International Day of Older Person

Observing International Day of the Older Person IASSW conducted a webinar on 1st October, 2022 titled – The Resilience and contribution of Older Women. The webinar was hosted on the virtual platform zoom and live-streamed via IASSW Facebook page for a larger audience. The webinar was moderated by Junk Wake, Prof. School of Social Welfare, Tokyo Metropolitan University. The panel had two esteemed panelists; Minna Zechner, Associate Professor, University of Helsinki, Faculty of Social Sciences highlighted the “Contributions of older women: care, voluntary work and kin keeping”. The second panelist Alexandra Mustafa, Associate Professor, the Federal University of Pernambuco shared her insights on “Resilience and potential of elderly women in the construction of the Societary Project.”. The enriching input sessions were followed by a round of discussion and questions answer round.
The theme for 2022’s World Mental Health day was “Make Mental Health for all a Global Priority”. IASSW hosted a fireside chat with mental health specialists. The chat was moderated by Ms. Janet Saldanha, Counselling Psychologist (India). The guests for the chat were David Rose, Associate Prof., The University of Melbourne and Christos Panagiotopoulos, Prof-Child & Adolescent Mental Health Research & Practice, University of Nicosia (Cyprus). The discussions were spun around Drug or substance abuse, adverse effects of family violence, different types of trauma, and social work in mental health. The enriching discussions motivated the participants to contribute their experiences and insights related to the above-mentioned topics.

The University of Eastern Finland and the University of Namibia launch a short documentary ‘Finland and Namibia Standing in Solidarity for the Human Rights of Older People: Ageism during Covid-19’ which captures first-hand, the experiences of social work academics, practitioners, and older people living in Namibia and Finland concerning the challenges in health and social care provision to older people and how ageism under the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic became an inherent source of discrimination, abuse, and oppression. Despite the socio-cultural and economic differences between Finland and Namibia, the documentary brings older people, professionals, and academics together and makes an appeal from both countries for an urgent re-examination of university-based social work education in prompting theories, skills, and interventions for promoting human rights across the life course and global registration for the rights of older people.

The documentary was produced by a team of Social Work academic from UEF and UNAM and Mounir Ould Setti of Science Stories, through the FinCEAL + BRIDGES programme administered by the Finnish University Partnership for International Development (UniPID) and funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland. The project team consisted of Professor Janet Carter Anand and Ms. Natalie Joubert of the University of Eastern Finland and Ass. Professor Janet Ananias and Dr. Rachel Freeman of the University of Namibia.
The Joint World Conference on social work education and social development sponsored collaboratively by IASSW and ICSW was held on October 26-28, 2022, in Seoul, South Korea. In short, it was an amazing experience using hybrid technology opening up the conference to colleagues around the world who could not attend in person.

The conference opened with remarks from Dr. Sang-Muk Suh, President of the International Council on Social Welfare and Dr. Annamaria Campanini, President of the International Association of Schools of Social Work. A congratulatory message was delivered by Kyoo-hong Cho, Minister of Health and Welfare, Republic of Korea.

During the opening ceremony, we experienced a fantastic digital show, and skilled Korean traditional musicians and dancers. All delegates were treated to a wonderful Korean luncheon sponsored by the Korea Social Welfare Credit Union.

Two plenary lectures were delivered. The first was by Dr. Gloria Kirwan from the Graduate School of Healthcare Management, Royal College of Medicine, and the second, the Katherine Kendall Lecturer, Dr. Julia A. Watkins, Co-director of the Southeast Europe Academic Women’s Leadership Initiative. Four special lectures were delivered by Sang-Mol Suh, Neil Gilbert, Chaime Marcuello-Servos, and Darja Zavirsek, the Eileen Younghusband lecturer. During the Opening Ceremony, President Campanini presented Dr. In-Young Han, an award from IASSW in appreciation for her long-time service and commitment to IASSW.
The afternoon was filled with special sessions from representatives of the Korean Social Welfare Credit Union, and the Seoul Welfare Foundation, the Hyundai Motor Chung Mong-Koo Foundation and the Community Chest of Korea.

All of these excellent plenary sessions were followed by a welcome reception sponsored by Seoul City & Seoul Welfare Foundation.

IASSW extends it heartfelt thanks to the local management committee, the global management committee (Annaline Keet, Alexandra Mustafa and Junko Wake representing IASSW) and the scientific committee for organizing and putting on this amazing world conference.

The conference venues included the Seoul Garden Hotel and the Korea National Council on Social Welfare. All sessions were recorded and broadcast synchronously. Over one hundred and twenty-seven presentations, workshops, and posters were delivered on day two with several hundred presenters. The range of topics was extensive, all contributing to the consideration of social work education and social development post-pandemic.

Following presentations on day two, IASSW and ICSW held a book launch featuring two books, Remaking Social Work for the New Global Era, edited by Tiong Ngoh Tan and. P. K. Shajahan. This book was the product of work completed for the Rimini World Conference that was cancelled due to COVID. Digital Transformation and Social Well-being: Promoting an Inclusive Society edited by Antonio Lopez Peaez, Sang-Muh Suh and Sergei Zelenev was also launched. All editors and contributors were thanked for their forethought and contributions to social work and social development.

The final day of the conference included a field site visit to the Social Welfare Corporation Angel's Haven which cares for about 80 children, orphans and children from broken homes, some with disabilities. They also provide services to the elderly in the community through schools, welfare centers, hospitals, sports centers, and sheltered workshops.

We experienced a traditional Korean lunch and then toured Gyeongbokgund Palace, 'Palace Greatly Blessed by Heaven” built-in 1395. Surrounded by mountains, the Palace was at the heart of Seoul and represented the sovereignty of the Joseon Dynasty.

Delegates traveled to Seoul from many different countries and all indicated their appreciation of returning to an in-person meeting to strengthen old relationships, build new ones and have the opportunity to collaborate and network with like-minded colleagues.

SWESD 2022 Seoul was a major success. All involved must celebrate their accomplishments. We are looking forward to the next tripartite world conference to be held in Panama, April 4-7, 2024. I hope to see you all there!

Barbara W. Shank, IASSW Secretary
The International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) has launched its student membership for all social work students. The membership is available at 20$ for all students.

IASSW is the worldwide association of schools of social work, other tertiary-level social work education programmes, and social work educators. IASSW promotes the development of social work education throughout the world, develops standards to enhance the quality of social work education, encourages international exchange, provides forums for sharing social work research and scholarship, and promotes human rights and social development through policy and advocacy activities.

As a student member, He/She will have an access to

1. Access to a worldwide network of social work educators through conferences, seminars, exchanges, and listservs.
2. Access to the IASSW Virtual Knowledge Center.
3. Monthly & Weekly updates from social work schools and associations through newsletters.
4. Opportunities to apply and benefit from IASSW projects and funds for enhancing social work education such as Regional resource centers.
5. Eligibility to participate in the proceedings of the UN
6. Free access to the IASSW website, Social Dialogue online magazine
7. Free access to monthly webinars on discussions around social work-relevant themes.

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We invite all members and readers to share the recent news and updates of your organization latest by 10th of every month for it to be published in this monthly newsletter. Kindly share your reports with relevant photographs to Ms. Jenny Joy, Communication Officer jenny@iassw-aiets.org.