



World Autism Awareness Day

Inclusive Quality Education for All

Virtual Event: Friday, 8 April 2022 | 10 - 11:15 a.m. EST

10:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Melissa Fleming, Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications, UN

10:05 a.m. Inclusive Classrooms: Challenges & Opportunities (video contributions from around the world)

Jean Winegardner, Board President, Partnership for Extraordinary Minds; Office Manager, ASAN, U.S.

Deirdre Kempen, Principal and Founder, Shelanti Private School, South Africa

Deepti Ganesh Kakkirala, Application Development Associate, Accenture, India

Swathi Vellal Raghunandan, Founder and Director, Ishanya India Foundation, India

Sarah Ahmad Bawazeer, Lead Therapist, Namaee Center, Saudi Arabia

Oliver Akello, Occupational Therapist, Silver Bells, Rwanda

Brian Middleton, Educational Consultant, Bearded Behaviorist, U.S.

10:20 a.m. PANEL: Inclusive education – The foundation for reducing inequalities

Moderator: Claire Barnett, Visiting Fellow at the Frist Center for Autism & Innovation, 2023 MBA Candidate at Kenan-Flagler Business School, U.S.

Abelardo Apollo David, Jr., Executive Director, The Academia Progresiva de Manila, and The Independent Living Learning Center, Philippines

Lauren Melissa Ellzey, Instructional Support Specialist and Autistic Self-Advocate, U.S.

Diana Ringe Krogh, Head of LEGO Collaboration & Social Ventures, LEGO Foundation, Denmark

Gerardo Gaya Real, CEO, Iluminemos por el Autismo, Mexico

10:55 a.m. Adapting Schools to Different Ways of Learning (video contributions from around the world)

Major Dodson, Actor, U.S.

Pooja Panesar, Founder and Director, Kaizora Centre for Neurodevelopmental Therapies, Kenya

Charlotte Valeur, Chief Executive, Global Governance Group; Founder, Institute of Neurodiversity, Switzerland

Jordyn Zimmerman, Director of Professional Development, The Nora Project, U.S.

Dr. Mapy Chavez Askins, Founding Director, Alcnzando Inc., Peru/U.S.

Donny Mardonius and N. Anfield Wibowo, Father and son, Indonesia

Prof. Irwanto, Researcher and Psychologist, Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia



Maria Fernanda Chang, Director, Centro Enigma ABA, Ecuador

Thorkil Sonne, Founder, Specialisterne Foundation, Denmark

Rasmus Haugaard, Chairman, North Denmark Chambers of Commerce, Denmark

Shravan Roy, Self-advocate, Intern at SOREM, India

Kavitha Manjunath, Special Educator, Academy for Severe Handicaps and Autism [ASHA], India

11:10 a.m. Closing Remarks

Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Co-ordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, DESA, UN

11:15 a.m. Event Concludes

Event website + access:
un.org/en/observances/autism-day

The event is organized by the United Nations [UN] Department of Global Communications and UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, with the support of civil society partners including the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, the Global Autism Project and the Specialisterne Foundation. The event is co-sponsored by the United Nations Permanent Missions of Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Denmark, Italy, Malta, and Poland.

