

## From the DISES President



**Eileen  
Raymond**

One of the great  
joys of serving  
in the DISES  
Leadership with

some marvelously interesting human beings. Whether it is at the CEC Convention, a summer roundtable or conference, or at meetings of the Leadership Team or Board of Directors, I am always grateful for the interactions I get to have with our committed DISES members and leaders.

You all do so much to make our world a more inclusive and respectful place. My concern is that many of our DISES members do not have the opportunities I have had. Many of you never get to chat with a fellow DISES or CEC member over a cup of coffee or tea, exploring solutions to the thorny problems we all face in our everyday work.

One of our strategic plan goals for the next 5 years is to increase opportunities for networking and collaboration among our members and with other organizations. Soon you will start seeing new ways to reach out across the miles, to share your accomplishments and concerns, and to develop partnerships to address the

## Looking for a way to get MORE INVOLVED in DISES? Apply to be the new DISES Social Media Director!

DISES is looking for a DISES member who has significant applied knowledge of social media, including the opportunities and challenges that exist when maintaining an active social media presence. The individual nominated to this newly created position will have a large impact on our membership, recruitment, and advocacy for those we support.

This individual will collaborate with the Information and Publications Officer to develop a social media agenda to further our strategic goals. Responsibilities will include managing our current social media accounts, maintaining an active presence online across all platforms, monitoring membership engagement in our online communities, and recommending additional outlets to broaden our digital presence.

If YOU are this individual, please submit your nomination using the Google form link [Here](#).

For full consideration, submit applications before July 1, 2016.

challenges children and youth with disabilities face every day. Current opportunities are presented by Facebook posts that invite discussion on a variety of topics. You might even post your own discussion starter... and see what happens!

Our immediate task is to appoint a DISES member as our new Social Media Director (see notice in the newsletter). This person will play a significant role in developing our digital capabilities to enable more interaction among our members, wherever they work in the world. Whether this is a Facebook discussion group, a more robust Twitter corps, or something we haven't even dreamed of yet, we will be working to connect with each of you.

Finally, we are looking for better ways to get feedback from our members. We began this process with small group discussions about member needs at our annual business meeting at CEC-St. Louis. Over the next few months we will be reaching out to you with invitations to take part in online focus groups designed to help us learn how we can better bring you all together across the miles. Our new Social Media Director and Sigamoney Naicker (our membership officer) will play a big part in making this happen.

For now, please stay in touch. You can reach out to any Board member through our website or at [DISES.CEC@gmail.com](mailto:DISES.CEC@gmail.com). Let us know what you're dreaming of, and even more importantly, how you would like to help build a strong DISES. Hope to see you soon, at an event, or over the World Wide Web. We're all closer than you think!

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**DISES Student Spotlight**

For more information, please email [DISES.CEC@gmail.com](mailto:DISES.CEC@gmail.com)

**Note:** Because this volunteer position requires an ongoing commitment of time to DISES, a small annual honorarium of \$500 is provided to support the time and effort required in this position.

### **Social Media Director Responsibilities**

- Create, monitor, and maintain relevant social media accounts
- Post information about DISES activities across DISES social media platforms
- Setup weekly tasks and activities for all social media outlets
- Collaborate with the Membership Officer on social media initiatives
- Monitor social media trends and competition
- Report to the Information and Publications Officer to ensure a cohesive social media identity
- Provide monthly reports to the Management Team and the Information and Publications Officer, with statistics and results for each account
- Propose new social media initiatives in collaboration with members of the DISES Board of Directors

### **Requirements**

- Familiarity with a variety of social media outlets
- Active DISES member for 3 or more years
- Ability to maintain a minimum of 4 hours/month implementing social media for DISES.
- Current involvement in special education issues and services

[Click here for DISES Media Director Flyer](#)



**Kelly Clark**  
**Doctoral Student in Special Education**  
**University of North Carolina at Charlotte**

I am a first year doc student at UNC-Charlotte. I also work as a graduate assistant with the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT). I have had the privilege of traveling to Zanzibar, Tanzania through the non-profit Chara to provide training for administrators for one of the four school districts on the island of Zanzibar. I am returning this summer to provide training for the additional school districts.

On my previous visit, I assisted in handing out Toms shoes, distributing Personal Energy Transportation carts to individuals with physical disabilities, taught a lesson at the only school on the island that serves students with disabilities, and provided a two-day training for administrators on many topics including why they should educate children with special needs and how they can include them in their schools. The principals were very receptive and since the training they have identified at least one student with Down Syndrome who was not in school but is now attending the special school through the financial support of Chara. I am very excited to return and hope to inspire change in this area of East Africa. I hope to conduct research in the future to continue to advance special education in that area. I also hope to help educators there



**Tom Gumpel**  
**Executive Director**

DISES continues to move forward in a number of important areas. Firstly, your organization is fiscally healthy and we have recently filed our 2015 IRS returns. In keeping with the Board of Directors decisions regarding complete transparency, this year's returns, as well as all previous years, will be freely available on the DISES website. We continue to work towards a comprehensive fiscal year review which will take place this year. We maintain a healthy bank balance and remain firmly within our 2016 budget.

Three major international events are on the DISES horizon, and the entire organization is working diligently to ensure their success. Registration for the DISES round table event in Nicaragua has been brisk, and we are looking forward to another outstanding event, led by Past-President Susan O'Rourke. There are still a limited number of spaces available, so don't hesitate any longer. Besides the immediate event, your DISES Board is in the midst of planning...

*(read more...)*



Registration remains open, with only a few spaces still available. Make plans now to attend what will certainly be an unforgettable experience in Nicaragua.

[Register here!](#)

**Information on Nicaragua and the Round Table Event**

see that children with disabilities can learn and deserve the same opportunity as their typically developing peers to attend school in a mainstream setting.

*Chara is a non-profit on the island of Zanzibar, Tanzania. They provide a variety of services to the island and partner with Toms shoes. [www.chara.org](http://www.chara.org)*

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## The 2016 DISES Awards Announced

Our DISES reception at the 2016 CEC Convention in St Louis was held in the beautiful new Arcade Museum at Webster University. At the reception we presented our DISES awards to two of our members who are working to improve the lives and opportunities for children and youth with disabilities.

**The 2016 Distinguished International Student Award** was presented to

Andrew Scheef who is just completing his doctoral studies in special education at Washington State University. His award was given in recognition of his work on enhanced transition opportunities in the US and in Singapore where he held a Fulbright Distinguished Award in Teaching. For more information about Andrew's accomplishments, see our Awards page at [www.DISES-CEC.org](http://www.DISES-CEC.org)



**The 2016 DISES International Distinguished Leadership Award** was presented to George William Muliika for his work to improve the lives of learners with disabilities through organizing and leading a new student group at Kisubi

DISES received many very exciting proposals for the 2016 Round Table in Nicaragua. Members of the organizing committee visited the Gran Pacific Resort to finalize plans for the event. Visits to three local schools revealed the need for innovative practices that focus on academics while teaching functional practical skills for all children but especially the vulnerable children living in rural areas of the country. Round Table participants will visit the schools and complete a service project at each school during the event. We had also considered visiting the Trash Dump Community, however, it was apparent that this would not be helpful to the community...

*(read more here)*



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## Looking back at CEC 2016 Convention in St Louis!

**CEC 2016**  
CONVENTION & EXPO  
APRIL 13-16 • ST. LOUIS

DISES once again offered a full program of activities for our members and friends at the CEC Convention. Thanks to our committed DISES reviewers who evaluated all the session proposals we received, we were able to showcase 11 presentations and 8 posters sessions in the International Services and Programs topic area. Our DISES Showcase session: *Work Around the World* featured DISES members Rachel Brody, Jugnu Agrawal, Jake Hackett, and Iva Boneva who described the partnerships they have created with colleagues in other countries.

On Saturday morning (at 8 am!), Clay Keller, Suzanne Martin, and Zachary Walker provided us a special session, *Colleagues Without Borders*, breaking new ground as they brought together colleagues from India, Zambia, and Zimbabwe – electronically! We thank them for helping us experience new ways to work globally without ever leaving home!



Brothers University in Uganda where he is a student leader. This group focuses on the needs of learners with disabilities, and it works to support local efforts

to improve the lives of children living and learning in challenging conditions in Uganda. For more information about George's accomplishments, see our Awards page at [www.DISES-CEC.org](http://www.DISES-CEC.org)

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## What does a Commitment to International Inclusive Education Mean?

DISES is committed to being a player at an international level through the mobilisation of resources needed to address inequalities in the provision of services relating to special education needs. One of our major goals is to address inequality in service provision across the globe. It is our contention that we can impact the development of inclusive education through making special education services available to as many parents, teachers and systems of education. Special education theories, assumptions and models have generally been exclusive and mystifying. These practices of special education created the perception that only certain people can teach children who experience barriers to learning. Right now at a global level, it is important for every mainstream teacher to be exposed to inclusive education as a theory of knowledge as we attempt to create a truly inclusive system of education at an international level. Different nation states are at various stages of development concerning inclusive

In another special session, DISES presented a CEC Program Chair Invited Town Hall: "Who is included? Who do we serve?" facilitated by Eileen Raymond, DISES President. Our panelists included Zachary Walker, Patti Powell, Iva Boneva, and Mary Lynn Boscardin, CASE President, who shared their ideas and experiences with the meanings of words commonly used to refer to inclusion of learners with a variety of special needs in the US and globally, as well as the meanings attached to "inclusive education" within this language context. This session started a conversation on these complex topics, one we will continue exploring in the future.

At our annual Membership Business Meeting on Friday afternoon, we devoted a significant portion of that meeting to small group discussions of the needs of members, and the benefits of membership. That conversation will also continue as we implement our 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and consider ways to better meet our members' needs.

Our Friday evening reception provided a capstone event to top all capstone events. Looking for an alternative to bland and expensive hotel receptions, President Elect Vicky Spencer worked with DISES member Donna Campbell from Webster University to host our reception in Webster's newly renovated Arcade Museum a couple of blocks from the convention. It was a wonderful space with interesting art, a sumptuous spread and lots of time and comfortable spaces for networking. We announced our 2016 Award winners, and many new connections were made. By all accounts, it was the best reception DISES has ever had, and we'll be looking for a similar opportunity next year in Boston.

If this all sounds interesting to you, we invite you to submit a proposal to present at next year's convention in Boston. Watch for the call for proposals soon from CEC, and plan to join us in 2017!

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## Sites for DISES Future Events

Soon DISES will be convening our 2016

education. It is our understanding that as more people are exposed to inclusive education training, the easier it becomes to create an inclusive system.

One of our goals is to bring expertise to areas of the world where that expertise does not exist. In both so called "first world" and "third world" contexts, there remains a need to bring support and expertise from more privileged contexts. We also need to encourage faculties of education across the world to ensure inclusive education becomes a core area that is taught to every student. The idea of having special education departments should become obsolete since education faculties should become inclusive. Inequalities in terms of race and class have marginalised many learners. With knowledge and expertise we want to bring those from the margins to the center. That we can do if we mobilise resources at an international level.

Our task is to create the conditions for inclusion at an international level. We will bring resources to the most disadvantaged contexts by mobilising expertise of professionals who want to make a difference. I encourage all teacher preparation students at universities across the world to join DISES. Very shortly our Facebook page will generate debate about these and other issues. Ultimately our task is to make the world a better place for those who have been marginalised from mainstream economic and social life by segregated and unfair education systems.

*Dr Sigamoney Manicka Naicker  
Cape Town, South Africa  
DISES Membership Officer*



Roundtable in Nicaragua from June 26-July 1. Planning is well underway under Susan O'Rourke's leadership, and we are anticipating many lively exchanges of ideas among the presenters and other participants.

In its recent meeting at CEC 2016, the DISES Board of Directors has now confirmed the following sites for its professional development events in 2017 and 2018:

- **June 25-30, 2017: International Roundtable in Sofla, Bulgaria**

For this roundtable we are partnering with the Center for Inclusive Education, with Iva Boneva, CIE's Executive Director. Building on CIE's work in Bulgaria, a country formerly under Russian control, we will be considering a variety of issues associated with building an inclusive educational system. Who is included? Who do we serve? How do we best serve diverse student groups as the foundation for an inclusive society?

- **July 2-6, 2018: International Conference in Port Elizabeth, South Africa**

This conference promises to be a significant professional development event, one you won't want to miss, drawing educators from throughout southern Africa and beyond. Partnering with Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's Faculty of Education, our keynote speakers and presenters from throughout South Africa, the region and the world will engage participants in consideration of practical implementation of inclusive education in developing countries and elsewhere. Attendees will have plenty of time to learn from those who are working in different contexts in this country and region and who are engaged in significant change, while enjoying all that the friendly city of Port Elizabeth on the Indian Ocean coast has to offer.

Both of these events promise to provide us

with many excellent networking opportunities. Both will help us all to consider innovative ways of moving to more inclusive educational practices within contexts in the midst of significant change and development. We hope you will mark your calendars and plan to join us! Having you join us will enrich the dialogue and experience for us all.



Have you read the most recent special issue on Braga 2014: Embracing Inclusive Approaches for Children and Youth with Special Education Needs? Check it out at:  
<http://jisne.org/toc/spne/19/1>

Current and past issues of the Journal can be accessed at:  
<http://www.jisne.org/>

Non-members will need to subscribe to the journal. See more information at:  
<http://dises-cec.org/site/publications/journal/>

**Contribute!**  
DISES Newsletter  
and the  
Journal of International Special Needs Education (JISNE)...

...welcome articles from our global membership. Please follow the links below for further information.

[DISES Newsletter Submission Guidelines](#)

For manuscript submission to JISNE  
[click here.](#)

**Thank you!**

