a tour of the Museum of Anthropology on Tuesday July 7, 2015. The tour is 2 hours and includes the museum admission and a knowledgeable guide. The cost of the tour is $20 (Canadian dollars).

**Payment**

Please make all payments through PayPal and indicate the payment is for the IARLD Conference 2015.

**Registration Form**

Please submit completed form to leslaura@gmail.com after you have paid the fees. Early registration ends on May 15.
Meet New Members of the Executive Board

Our new Secretary for the Academy: Dr. Evelyn Johnson

Evelyn Johnson is a professor of special education at Boise State University and the Executive Director of Lee Pesky Learning Center, a non-profit center that provides evaluations and intervention services to people with learning disabilities. Evelyn has been an academic Fellow in IARLD since 2013 and will be filling the role of secretary beginning July 2015. Her research interests include developing processes for special education teacher evaluation, early math screening and assessment, and intervention research that focuses on the needs of the whole child, including self-regulation, academic skills and cognitive processing areas.

Our new Chair of the Publications Committee: Dr. Annmarie Urso

Annmarie Urso has been a member of IARLD since 2006. She started as a doctoral student member while at the University of Arizona where she was mentored by other IARLD members - Nicole Ofiesh and Nancy Mather. She has been a professional member of IARLD since 2008 and has served on the Editorial Review Board for the Journal of the International Academy for Research in Learning Disabilities since 2012. Annmarie is currently an Associate Professor of
special education at the State University of New York at Geneseo, where she prepares pre-service and in-service teachers to work with students with learning disabilities. Annmarie’s research is in the area of dyslexia and cognitive profiles of students with learning disabilities. She is particularly interested in how understanding the patterns of cognitive strengths and weaknesses in students can inform learning disability identification and intervention. She currently is the Principal Investigator on over $600, 000 worth of funding to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in the Common Core Learning Standards and through innovative summer learning programming. Annmarie will be presenting several research and practice lectures at the Bogacizi University in Istanbul in April and hopes to cultivate some new members for IARLD while at the university. She can reached at urso@geneseo.edu.

“I am excited for this opportunity to work with the members of the Publications Committee and IARLD to advance the prominence of our journal and the scholarly work and research of our members.”

Our new Vice President for Members and Associate Members: Dr. Anna (Anya) Evmenova

My name is Anya Evmenova and I am the Assistant Professor in the Division of Special Education and disAbility Research at George Mason University. I have been a member of IARLD since Spring 2013 when I was nominated to join this fantastic group of exceptional professionals. My professional interests lie in the areas of special education and assistive technology. My current research focuses on the use of assistive and instructional technology tools for improving access to general education curriculum for students with various abilities and needs, including those with learning disabilities; Universal Design for Learning; effective and efficient online teaching and learning; as well as advances in the field of single-subject/case research methods. I have been honored to be selected as the Vice President for Members and Associate Members for the IARLD. I look forward to identifying potential members and associate members in order to expand the IARLD membership to include distinguished researchers in the area of learning disabilities.
Before restoration of independence of Lithuanian Republic, the school of defectology prevailed both in terms of methodology and tradition. The methodological basis of defectology was a clinical-correctional paradigm, oriented towards diagnosing a disorder and its medical or didactic correction.

The restoration of the Lithuanian state in 1990 and subsequent democratisation processes had a crucial influence on the changes in the sphere of education of people with disability. We want to pay your attention to three directions of changes in special needs education, which have been caused by the processes related to the restoration of independence in Lithuania, new international experiences (TEMPUS projects in 1992-1995 and 1996-1999), efficient activities of parents’ of disabled children organisations.

Methodological changes took place, with transition from clinical to social interactional attitudes, oriented towards social roles, social interaction and social educational environment of a person with a disability. Critical changes in Lithuania happened rather quickly – in about two decades. Methodological changes determined changes in the educational practices of children with special educational needs (SEN): we came from segregation to recognition of diversity and inclusion. The democratisation of the whole system of education made it possible to develop a system of education based on the principle of equal opportunities. Today’s Lithuania’s educational system is fair, it ensures equality for individuals irrespective of their gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social position, religion, beliefs or convictions; it assures each individual access to education, opportunity for attainment of a general education level and primary qualification and creates conditions for in-service education or gaining a new qualification. The implementation of the principle of equal opportunities in practice started in 1991, when the first Law on education of the independent Lithuanian Republic legalised integration of children with disabilities and disorders in mainstream educational institutions. Over the last two decades a lot has been done: a system of education stimulating inclusive education has been created; teachers recognise theoretical principles of inclusive education as important and valuable, primary school teachers rather favourably view the opportunities of inclusive education; teachers aim for collaboration and team work; educational support is envisaged as a means of ensuring efficiency and accessibility of education; educational support is provided not only for the children, but for their teachers, school and family; there are positive examples testifying to the care taken by the schools of children with SEN and their ability to organise support for these children, their teachers and parents in a proper way. Today we are
already talking about inclusion of persons with special educational needs and search for effective ways to develop school with aim to become an inclusive school, we analyse, which stage towards inclusion we are at the moment and what still has to be done.

In order to achieve a higher quality of meeting SEN, the legal basis is constantly being renewed, documents dealing with assessment and meeting SEN are prepared and based on the social interactional methodology. In summer 2011, the following documents were approved:

- Re. Approval of the Inventory of Procedures of Providing Special Educational Support (Order of the Minister of Education and Science of LR of 8th July 2011 No. V-1228).
- The Inventory of Procedures of Organising Activities of Pedagogical Psychological Services (approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of LR of 22nd July 2011 No. V-1396.
- The Inventory of Procedures of Assessment of the Student’s Special Educational Needs (except those arising due to exceptional giftedness) from the Pedagogical, Psychological, Medical and Social-Pedagogical Aspects and Allocation of Special Education (Order of the Minister of Education and Science of LR of 30th September 2011 No.V-1775).

Some of them in more detail, as they reveal the specificity of assessment and meeting SEN in our country. In the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of LR Minister of Health of LR and Minister of Social Security and Labour of 13th July, 2011 Re. Determining the Groups of Students with SEN and Approval of the Inventory of Procedures of Regimentation of the Levels of SEN according to the nature of the disability (constant, long-term, temporary) the following developmental specificity categories have been established: disabilities, disorders and disadvantages.

Disabilities include stable developmental, sensory, physical and other health disorders, the nature of which can be biological. Talking about this category, it is important to establish its relationship with a concrete disability. People ascribed to this group may have profound, medium and mild disability and are allocated extra medical, social and educational services. The kinds of disability (mild, medium and profound) are defined by the Disability and Employability Assessment Services (DEAS). Disorders’ group includes long-term learning disorders (reading, writing, mathematics), also behaviour and emotional disorders, speech and language disorders,
which manifest themselves in the process of learning. The new classification distinguishes between the following groups of learning disorders: general, specific and non-verbal. Understanding and assessment of specific learning disorders caused most discussions; the previous classification focused on the causes of specific learning disorders, thus it singled out specific cognitive disorders, causing learning difficulties (hearing and linguistic disorders, visual and spatial disorders, memory disorders, interfunctional disorders (audio-visual, visual motor coordination). In the present classification, the emphasis is on the learning disorders. **Learning disorders** includes general learning disorders, specific learning disorders and non-verbal learning disorders. **General learning disorders** consist of various disorders, which manifest themselves by underachievement of the student in two or more subjects. Underachievement is likely if the student’s intellectual abilities are low (IQ between 70 and 79), but they do not reach the borderline of a very low intellect (IQ is 69 and below). **Specific learning disorders** are a heterogeneous group of disorders, which manifest themselves by lower achievements in reading, writing or mathematics than it is likely in terms of intellectual abilities (when IQ is 80 and above) and education corresponding to the child’s age. For these disorders it is typical when due to the underdevelopment of certain cognitive processes or disorder learning achievements do not correspond to the general achievements and competences, but they are not caused by intellectual or sensory disorders, improper education or socio-cultural conditions. **Reading disorders** are characterised by difficulties in reading words, difficulties in reading fluently, difficulties in understanding text, complete inability to read. **Writing disorders** are characterised by distortion of the structure of the word – letters or syllables are omitted, changed or added; reversion of the form of the letters, the order in the word and writing direction; failure to apply rules for writing; difficulties in conveying the thought in writing; illegible or hardly legible writing; complete inability to write. Persons having specific disorders of learning mathematics may have difficulties in the main mathematical skills (counting things, doing sums orally and in writing, difficulties in writing down the sums); difficulties in naming and understanding mathematical terms (concepts), difficulties in writing down in figures orally presented mathematical tasks; difficulties in understanding figures, mathematical signs, numbers and symbols, difficulties in writing down numbers; difficulties in remembering facts, sequence of actions and ways of solution necessary to perform a mathematical task; difficulties in solving textual problems. These are the children that in many countries are termed as having learning disabilities or difficulties, dyslexia, etc. The new thing is also that in the new classification the category of Non-verbal Learning Disorders has been singled out. It is established based on 5 criteria:

1. Learning difficulties: difficulties in writing, counting, operating abstract concepts while performing tasks; however, reading skills usually do not lag behind the peers.
2. Lack of motor skills: lack of coordination, substantial balance problems, poor writing skills.
3. Difficulties in processing visual/spatial information: lack of imagination, poor visual memory, erroneous spatial perception and estimation of spatial relationships.
4. Communication difficulties: inability to understand non-verbal communication, difficulties in adjusting to new situations, lack of social skills.

5. Verbal skills are average or above average and verbal IQ is significantly higher than non-verbal one.

The third group is disadvantages group. This group contains temporary learning difficulties, when due to unfavourable environment (cultural/linguistic, pedagogical, social-economic) and other circumstances the child’s opportunities to realise his/her abilities to master General Learning Programmes are limited. In the group of disadvantages are:

1. *Children who do not learn in their native language or who are living in another cultural/linguistic environment.* It is difficult to master General Programmes when the child is taught not in his mother-tongue, but in a language which he does not know so well as his mother tongue, or when a person has been learning in another country not in his mother tongue and according to a different programme for more than half a year, or when a hearing child lives with a family of deaf parents (foster parents, etc.) whose native language is sign language.

2. *Students with developmental delay.* Difficulties become obvious before the age of 7–8 and manifest themselves by the child lagging behind his/her peers in at least one of the following spheres: cognitive, motor, communications, self-regulation, social and emotional. Difficulties become obvious before the age of 7–8 and manifest themselves by the child lagging behind his/her peers in at least one of the following spheres: cognitive, motor, communications, self-regulation, social and emotional.

3. Health problems: It is difficult to master General Education programmes if the child has missed more than 2/3 of the lessons per academic year due to an illness and didn’t have an opportunity to study during the period of an illness.

4. Students experiencing socio-economic and family disadvantages: It is difficult to master General Education programmes because the child constantly misses classes and/or doesn’t do homework due to the poor financial state of the family (parents/foster parents, etc. are unemployed and/or homeless, the living place is too small, there is nowhere to do homework, etc.) and/or the family is ascribed to a risk group.

5. Students in emotional crises. These are difficulties when the child loses his/her parents, due to the parents’ divorce, due to the loss of a close person, due to the various illnesses of the family members (fatal, long-term), due to a trauma and/or abuse, having become a witness of a traumatising event, failing to cope with adjustment to school, due to the problems in the new family or after a natural disaster.

6. Gifted students who experience under-achieving.

The child’s achievements do not correspond to his/her intellectual abilities, which are higher than his/her peers (IQ 130 or above) due to the individual (personal) and environmental factors (family, school, peers, etc.).

In the new documents no new disorders or needs have appeared that haven’t objectively been there before. The new classification only reflects a more precise and comprehensive view on the developmental specificity. The needs and disorders have been before, however: they
haven’t been recognised and named enough (e.g. the category of learning difficulties, non-verbal learning disorders, etc.); they had different names (general learning difficulties, mental disorders); they happened in a different context (e.g. autism spectrum disorders, mutism, etc.).

Disorders and Special Educational Needs. When we talk about support for those who have disability, disorders or disadvantages the most important is to know and understand persons’ Special educational needs. Special educational needs are defined as the need for support and services in education process that occurs due to being exceptionally gifted, having congenital or acquired disorders or disadvantages because of environmental factors (The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania, 2011). Before, SEN were related only to a disability or a disorder, the concept of SEN has been broadened by including SEN arising due to specific giftedness and unfavourable environmental factors. For the educator the understanding of a disorder and its statement is important only in so much as it interferes with the child’s education and determines support strategies in meeting his/her SEN. The strategies are different and depend on the cause (e.g. in case of a mild intellectual disorder; in case of specific non-verbal, general learning disorders, etc.). The most important thing is not what conclusion about the child’s disorder, disability or disadvantage we are going to provide but how much we are going to reveal difficulties experienced by the child and his/her strengths in the process of education, how we are going to assess his/her SEN and provide him/her with the most appropriate educational support (psychological, special educational, social educational or special).

Four groups of SEN are distinguished according to the extent of the needs: Mild, Moderate, Big and Very Big. Criteria according to which the students who have SEN are ascribed to a SEN group are as follows:
1) the extent of adapting General Education Programmes;
2) the level of adapting General Education Programmes;
3) the adjustment of the plan of education;
4) the adjustment of educational methods and ways;
5) the selection of textbooks and teaching aids, adaptation, preparation and development of teaching materials;
6) the selection of the place of education and/or adapting environment;
7) the need for technical aids in education;
8) the need for special educational support;
9) the need for special support;
10) the need for psychological support;
11) the need for social educational support.

SEN assessment stages and institutions. Early assessment and early support for children or their parents in the early age (1-3 years) is provided by early rehabilitation services, the activities of which are coordinated by the Ministry of Health. There are two Child Development Centres at national level and 38 Early rehabilitation services where early intervention support is available in Lithuania. But if at this age a SEN assessment is necessary
and if there is a need to attend a special institution, the family applies to the PPS regarding the evaluation of SEN and recommendation as to what education would be most appropriate with regard to the child’s needs.

When child is Pre-school or School age, initial detection of a student’s problem is made by his/her teacher. The teacher informs the parents of the student and only after that can an initial assessment of the student’s special educational needs be conducted by specialists. They present their findings and recommendations regarding further individualization of the programme to the Committee of the Child’s Welfare that takes a decision. This Committee consists of five to nine members: school based specialists (speech therapist, special educator, school psychologist, social pedagogue), class teachers, school administrator, parents, other. Committee is responsible for initial evaluation of SEN and initial support for child, family and teachers at school level. If a student still cannot cope with teaching requirements and achieves low results, the Committee of the child’s Welfare recommends the parents to apply for further assessment to the local pedagogical psychological service (PPS). A team of specialists works at each PPS and there are such services in almost every municipality. These specialists after a further assessment and evaluation period, provide recommendations to parents and the school a student is coming from. This indicates what kind of special assistance and education plan/programme that has to be implemented; what kind of special provision is required in order to support the student’s learning and teaching process and when it is necessary to repeat the assessment and evaluation of the pupil’s special needs is also indicated.

In exceptional or conflict cases the assessment can be carried out by Special Education and Psychology Centre (SPPC) under the Ministry of Education and Science. This Centre also develops an effective special pedagogical and psychological support system across the country has particular responsibility for the identification, evaluation and supply of special materials supports the PPSs through technical advice on assessment procedures and arrangements and professional support on methods of teaching interventions evaluates children presenting particularly difficult problems implements various research projects (e.g. from the EU).

**Children with SEN and educational practice.** The number of students with SEN educated in a mainstream classroom in 2011-2012 was 11.1% of the total number of students. Special schools and educational centres had: in 2004/05 12% students with SEN; in 2011/12 8% students with SEN; 88% - 92 % were educated in mainstream classrooms. The levels of SEN educated in mainstream classrooms: mild SEN - 69%; moderate SEN - 26%; big SEN - 5%; very big SEN - 0.3 %. The most urgent issues of meeting SEN in a mainstream schools are decreasing the exceptionality of special educational support and exclusion of students with SEN. Support should be more often provided in the common classroom context by bringing it closer to the needs of the child, a greater flexibility of the teacher’s and/or special educators support should be aimed at by combining more varied forms of it by providing individual support in the classroom, by using group work in homogeneous and heterogeneous groups, pair work, by combining special educator’s support in the classroom and/or special educator/speech therapist’s office.
NEWS FROM IARLD MEMBERS

Da Fonseca, Vitor: IARLD Member, Professor of Special Education and Rehabilitation, Technical University of Lisbon, Portugal, is happy to inform IARLD members about the 5th edition of his new book, "Dificuldades de Aprendizagem: abordagem neuropsicopedagogica" (translated: Learning Disabilities: a neuropsychopedagogical approach). Congratulations, Dr. Da Fonseca!

Leong, Che Kan: Dr. Che Kan Leong, IARLD Fellow, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Dept. of Educational Psychology & Special Education, University of Saskatchewan, is pleased to announce his most recent publications:


Vukovic, Rose: Dr. Vukovic, IARLD Member, would like to announce the change of her position. She has moved to the Special Education Program, University of Minnesota Department of Educational Psychology.

MANUSCRIPT PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS SOUGHT

Message From our “IJRLD” Editor

Dear Fellow Members of the Academy,

The "International Journal for Research in Learning Disabilities" is our best platform for sharing your scholarship with the entirety of our membership and with our profession at large. Publishing your work in the IJRLD embodies your commitment as a member of the Academy. We are anxious to receive your submission. Please review submission guidelines posted on the Academy website along with our past issues; you are also welcome to contact me directly to discuss potential submissions, at IJRLD@bc.edu

In Fellowship,

David Scanlon, Editor
INTRODUCING NEW IARLD MEMBERS

It is a pleasure to introduce to our membership some of our newest members: new Members, Dr. Carla Colomer, Dr. Douglas Dexter, and Dr. Jennifer Samson, and new Student Members, Apryl Poch and Hilary Scruton. Our warmest congratulations!!! In the brief interviews below, we asked the new members to tell us about themselves.

IARLD Member – Colomer, Carla

Affiliation: Assistant Professor, Universitat Jaume I (Castellón).

Nominated by Dr. Judy Wiener, January 2015

What are your current research interests?

My current research interests are related to the study of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) from a developmental perspective and to the learning disabilities in math.

How did you hear about the IARLD? What made you decide to join?

I heard about IARLD while I was completing my PhD with Ana Miranda, current member of the IARLD. Moreover, I have had the opportunity to work with two other IARLD members. In 2012, I completed a predoctoral fellowship at University of Padova, Italy, with Daniela Lucangeli, where I have attended the 36th Annual IARLD Conference. In 2014, I did a postdoctoral fellowship program with Judith Wiener, who has nominated me for this Membership.

After working with such interesting and amazing colleagues, I felt that it would be an honor to be part of the IARLD, a very prestigious group of international scholars in the field of learning disabilities.

IARLD Member – Douglas D. Dexter

Would you tell us something about your professional background and what you are doing now?

I defended my PhD in 2013 at University of Valencia, Spain, and I’m actually working at University Jaume I of Castellón. I work in Ana Miranda’s research group. The main area of research is a follow-up study of the adolescents and young adults with the childhood diagnosis of ADHD. A second project we are working on is a longitudinal study of the contribution of the executive functions, motivation, and basic mathematical skills to learning disabilities in math.
Affiliation: Assistant Professor of Special Education, The Pennsylvania State University.

What are your current research interests?

My current research interest include effective inclusion practices for adolescents with LD, RTI, and statistical modeling.

How did you hear about the IARLD? What made you decide to join?

I heard about the IARLD through the journal and decided that I wanted to join this esteemed group of LD researchers.

Would you tell us something about your professional background and what you are doing now?

Prior to my PhD, I was a high school English teacher in San Antonio, Texas. I have been an Assistant Professor at Penn State since 2010 where I primarily teach aspiring high school general education teachers how to successfully include students with LD in their classrooms.

What are your personal hobbies or special interests?

I play guitar and sing in a band with fellow Penn State special education professors – we are called the Grateful SPLED!

IARLD Member – Samson, F. Jennifer.

Affiliation: Assistant Professor, Graduate Program in Learning Disabilities, Department of Special Education, Hunter College, City University of New York.

What are your current research interests?

Currently, my research is focused on how to prepare special education teachers to better meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students as one way of addressing disproportionality. I am concerned that CLD students have teachers who lack the appropriate knowledge and skills to meet their academic needs. As a teacher educator I am interested in
supporting teacher candidates to be effective, culturally responsive teachers.

How did you hear about the IARLD? What made you decide to join?

I heard about IARLD from my colleague Dr. Wendy Cavendish. Based on our shared interests in the areas of special education, response to intervention, and diversity she suggested that I consider IARLD as an opportunity to join other similarly minded scholars. It has been a delight to discover many familiar colleagues are already members of IARLD.

Would you tell us something about your professional background and what you are doing now?

Professionally, I was trained as a school psychologist and served students and families in California and Massachusetts. I worked in multicultural settings and dual immersion schools prior to my work as an educational researcher and teacher educator. My role in public schools included identification and evaluation of CLD students for special education services and I was concerned about the lack of guidance for educators on appropriate methods for working with CLD students. My background as a practitioner guides both my current research and policy work on teacher quality for English language learners. Recent publications include a national report published in Teachers College Record on language minorities and their teachers as well as a policy report published by the Center for American Progress.

What are your current research interests?

My current research interests include students with learning disabilities, the intersection of adolescent literacy (specifically writing) and the dropout rate of students with disabilities, and instructional strategies for supporting students with disabilities in the high school English language arts classroom.

What are your personal hobbies or special interests?

In my very limited spare time, my hobbies include oil painting and running in Central Park. After having completed several marathons in the past, I now train for half marathons and enjoy discovering new running routes when I travel both locally and abroad.

IARLD Student Member – Poch, Apryl L.

Affiliation: Doctoral Candidate, University of Missouri, Columbia.

Nominated by Dr. Delinda Van Garderen, January 2015

What are your current research interests?

My current research interests include students with learning disabilities, the intersection of adolescent literacy (specifically writing) and the dropout rate of students with disabilities, and instructional strategies for supporting students with disabilities in the high school English language arts classroom.
I heard about IARLD through Dr. van Garderen with whom I have been on assistantship with at the University of Missouri – Columbia. I decided to join based on Dr. van Garderen’s recommendation.

Would you tell us something about your professional background and what you are doing now?

I am a former high school special education teacher, where I worked for a small rural school district in Western New York. The first year I served as a home instruction teacher for a high school student with an IEP and a tutor for middle and high school students who had been suspended from school or who were awaiting a more appropriate placement. The following four years I worked as a high school special education teacher. I possess certification in New York State in Students with disabilities and English language arts in grades 7-12. Most of my work was teaching 15:1 parallel classes in English 9, 10, and 11, co-teaching English 9 and 10, and working with students in the Resource Room setting.

Currently, I am a third year doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri – Columbia. I have successfully proposed my dissertation, with data collection to commence in the fall. My dissertation will explore structural relationships of the Simple View of Writing at the 9th grade level with students with and without identified learning disabilities.

What are your personal hobbies or special interests?

When not busy with my doctoral studies, I enjoy reading, baking desserts, and walking/jogging.

IARLD Student Member – Scruton, Hilary

Affiliation: M.A. Candidate, Department of Child and Youth Studies, Brock University.

Nominated by Dr. John McNamara, January 2015

What are your current research interests?

My research interests are centered on providing effective literacy interventions to support children with reading disabilities.

How did you hear about the IARLD? What made you decide to join?

I was introduced to the IARLD through my MA supervisor, John McNamara. I became interested in joining the IARLD as this membership will provide me with the opportunity to connect with some of the most renowned researchers in the field of LD.

Would you tell us something about your professional background and what you are doing now?
I am currently completing my MA in Child and Youth Studies at Brock University. During this time, I have discovered a passion for researching the most effective interventions to support struggling readers. Specifically, over the past year myself, John McNamara, and Ashley Short (the Executive Director of the Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara) developed and published Reading Rocks: An approach to support and motivate vulnerable readers. The program is currently adopted by the Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara to over 400 children per year. In our research lab at Brock University, we study the efficacy of Reading Rocks by collecting pre- and post-program achievement data for each participating child. In addition to traditional literacy skills, Reading Rocks uses motivational tactics to build children’s self-regulated learning skills thus increasing their motivation to engage in reading-based tasks.

What are your personal hobbies or special interests?

In my free time I enjoy fitness and outdoor activities.

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**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**39th Annual IARLD Conference**

*July 7-9, 2015*

*Vancouver BC, Canada*

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We look forward to seeing you!
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