

The President's Letter



You and I would not be members of IDA if we did not share the belief that literacy offers promise for the individual and hope for a society. As Peter Drucker has said, "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance!" In our world ignorance and illiteracy walk hand in hand.

For 57 years IDA has promoted the development and dissemination of clinically proven and research-based practices. Our 47 branches are led by educators and therapists that are informed by best practices supported by current research. Our international Board and Council of Advisors include leading experts in the fields of genetics, brain function, diagnosis, treatment, staff development, and cutting edge educational practice. IDA is, in fact, an organizational model that efficiently and effectively bridges the gap between research and practice.

IDA promotes dissemination of information through *Annals*, our professional and scientific journal; *Perspectives*, our more practice oriented theme publication; branch, regional, special, and national conferences that are attended by over 20,000 annually; and Fact Sheets together with numerous other publications intended for diverse audiences.

In addition to conferences, Branches offer various symposia, forums, workshops, summer institutes, overviews and other personal and staff development opportunities throughout the year. IDA spearheaded the development of scientific definitions of Dyslexia that are used in research conducted by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE). IDA hosted a forum attended by 33 invited organizations to study ways to build the capacity of public schools to deliver informed practice when implementing Response to Instruction (RTI). Our branches are beginning to provide direct services including screening to identify children at risk for reading failure, therapeutic services for adults who have not learned to read, and multiple staff development opportunities. We are building a new web-site and, after nearly completing our Capital Campaign, we have purchased an office condominium that will more than double our office space.

IDA has attracted nine Global Partners including organizations headquartered in Austria, Brazil, Czech Republic, Israel, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Kuwait, and the Philippines. Nationally we are developing strong partnerships with organizations with compatible missions and a history of excellence, such as Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) and the National Center for Learning Disabilities among others.

We don't often reflect on all that we do or how far we have come, either personally or organizationally.

As I am writing, I am becoming increasingly impressed with the initiatives and accomplishments of IDA; I hope that you feel the same. However, in spite of all that IDA is doing and all that it has done; it is a drop in the proverbial ocean! We can do better, we can do much better. Being the one holding the light in the darkness provides a false sense of success and empowerment when our real mission is to banish darkness altogether.

IDA's potential for advancing our shared mission, yours and mine, is driven by membership. IDA is a membership organization. IDA exists to support the mission of its membership and its success is fueled by the influence and dedication of each and every member. All too often we find ourselves preaching to the choir with the congregation out of reach.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

I am going to find one new member this afternoon; someone who cares about advancing the promise and hope of literacy. If you have taken the time from your incredibly busy life to read this message, I am speaking to you directly and individually. You are the one, perhaps the only one that can make a difference now, today. The back cover of this issue of *Perspectives* contains a membership application. Tear it out and find one new member to help you, me, and IDA make an impact on illiteracy and ignorance. With every member that we can add to the foundation of IDA we increase the opportunity for us all to advance our shared mission.

Thank you.

G. Emerson Dickman, President

The
International
DYSLEXIA
Association®

Promoting literacy through research, education, and advocacy.™

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Written comments regarding material contained in *Perspectives* are invited and can be directed to Megan Cohen or Diane Nies.

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