



**A Message from the  
IASE President  
Zandile P. Nkabinde**

Dear IASE Members,

In the current year, the outcry for social justice and the pandemic has pushed all sectors to reckon with the issues of marginalization and opportunity. However, IASE with its long record of serving the marginalized, e.g., persons with disabilities both nationally and internationally, is a force for good. Both the IASE mission and commitment to fostering social justice, inclusivity, and serving as a voice to the voiceless around the globe have proven successful in promoting goodwill between all cultures.

This issue provides updates about the planned Virtual/Dialogue Meeting scheduled for October 10, 2020. The theme for this virtual meeting is: Global Responses to COVID-19 pandemic: Responses from IASE National Chairs and Volunteer Service Project Sites. The objective of this Virtual Dialogue is to have National Chairs and IASE Volunteers share their personal insights and experiences in the implementation of IASE activities/projects during the COVID-19 crisis. The dialogue will focus on the following topics:

- The responses about how each country is coping with the pandemic as it relates to IASE activities.
- The resources that IASE provides in each site.
- The responses of IASE National Chairs and Volunteer Service Sites and future directions.

The International Association of Special Education (IASE) 17<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference will be held in collaboration with Ho Chi Minh City University of Education in Vietnam from July 17-20, 2022 (pending Board's approval).

The COVID-19 pandemic's crisis may have forced us to prepare for a "next normal." In my situation, attending professional webinars have become the norm and a way of connecting with other professionals in different organizations. At the beginning of this month I attended a webinar titled: Teachers as a Global Community of Practice for each other, where educators from the US and Malawi discussed improving literacy in rural populations. One of the participants, a special education Malawian Professor who now lives and works in the US ended up joining IASE. Therefore, our survival as an organization hinges upon our creativity in using every platform to increase our membership from social media to the new norm of virtual webinars and Zoom meetings. Membership engagement is a necessity in expanding the organization to new horizons.

As we plan our return to full activity, let us remember that we are ALL in this together. Finding innovative ways for IASE's growth and development should be our number one priority. In conclusion, as Winston Churchill said, "Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning." There are positive signs and hope of seeing this pandemic come to an end as the talk of vaccines takes the center stage. Thus, the road towards the next normal continues to unfold. Our challenge is to continue the drive to promote the IASE mission and vision throughout the crisis and find innovative ways to increase membership. New IASE members must be encouraged to get involved with IASE projects and organizations. The theme for my term is "Together we shall ALL survive this pandemic crisis and move from despair to action."

Dr. Zandile Nkabinde  
New Jersey City University, USA  
IASE President (2020-2021)

## S.P.J. Sadhana School Updates

June 2020

Admin Office for Principal

SPJ Sadhana School

Sophia College Campus, Mumbai, India

Since 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020 the school commenced online



classes, embracing the chalked-out syllabus but innovating strategies to engage the student. The first step was a successful partnership with the parents who are now consistently active in the online sessions. Utilizing the Google Meet platform, the teachers address small groups to ensure methodological instruction and transfer of learning. Daily feedback, meetings and interaction between the staff, Coordinators and Principal keep the entire program on track with each day's activities verified and approved by the apex and collated to keep every member of the staff in the know of the whole picture. The aim is to have a network where co-teachers may immediately step in to fill in delays due to technical or other problems. The past month has been a time of learning.

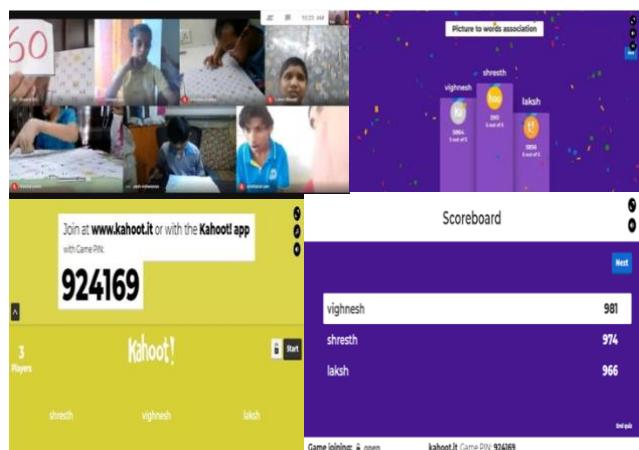
Several fears such as capturing attention of the students and holding it have mostly proved unfounded, as the majority of the students have taken to the change as ducks to water. The novelty of being home with parents in tow has definitely influenced the youngsters and their

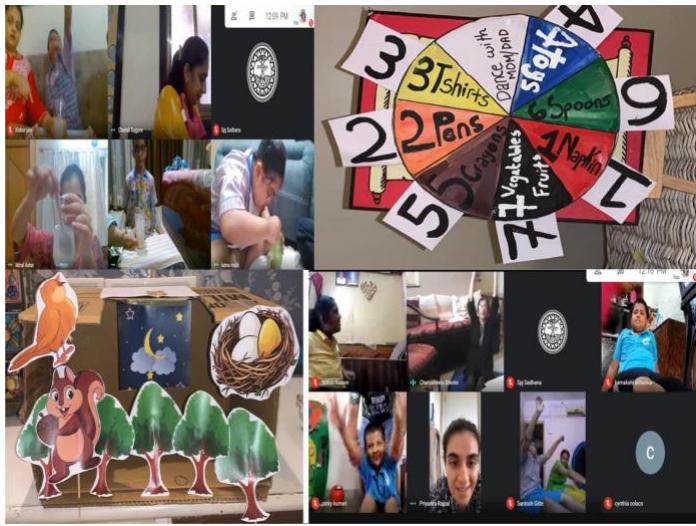
enthusiasm and engagement in their sessions and their perseverance certainly have something more to say. All in all, the experience has been extremely fruitful and encouraging as we look forward to a very fulfilling time ahead.

Teaching Methodology have spiraled creatively into the virtual dimension. Teaching aids employ household articles easily available around the house. The staffs have designed multi- shaped and colored beads from paper, used food processors to explain the workings of the computer - its input processing and output-, picture recipes to explain ingredients and PPT to explain The Essentials of art. Math gained new heights when the teacher duplicated a Math Lab at home.



In the Formative Years the younger students are enticed with stimulating games through the 'Kahoots' App where the teacher may host a series of action plan for learning.





## S.P.J. Sadhana School Updates

**July 2020**

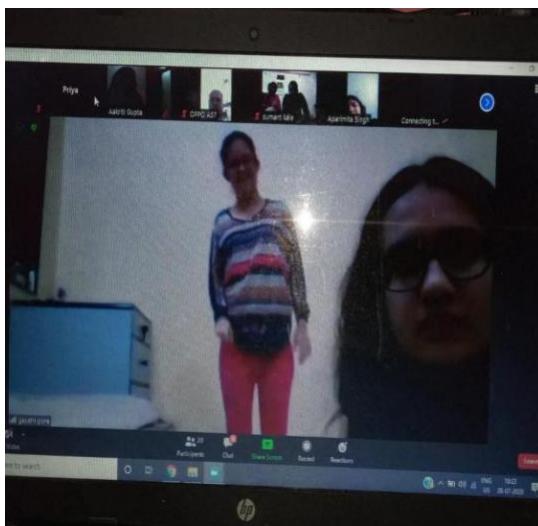
**Admin Office for Principal  
SPJ Sadhana School  
Sophia College Campus, Mumbai, India**

In the month of July, SPJ Sadhana School progressed well in its virtual learning program. Continuing its policy of interaction, the school has had regular meetings with parents to support virtual learning and to deal with behavioral issues. Timetables have been adjusted to suit the needs of the students especially those on the ASD spectrum. Physical capacity of the students has also been considered, which led to gauging and fixing the optimum time period for teaching. More individual sessions for academics and therapy have also been allotted, to help students settle.

On the mentor front, capacity building sessions for the teachers are held on Fridays to enhance teaching styles and provide a larger ‘think-tank’ to deal with the curriculum. Capacity building workshops have included in-house training of staff for Teaching, Learning AIDS for virtual learning; Mindfulness Meditation, Counting Workshop (Mathematics) and stress management for lock down and virtual training.

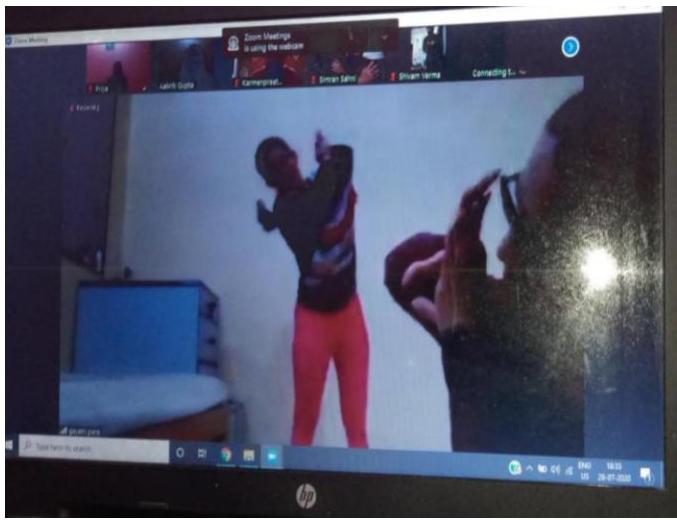
The teachers, by and large, have individually and on their own time participated in webinars and online courses for self-improvement. Anju Daswani, Alpa Mazumdar and Avadhut Magar have attended webinars from Nehru Science Centre, while Ms. Rajashri Ghosalkar, our Sports

Coach, is intensely involved in the entire online program conducted by Special Olympics Bharat.



A special mention must be made for our dedicated staff - in spite of ill health, network-failure and other problems, the online sessions have worked consistently and with full authenticity as the staff, working as one, pitched in during the absence of their colleagues.

The school has also continued student Admission interviews for vocational training online, in order to offer the best possible chance at education to students, in these stressful times.



Meanwhile, students have participated in various activities and events and come away with flying colors. The National Sibling forum of SOB conducted a Dance with Social Distancing activity. The dance was demonstrated and taught by our athlete Sanjana Pore. A very proud moment for us all.

Special Olympics Bharat Maharashtra also celebrated the Global week of Inclusion by showcasing with athletes by showcasing their art and craft creative abilities. Aria Mansingka is portrayed eloquently on their Facebook and Instagram pages with her very creative artwork.



A happy outcome of the program has been greater bonding between the staff and parents. Observing the teachers, the parents have often found themselves pleasantly surprised by the teaching strategies that have won over students. On the other



hand, the teachers have gained an opportunity to peep into their homes and learn how the home environment can affect the handling of the child and in use of techniques given to help.

**School in the Time of COVID-19**  
**By Jackie Wrafter MBE, M.Phil., Director**  
**THE KIANH FOUNDATION, Da Nang and Hoi An,**  
**Central Viet Nam**

April 2020 was the 8<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of opening our special school in Dien Ban, Vietnam. During the times of anniversary, myself and the staff usually stop to take a look around us and to express both pleasure and surprise at this wonderful learning environment that

together we have created. A place where children run free in the tropical garden, full of joy and self-confidence, where children learn to walk, to communicate, and to manage their daily lives.



*Art day before COVID*

I am the one who is usually the most surprised, for having been with Kianh Foundation from the start, I know firsthand all of the challenges and obstacles we have had to come through to get here. From the time when the orphanage we worked at knocked down our physiotherapy room without informing us, thus halting our physio program; to the time when we could not get any official agreement on building our school and progress stalled for a whole year. My colleague and I sat in our office in Vietnam, wondering if this was the time to just pack up and go home?

But COVID19 was a new challenge. Being so close to China, the virus hit Vietnam earlier than many places in the world and we were told we could not re-open our school after the Tét (Lunar New Year) holiday that had commenced in January. After a series of crisis meetings and waiting impatiently to be told the school could re-open; I became increasingly concerned about how we could explain to our donors that we were closed because of something ‘not any worse than the Flu’. As time passed, we decided that we could not delay actioning temporary measures any longer and must come back to work. The staff came to the school every day to make resources and do lesson plans. They have probably now planned enough lessons and made enough resources to last the next five years. Finally, came acceptance. As the global pandemic spread, we realized that this wasn’t ‘just the flu’ and it wasn’t going to be resolved quickly. But how to continue some kind of program for our



kids? Many of our students have Autism, ADHD or moderately severe cognitive disabilities. Despite knowing that this would be a very difficult thing to achieve and that it was unlikely they could get many of our students to sit in front of a computer, or probably phone, screen at home and pay attention, I told our staff that they should get some kind of distance learning underway with the kids.

Full kudos to our staff who took my request and made it work. They knew that it was not really likely that they would be able to teach our kids this way, and decided instead to teach the parents. Each week they would share a simple goal of their child with a family, give guidance on how to help the child achieve it, and then the family would send back video footage (usually just something very simple from their phone) of them working with the child, for feedback and review from the teacher or therapist. This strategy is working better than I could have hoped, and it is a joy to see the videos that are shared with me each week. Some of the families are really going the extra mile. One family has painted a walking track in their large backyard, to help guide the walking of their son who has Cerebral Palsy. Another family who has a child with Cerebral Palsy, have made parallel bars out of bamboo for him to practice in the garden. One mother is teaching her child her numbers, whilst also incorporating verbalization and sign language in the lesson. It's a dream of a lesson that any western speech therapist would be happy to conduct! Of course, not all of the sessions run like this, and many of the parents need a lot of feedback and guidance. But that is fine. The point is that they are thinking about their child's development and are learning how to bring it about themselves. As all special ed. teachers around the world will know, getting the parents on board is often a large part of the battle. Families are too tired, don't have enough time, find what is requested of them too difficult; as the mother of a child with Cerebral Palsy, I know all too well the barriers to working with your child at home, and what you are just too tired to do, even though you know you should be doing it. But here are our families, quarantined at home with their children, not allowed to go to work. They have the time to put some effort into this, and the more of these home videos I see, the more I realize that out of difficult circumstances, a golden opportunity has arisen.

So, although this particular Kianh anniversary has been a strange one, I cannot call it a wholly bad one. We

missed our school. We missed seeing our students every day. But it is gratifying to know that the Kianh Foundation school, is more than bricks and mortar, and those involved can bring about learning anywhere, and in any circumstances. If Vietnam teaches you anything, it teaches you resilience and flexibility, and this is what I am seeing in our staff, students and families now.

### **Teacher Feature: Spotlight on Rose Assey (Version 2.0), Toa Nafasi VSP Site, Moshi Tanzania By Sarah Rosenbloom**

I'm so excited to be able to post a brand-new, circa 2020 "Teacher Feature" at long last!

Teacher Features were meant to be glimpses of our incredible tutors in their own words: tidbits on what drew them to their work at Toa, what they've learned on the job; and of course, where they come from, what their early experiences were like.

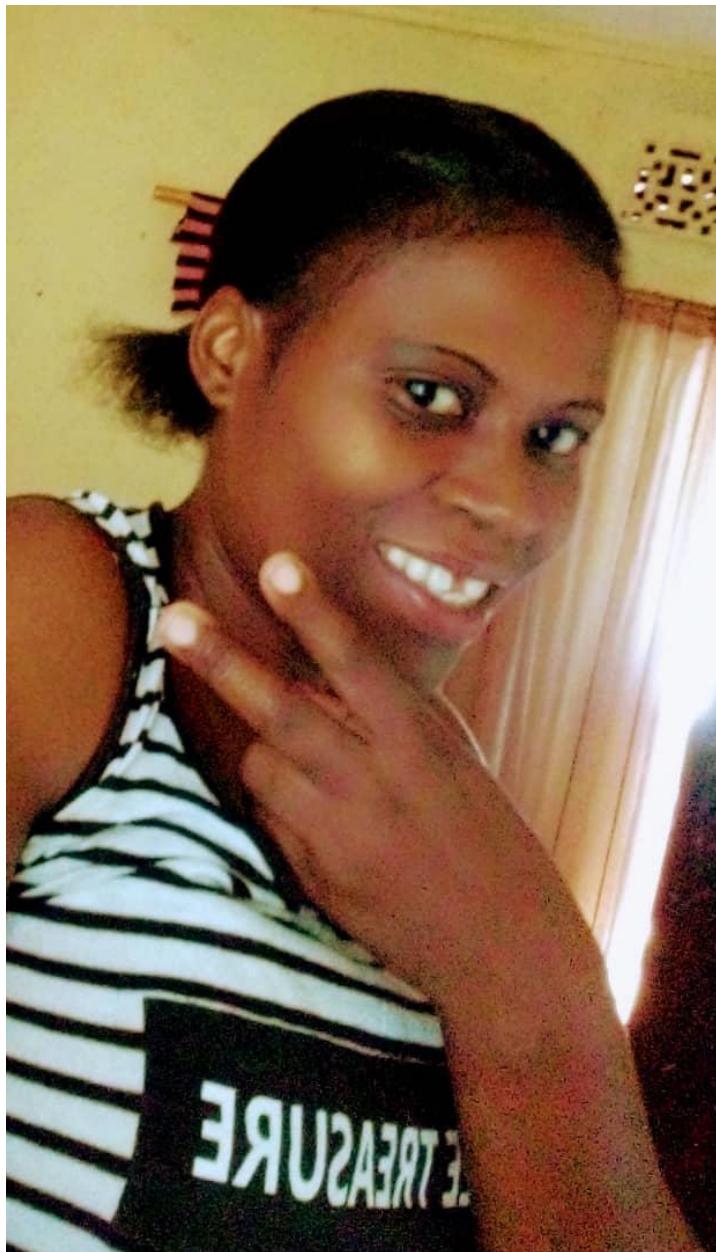
Unfortunately, we were terribly late to debut the idea, so the ones previously posted on this blog are from 2016 – basically, a lifetime ago!! But due to the pandemic and closing of schools, we finally found the time to put pen to paper and re-launch the series now.

Since it was [Rose Assey](#) with whom we inaugurated the Teacher Features, so it will be Rose again. Here she is – 2.0 – Rose Joseph Assey, Head Tutor, Kiboriloni Primary School, in her own words:

*When I was a little girl in school, I used to love studying and playing with the other children in school. Also, I loved when our school participated in tournaments against other schools in all sorts of games, though my favorite game was netball.*

*My dream work was to become a teacher as both my parents were teachers. When I completed O-Level secondary school, my parents took me to a vocational school, where I did not last as I dropped out to go join a teachers' college.*

*Before joining with Toa Nafasi, I used to teach at a kindergarten named Second Chance in Msaranga. I really loved and enjoyed teaching little kids but mostly I loved playing with them. I'm really happy and excited to work with Toa Nafasi as I am doing what I love and enjoy doing.*



I heard about Toa Nafasi from a teacher who used to work for Toa Nafasi. I then sent my applications and was called for the interview. Luckily, I was selected and started on probation for three months. Thereafter I was successfully employed, and ever since my life has not been the same. I became independent and I could also support my mother.

If I was not working for Toa, I would be a regular kindergarten teacher which means less fun because at Toa, the psychology is quite different. The kids are taught in a different way from regular classes and in that difference is where the fun is.

*I hated being whipped from childhood but as a child I believed that a child cannot learn without being whipped. So, when I heard that, at Toa Nafasi, kids learn without being caned, I was curious to see and I'm truly amazed that kids learn without whips – just games and extra attention!*

*My biggest accomplishment with Toa Nafasi has and will always be the knowledge that I now possess, the understanding and appreciation of differences among kids and people generally. I have seen kids who, in regular settings are considered incapable, become really capable kids and able to go their way. I can't wait for this disease (Covid-19) to end so we get back in schools and help these kids to become better individuals.*

*There are several good things that have happened to me during my presence in Toa but the one that is outstanding is that last year, we went to SEKOMU for the IASE Conference. It was a beautiful experience as I went with my fellow colleagues to Lushoto where I saw many amazing things. First was the climate as it was very beautiful though cold but very nice. There were hills everywhere and going up the hills gave me chills which was thrilling and very amazing. I remember that in school, we were taught about the Usambara Mountains but I had never seen them! Anyway, while we were there, I met a lot of people from all over the world. We also visited Lutindi Mental Hospital which was another amazing thing to see and learn about different people and have the chance to ask about their backgrounds.*

*During my time with Toa, above all else I have learned that kids need LOVE more than anything else and only through LOVE can a kid learn effectively. I have also learned that nothing is impossible and if it seems like it is, just try it a different way and use a different technique.*

*From the experience that I have had with Toa in dealing with kids who struggle in learning, parents should not segregate kids according to how they perform in school or anywhere. They should treat all kids the same with genuine love and support them. And teachers should not hate kids who learn differently but they should tolerate them and be considerate, and both parents and teachers should consider children's rights.*

**Student designs autonomous way-finding device for visually impaired people unable to home a guide dog**

**Loughborough's School of Design, and Creative Arts, Loughborough, Leicestershire, UK**

People with visual impairment comprise more than 253 million people globally with majority of them using white canes for navigation. Only a small percentage of people with visual impairment use guide dogs to help them navigate the environment. While some people prefer not to use a guide dog for various reasons, some others simply cannot use a guide dog due to allergies, expenses, and other reasons.

Anthony Camu, a final year student majoring in Industrial Design and Technology, wanted to design a product that could serve a guide dog's functions for people who have visual impairment and are not able to use a guide dog to help with navigation.



This handheld robotic guide dog 'Theia' was inspired by virtual reality gaming consoles and can be a great way to help people navigate both indoor and outdoor environments. Checkout the [link](#) for more information about a portable handheld device, or robotic guide dog.

**Be a Champion of Change  
Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much  
By Rachael A. Gonzales, Membership Chair**

The past 6 months have been a set of challenging and demanding days for all of us. Our daily routines have been altered, our means of communicating with each other is now through zoom, and travel appears to be something of the past. But through it all we will SURVIVE, for we are all strong individuals with hearts of compassion and commitment to children with disabilities and their families across the globe.

The strength of IASE is through membership. If you have received a message from me requesting to renew your membership, please don't delay in renewing your membership. If you know of someone who is interested in joining IASE, please forward the information below to them. You may want to pass along the last newsletter to potential members so that they can read how the mission of IASE is being carried out internationally. I would also like to ask that you check in with fellow IASE members to see if they are getting information from IASE – if they are not it may be that I have the wrong email address. Please ask them to email me with their correct email. Thank you for your support.

**Membership Information**

Your membership support is *critical* for IASE to continue their collaboration with partners across the international field of special education. There are several ways you can join IASE: As a regular member, a student, an individual from a developing country, an institution, and a regular member who sponsors a member from a developing country:

<https://www.iase.org/membership>

- 1) You can enroll online using a credit card account.
- 2) Complete an IASE membership form and send a check and or money order to IASE Treasurer at: P.O. Box 2159, Mesa, Arizona 85214, USA.

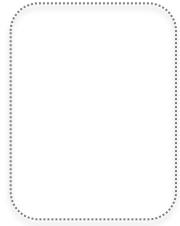
If you have been a past member of IASE a message requesting that you **Renew** your membership will be arriving in your email accordingly. We need your continued support so I do hope that you will renew. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [IASEMembership@gmail.com](mailto:IASEMembership@gmail.com). If you are a member, please consider sponsoring an individual from a developing economy.

<https://www.iase.org/membership>

**Treasurer's Report  
As of August 5, 2020  
Iris Drower**

Account	Amount
Checking	\$3,338.14
VSP/Giving	\$12,251.30
Marg Csapo Scholarship	\$6,000.38
Operational Fund	\$128,119.31
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$149,710.63</b>

**Renew and Join IASE Today!**



To join IASE, contact Rachael Gonzales, email: [rgonzales@csus.edu](mailto:rgonzales@csus.edu)

**Please print information clearly:**

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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: \_\_\_\_\_

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Donation to Marg Csapo Scholarship \$US \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed \$US \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Information:** \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ Master Card \_\_\_\_\_ Discover

Authorized.net (*Please follow link on the website @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:

Mail: 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)**