

# One Voice



International  
Stuttering  
Association

Issue 26 - June 2009

Downloadable from [www.stutterisa.org](http://www.stutterisa.org)



ISA Disclaimer: In keeping with our mission of providing an open forum for the exchange of extensive and thought-provoking information about stuttering, the ISA Newsletter presents a wide range of views. The ISA does not necessarily endorse the opinions of the writers of Newsletter articles.

*Edited by Jianliang (Albert) Zhang (email: [jz1208@ecu.edu](mailto:jz1208@ecu.edu))*

***A world that understands stuttering***

# From the ISA Chair

By B. Ravid, ISA Chair

The ISA has been creating a big, strong and proud international community of people who stutter.

Here are extracts from my Opening Ceremony speech to the 2nd African Congress for People Who Stutter, on October 27, 2008:

*“The ISA mission is for ‘a world that understands stuttering’. There are many interpretations and views of how ‘a world that understands stuttering’ should look like. But it is clear that ‘a world that understands stuttering’ means a better world for people who stutter, to their families and to all those who are in touch with them. ‘A world that understands stuttering’ grows and develops in self-help groups for people who stutter.*

*In a self-help group people who stutter are not alone any more; they have the opportunity to open themselves up, to start living in peace with themselves and with their stuttering.*

*In a self-help group people who stutter improve the quality of their lives, and by that they improve also the quality of life of their family members and all those around them.*

*National stuttering associations are there to encourage and support the development of self-help groups in every place in which people who stutter live.*

*In addition national stuttering associations are giving PWS protection against discrimination, and care for their rights.*

*The ISA encourages and supports the development of national associations worldwide. By this the ISA creates a big, strong and proud international community of people who stutter.”*

The ISA Board and ISA Advisory Board can in fact be called a big self-help group for people who stutter. ISA boards, which are the official management bodies of the ISA, are conducted in a very similar fashion as a self-help group. We have two such boards - the ISA Board which includes up to 9 directors, and the ISA Advisory Board with 18 advisers. The right to vote is granted to ISA Board members only. But the discussions are usually conducted with the participation of all the board members and advisers.

Since the ISA boards and self-help groups for people who stutter are so similar, it comes as no surprise that

board discussions and self-help groups are conducted in very much the same way. The board members (directors and advisers) act together very much like members of a self-help group. However, there is a difference: In a self-help group, people sit in a room and talk with each other face-to-face. In the ISA people are spread all over the world, and the discussions are carried on by the sending of emails.

Most board members are usually quiet (which means they send emails to the group quite seldom). This is due to many individual reasons (just as in a self-help group for people who stutter). But - not all directors are quiet.

There is a Board Chair (similar to a group leader), whose role is to insure that the boards' activities are conducted in agreed-upon order and according to the ISA Constitution. The boards' activities include mainly discussions and voting. Voting occurs when a decision must be taken. For example, the ISA Board must decide about accepting new stuttering associations for ISA membership, or the nomination of people to positions such as Treasurer, Webmaster, etc. It is the ISA Chair's responsibility to conduct the discussions and voting.

The ISA Chair, just as a self-help group leader, needs to also confront "troublemakers" on occasion. For example there are board members who have been sending an excessive number of emails to the group – that is, they are being too “noisy”. The Chair's task in this situation is to encourage them to reduce this activity. It is much like the case of a self-help group leader who needs to control a situation where people are being too noisy. The ISA boards also have other kinds of “troublemakers”. This is a subject well known to the ISA Chair, as it would be known to any self-help group leader.

## **New committee, the "ISA Constitutional Committee"**

Recently we formed a new committee called the "ISA Constitutional Committee". This group was created to resolve some constitutional issues not covered by the ISA Constitution.

The committee has been quite busy these days.

## **9<sup>th</sup> World Congress for People Who Stutter**

I am happy to announce that the 9<sup>th</sup> World Congress for People Who Stutter will be held in Argentina in the year 2011.

# **International Stuttering Awareness Day Oct. 22nd 2009**

## **Stuttering: More Than A Tangled Tongue**

*By Michael Sugarman, USA*

People who stutter represent a diverse group of individuals with different occupations, diverse cultural identities, personal experiences and accomplishments. Although over 60 million people stutter, most people actually know very little about stuttering. This lack of awareness is how come people who stutter may face discrimination, prejudice and at times social isolation.

International Stuttering Awareness Day (ISAD) occurs on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and is designed to raise awareness about the challenges that people who stutter experience. ISAD is a joint endeavor by persons who stutter and their families and professionals (educators, researchers and clinicians) interested in stuttering. ISAD provides a framework for building a more humane, just and compassionate world for millions of people who stutter

ISAD is co-sponsored and recognized by major international stuttering organizations such as International Stuttering Association; the International Fluency Association; European League of Stuttering Associations and American Speech-Hearing Association Division on Fluency and Fluency Disorders as well as national organizations which you can find on the International Stuttering Association website ([www.isastutter.org](http://www.isastutter.org)).

This year's events include the twelfth annual online conference October 1 –22<sup>nd</sup> found by The Stuttering Home Page ([www.stutteringhomepage.com](http://www.stutteringhomepage.com)) where participants can read papers by consumers and professionals from around the world and interact with the presenters during the three weeks the conference is "live." Papers remain available online and all past conferences are archived. Other ISAD activities in the past have included people who stutter and professionals hosting an open house, advocating for a proclamation marking ISAD October 22<sup>nd</sup> or students talking in their class about stuttering.

2009 presents many challenges that face people who stutter such as economic recession, job loss or anxiety about employment or personal fulfillment. It is vital to create a society, in which people who stutter can develop talents, become advocates for better understanding and become active participants in their future. This year in particular there are many conferences or workshops held around the world. It is an opportunity to take personal steps in changing: you can go to [www.isastutter.org](http://www.isastutter.org) for a listing of conferences you can attend.

Get Involved and Communicate

## **Update from NSA**

*By Judith Eckardt, USA*

The National Stuttering Association is expanding its family programs across the United States, and is looking forward to a successful national conference and research symposium in July.

Family programs are the fastest growing activity of the NSA. In the last few years we have placed special emphasis on support for children who stutter and their parents because that is where our organization can have the greatest impact.

The NSA now has 17 local support groups for children and teens who stutter. These include NSAKids groups, for children age 5 to 12 and their parents, and TWST (Teens Who Stutter) groups for young people ages 13-19. Parents and teens also are represented on the NSA's board of directors.

The NSA continues to operate local support group chapters for adults in more than 80 cities in the U.S. Each month, more than 500 adults attend NSA chapter meetings.

Regional Youth Day programs also are growing in popularity. The NSA sponsors one-day workshops for children and teens who stutter and their parents in partnership with local universities or school districts. These often are held in combination with continuing education workshops for speech-language pathologists (SLPs). In January, a dual program in Tampa, Florida, included 23 children and their families and 180 SLPs. A continuing education workshop in March in Phoenix, Arizona, attracted 225 SLPs.

As part of its emphasis on family programs, the NSA has combined several newsletters into a bi-monthly publication, *Family Voices*. The newsletter includes



articles by parents, teens, speech professionals and children. Both *Family Voices* and *Letting Go*, the NSA's primary newsletter, are available online at <http://www.WeStutter.org>.

Last year the NSA published three new booklets on childhood stuttering: a coloring book for young children, a booklet for school-age children and a Spanish-language version of the *Young Children Who Stutter* booklet for parents.

The NSA also is reaching out to physicians, who often are unaware of the need for early treatment of childhood stuttering. A booklet prepared by leading speech-language pathologists is being published and promoted to physicians who specialize in children and family practice.

The NSA's 25<sup>th</sup> annual conference last July near New York City set a new attendance record of 631 people from across the U.S. and several other countries. Anita Blom of Sweden, a member of the ISA Advisory Board, was one of the keynote speakers. The conference

included workshops for adults, children and teens who stutter, and continuing education sessions for speech-language pathologists.

Even though the economy is slow, we expect strong attendance at the NSA's 2009 conference July 8-12 in Scottsdale, Arizona: our first national conference in the Southwest United States. In addition to our three-day program of workshops, speakers, and social activities, the event includes a research symposium. Five top researchers will present the latest information on genetics, pharmaceuticals, fluency devices, behavioral therapy and concomitance.

The 2009 conference also will celebrate the election of Joe Biden, a person who stutters, as Vice President of the United States.

The NSA receives no government support and is funded primarily by its members. With a full-time executive director and two part-time employees, much of the organization's work is done by volunteer directors, program coordinators and chapter leaders.



# **Canadian Speech and Language Pathologist Offered 6 Weeks of Voluntary Work for People Who Stutter or Have Other Related Communication Impairments in Cameroon**

*By Joseph Lukong, Cameroon*

At the invitation of Speak Clear Association of Cameroon, SCAC, the stuttering Association of Cameroon, Mr. Gordon Skinner, Speech language pathologist and member of the Canadian Association of Speech language pathologists and audiologists, paid a working visit to Cameroon from the 1st of April to the 8th of May 2009.

During the said visit, Mr. Skinner offered a one week intensive group therapy for 12 adults and adolescence who stutter in Douala, and another one in Bamenda some 400 Kms from Douala. He gave a two day lecture on stuttering to teachers and health professionals in Douala on how to help children who stutter in Cameroon. He participated in two live TV Shows and sent out valuable information on stuttering. Same lectures were given to students in two Teachers training College for children with special needs in Bamenda town.

Apart from working with PWS and doing lectures on stuttering to teachers, Mr. Skinner also taught physicians and nurses on how they can help patients with swallowing disorders as this falls under the domain of intervention of a speech language pathologist.

This visit to Cameroon falls in line with the International Speech Project-Stuttering, a project of the International Stuttering Association, ISA aimed at making speech therapy services available to countries of the developing

world. This project was launched in Douala Cameroon during the First African conference on stuttering and since then the said project has been carried out in Togo and Senegal countries in French speaking part of West Africa.

Mr. Skinner personally funded the cost of his air fare and part of his living expenses in Cameroon. Joseph Lukong, the Coordinator General of SCAC, provided accommodation and African meals for Mr. Skinner during his stay in Douala Cameroon. Mr. Skinner hopes to pay another visit to Cameroon in 2011 and to come along with some speech pathologists students from the University of Toronto Canada and to supervise them for a period of two months in Cameroon.

The Speak Clear Association of Cameroon is very grateful to Gordon Skinner who devoted his time and resources to offer these valuable services to the needy people of Cameroon. It should be recalled that between 2004 and 2007, Gordon Skinner who is a retired Speech language therapists has offered the same services in Bangladesh in Asia. We are calling on active or retired Speech language therapists to consider offering part of their time and know how to other countries of the developing world for as Gordon Skinner puts it '.... When you travel around the world, that is when you see that we of the western world are spoiled in many ways.....'

## **From Editor**

Below are articles originally submitted to One Voice for the winter issue of 2008. However, these articles never reached me until recently and that issue had to be cancelled. Many things have happened since then. A lot of them are good news, as you can see from the letters and reports from Africa, Brazil, Croatia, etc. I believe that, just as the International Stuttering Association is receiving more and more influences from culturally and ethnically different groups, change is inevitable at this era. The confusion and pain we sometimes experience may be necessary to make this organization a much stronger one, just like many of us believe that, stuttering is a necessary pain that makes us stronger if it does not kill us.

For all the authors that wrote for the winter issue of One Voice, 2008, please accept my sincere apology for not being able to publish your work in time. This time, I have tried my best to make a complete collection of every article. However, if any omission happened, that is of course my fault.

Yours sincerely,

Albert Zhang

## Stammering as A Disability

Presentation made by Joseph Lukong at the 2008 Bamenda Conference on Disability and Rehabilitation: “Dignity and Justice for all of us”: Making the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities a reality in the North West Region of Cameroon from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

This conference was jointly organized by The Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board through its Services for People with Disabilities (Bamenda, Cameroon) and The Cameroon Working Group of the International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation (Toronto, Canada).

The conference had about 150 delegates in attendance made up of people With Disabilities PWD, health care Providers, Social workers, representatives of the Government and churches and other NGOS.

Presentations touched on the various forms of disabilities and what can be done to make the UN convention on the rights of people with disabilities a reality in Cameroon

I was asked to talk on stammering as a disability. I drew much inspiration from the paper Mark Irwin, Anita Blow and Michael Sugarman persons who stutter PWS and prominent members of international self help movement for PWS made during the last world congress on Fluency Disorders that took place in Dublin Ireland in July 2006. I equally drew inspiration from my experience as a PWS and from the testimonies of other PWS in Cameroon. I talked about stuttering in general, SCAC- the stuttering Association in Cameroon, ISA, ISAD and the on line conference, the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities of PWS. All the hand outs I had left on the registration Desk on the Bill of Rights of rights and responsibilities of PWS, our Association and others I had from the BSA and the SFA were all picked up and requests were made to me to mail some to interested delegates.

From out of Africa, we had delegates coming from Canada, Netherlands, Norway, UK and Norway. Some of these were occupational therapists and other Speech and Language therapists SLTs who do not specialize or work with PWS. It was amazing to note that some of these SLTs learned a lot on stuttering from my presentation as a PWS who is not a trained SLT. It shows that we still have a lot to do to create stuttering awareness and I am glad to see that the ISA and other organizations, Institutions are doing a lot in that field. This goes to confirm the right choice that was made of the ISAD theme some years ago to the effect that ‘**STUTTERING AWARENESS IS EVERYDAY, WE JUST CELEBRATE IT ON 22 OCTOBER**’.

During the conference, I met with authorities from a lone institution in Cameroon called ‘SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTE Bamenda that trains professionals to help children with disabilities. They were surprised to know that stuttering was such a communication problem that could affect the academic lives of many children. We started negotiations and if all move well, a course on stuttering could be offered there next academic year.

During the conference, an advocacy committee was set up and I was made member of that committee and we are going to work immediately to attack a Ministerial decision here in Cameroon. It concerns admission of students into a newly created ECOLE NORMALE SUPERIOR ENS (Higher Teacher Training College). One of the admission requirements states that prospective students must provide a medical certificate testifying that they are physically fit and that they free from any form of visual and verbal communication impairments. This text is anti constitutional, against the UN charter, the UN **convention on the rights of persons with disabilities** (PWD). We would be following up this in the next weeks to see if that Ministerial decision would be annulled.

## Update from NATIONAL STUTTERING ASSOCIATION, USA – 2008

The National Stuttering Association is expanding its family programs after the most successful U.S. conference in the organization’s history.

The NSA’s 25<sup>th</sup> annual conference was held June 25-29 in New Jersey, near New York City. The three-day event set a new attendance record of 631 people from across the U.S. and several other countries. Anita Blom of Sweden, a member of the ISA Advisory Board, was one

of the keynote speakers. The conference included workshops for adults, children and teens who stutter, and continuing education sessions for speech-language pathologists.

Family programs are the fastest growing activity of the NSA. The organization is expanding its network of local support groups for children and teens who stutter. These include NSAKids groups, for children age 5 to 12 and

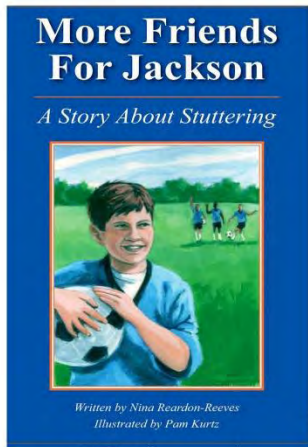
their parents, and TWST (Teens Who Stutter) groups for young people ages 13-19. There are now 12 of these groups and 7 more are organizing. The NSA continues to operate local support group chapters for adults in more than 80 cities in the U.S.

As part of its emphasis on family programs, the NSA began publishing a new bi-monthly newsletter, *Family Voices*. The newsletter includes articles by parents, teens, speech professionals and children. The NSA also has published three new booklets: a coloring book for young children, a booklet for school-age children and a

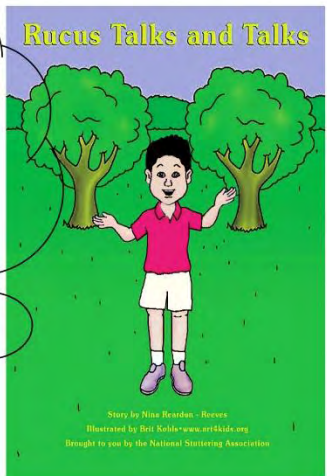
Spanish-language version of the *Young Children Who Stutter* booklet for parents.

Preparations already are under way for the 2009 conference July 8-12 in Scottsdale, Arizona.

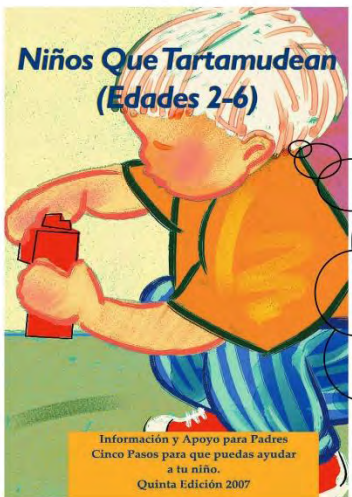
The NSA receives no government support and is funded primarily by its members. With a full-time executive director and two part-time employees, much of the organization's work is done by volunteer directors, program coordinators and chapter leaders.



**New Coloring book for kids!**  
 Rucus likes to do a lot of things and his parents love to hear his stories no matter how he speaks ("smooth" or "bumpy"). This is a wonderful message to bring to a family who is dealing with the concerns and fears surrounding the early developmental stages of stuttering.  
**\$1.00**



**New School-Age booklet!**  
 This booklet is about a young boy named Jackson who attends a meeting for kids who stutter. As the story progresses we learn about Jackson's initial apprehension over attending the meeting, his experience during the course of event, and the resulting friendships made by those in attendance.  
**\$3.00**



**Pre School booklet Now is Spanish!**  
 Young Children Who Stutter (Ages 2-6) Information and Support for Parents: Five steps to help you help your child  
**\$5.00**



Celebrating More than 30 Years of Support  
and Education for Children and Adults Who Stutter  
1977 - 2009



# Join Us for the 26th Annual Conference of the National Stuttering Association

**July 8 - 12, 2009**

**First time in the  
Scottsdale, Arizona Area!**

## Youth Program

Three full days of activities will begin Thursday morning with a special Family Orientation Workshop and continue throughout the weekend. Festivities will include various workshops for the young and many special events for the entire family. Leading experts who specialize in working with children who stutter will answer questions, parents will meet with other parents and the young will explore their stuttering in a fun and safe environment. Other activities will include: pool parties, a youth roundtable discussion and special workshops. Fun for all!

## Adult Workshops

Thursday begins our regular workshop series for adults, parents, youth and spouses/significant others. The program will begin at 9:30 a.m. Plan to arrive on time to experience it all. Choose from more than 60 workshops designed to educate and motivate all who attend!

## Continuing Education Units

SLPs can now earn more CEUs than ever for attending the entire conference. This year, we will be offering up to 1.2 CEUs for attending the conference, so you will be able to earn more CEUs than ever before. In addition, we will provide a CEU-specific seminar that will highlight successful treatment strategies presented by a nationally recognized expert in stuttering therapy.

## Scholarships Available

Need help getting to the conference this year? Due to the generosity of corporate sponsors and many of our members, we are pleased to announce that scholarships are available once again to provide financial assistance for adults/families who would like to attend our annual conference. If you would like more information regarding scholarships please tell us by emailing Tammy at [tflores@WeStutter.org](mailto:tflores@WeStutter.org).

Speech therapists are also asked to email us to help identify families who would benefit from this assistance.

Mark your calendars now NSA's annual conference  
July 8-12, 2009, Scottsdale, Arizona.

Tammy Flores, Executive Director  
National Stuttering Association  
119 W. 40th Street, 14th Floor  
New York, NY 10018

Phone: 800-(WeStutter)937-8888  
Direct: 212-944-4050  
Fax: 212-944-8244  
Email: [www.WeStutter.org](http://www.WeStutter.org)



## SAVE THE DATE!

# Yes!

I want to receive conference information when it becomes available!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I am an SLP \_\_\_\_\_ I am a student \_\_\_\_\_ I am a person who stutters \_\_\_\_\_

[www.WeStutter.org](http://www.WeStutter.org)



# **The Ouagadougou Congress: Some Word of Encouragement**

*By Anass Mohammed (Ghana, anass4000@yahoo.com)*

It was on Sunday October 26 that I arrived in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, to participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> African Congress on Stuttering. I am a stutterer myself and that was what qualified me to take part in the congress. This was after unsuccessfully trying to be part of the 1st African Congress on Stuttering which took place in Cameroon, in 2005.

The congress once again brought to the fore what people can do collectively no matter their background. The careful selection of the participants really gave it an African look. But one must be quick to point out that Arab-Africa was not represented. Also absent was Southern Africa. But I believe the organizers had good reasons for not bringing them on board.

Coming back to the main event, it is no mean an achievement to bring people of different cultural backgrounds under "stuttering"; getting them to realize that no matter their differences, one thing binds them. And together, they could work at getting non-stutterers understand them better.

The task has just begun, and so long as stutterers remain on earth, it cannot be won. But that is not to say that it is insurmountable. Life itself is full of obstacles. Whatever you want to achieve has obstacles peculiar to it. Sometimes it is not merely about trying to achieve a goal. Just by being born in a region or among a people automatically places some obstacles on your way. At other times, the obstacles come because of your color. Still some obstacles will come because of your religious belief. But our obstacles are there because we stutter. It

is not through any fault of ours that we stutter. That should be a consoling factor to us stutterers.

The likes of Professor David Shapiro in our midst should be a source of encouragement. Somebody who stuttered for 20 years is today a speech pathologist; very fluent in speech and even guiding others to overcome stuttering. His example is an indication that stuttering can be overcome though there cannot be a 100 per cent guarantee.

To me, even if one cannot overcome his/her stuttering, one should learn to live by it without being sorry for them. People should not blame themselves for their speech impairment. For blaming yourself can be very catastrophic. You cannot unearth your potential. You might even be compelled to sleep on your rights. In my opinion, being great has much to do with accepting who you are and using who you are to achieve what you desire in life. The moment you ignore your collective personality, that moment you start retrogressing.

I am not in any way suggesting that it is easy to accept who you are or to overcome stuttering. I am also not saying that immediately you accept your personality, doors immediately begin to open for you.

My point is that it is worth challenging oneself. It is worth taking the initiative to seek for help. It is worth joining self-help groups. It is also worth exploring networking opportunities among self-help group. The Ouagadougou congress has once again proved that the stuttering family is a great family.

## **Letter from Mali**

After having participated in the second African conference that has been held from the 27th to the 31st October 2008 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) on the stuttering, I 'm happy to present you with all my sincere thanks, and I also thank everybody who has granted his financial or material support to ISA for a successful participation of the African associations in this conference. In fact, the participation in this conference has permitted me to present a communication on the experience of the 'association for overcoming the

stuttering in Mali'' on the one hand and to create an exchange network with the African associations as well as the therapists present at this conference on the other hand.

Sincerely yours

Vice president  
Zan Camara



Sylvie and Zan



Represents of African Association



Visit to the touristic site

## Letter from Cote D'Ivoire

The first words of my interventions are to our donators in Ivory Coast our country, who help us to make possible the journey. I thank for example the General Director and Out side relation Director of SITARAIL, a society which is responsible of the train-travel; I thank also the DAF of Abidjan Golf Hotel and El hadj Dembele Lassina an old deputy.

On other sides, I thank the second Congress organizers, Dao Moussa and his friends; I don't forget I.S.A, its President and secretary Joseph Lukong who allow us the mounts which help us to support the difficulties of room, foods and return. I thank them.

About the Congress itself, we are satisfied for for our young association needed experiency. Then, at the meeting of Ouagadougou, we learnt enough. Some of our problems, preoccupations got answers. We have also exchange adress with many associations and Officials. We increased our friendhod. In a word, we returned in our country empty of hoppness.

But, like all the others human actions, we noticed some imperfections that we think we could expose them in the parlement of the new African Stuttering Associations

which is instituted at the end of the lattest Congress by the representants of national stuttering associations who participated.

We are not experts, but we will expose our remarks and if the others members pay attention for them, these remarks could contribute to improve another Congress.

I hoppe that Ouaga 2008 will help us in Ivory Coast to build our young association. We will call to assistance near Ane Marie Simon, the old orthophonist of Mali, David Shapiro...for the questions that we haven't got answers.

To end, I repete our thanks to donators, I.S.A and all the delegations we met at Ouagadougou. I would like to see our cooperation increased. I am talking about cooperation between stutters in Africa and anothers continents.

Thanks to you.

President of APB-COTE D'IVOIRE

COULIBALY SOULEYMANE



ASSOCIATION POUR LA PROMOTION DES BÉGUES EN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Récépissé N° 488 / PA du 28 Février 2008

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E-mail : apb\_ci@yahoo.fr



## Letter from Ghana

P.O.Box AN 11076  
Accra-North, Ghana  
West Africa  
15 November, 2008  
The International Stuttering Association (ISA)  
Through, the Secretary

Dear Sir:

I wish to thank you most severely for sponsoring my trip to Ouagadougou to enable me to take part in the 2<sup>nd</sup> African Congress on stuttering. I must say that I enjoyed the company of fellow stutterers and the encouragement I received through the various presentations. It is my hope that the ISA and its affiliates will continue to sponsor such congresses to enable the stutterer to improve the quality of his life. Thank you once again.

Yours faithfully  
Anass Mohammed

## Letter from Chad

I'm Ousmane Issa Bourkou Santa from Chad, which is located in central Africa.

Once more, I would like to thank ISA and all the donors for the money they gave me to help me attend the second African Stuttering Congress held In Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from October 27 to October 30, 2008.

The Congress was a success because many other African countries were represented. This shows that Africa begun to be aware of this disorder and together we will bring our governments and other NGOs who take care of human problem to help us recognized our rights. As I've mentioned in my first statement after the first African Congress held in Douala, the second conference helped created an African network for stuttering.

Speech therapists who attend the Congress gave us other techniques and teach us how to pronounce words which are difficult for us when we have difficulties to pronounce.

After attending three times congress on stuttering, I'm not ashamed to speak in front of people. I don't care of their laugh.

Concerning our country Chad, we are hoping to create our Association after 5 years of self help group.

Thanks and hope to see guys during the 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference in Beijing, China

My email: [bourkou1@yahoo.fr](mailto:bourkou1@yahoo.fr)  
Cell phone: 00 235 25 52 75

Thanks.

## Letter from Uganda

I am Joseph Nsubuga, a person who stutters the founder and coordinator of Easy Speak Association of Uganda. When I was in Croatia for the world congress I met a tutor from Citylit College in London who presented a paper on ways to curb stuttering. Citylit specializes in the biological and behavior aspects of stuttering and here practically tried and triyable approaches are taught to stutterers and among these include: desensitization, prolongation, self-advertising and others.

Prior to my going to Citylit College I could not imagine introduce myself as a stutterer before a non receptive audience and now i can proudly and bravely do so. I am now using the same approaches and techniques in Uganda to both self and my fellow stutterers.

I do encourage all those with means to try Citylit College for there is good news to curb stuttering problem.

Joseph Nsubuga

Easy Speak Association  
PO box 11508  
Kampala, Uganda  
Email; [nsubuga2003@yahoo.com](mailto:nsubuga2003@yahoo.com)



## **My Experience at the ISA Regional Conference 2008**

October 27-31 2008 afforded me a unique opportunity not only to gather with people who have concern for people who stutter, more so to meet with fellow speech therapists that are doing one work or the other, helping children and adults with stuttering.

Venue of the event? Of course the warm and hospitable city of Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso. The event was the 2<sup>nd</sup> African congress on stuttering. This was my first time of attending the conference because I Missed attending the congress in Douala, Cameroun. This congress afforded me the opportunity to meet people from different countries. Like I met the speech therapy students on posting from France who were working with children in different Schools in Burkina Faso. I made friends with therapists from USA and Lithuania sharing experiences and also got books and videos to help with my work in Nigeria.



In addition I presented a paper on my experience as a speech therapist working with people who stutter in Nigeria. I discovered that stuttering is the same

## **Different Languages But United by Stuttering**

Imagine yourself in a place where you could hardly understand the language spoken there. To express yourself, you tried the few words you had picked before leaving home but as the discussion got deeper you became lost and had to express yourself through sign language. So was my experience at the second African Stuttering Congress in Burkina Faso. Difficult as it was for me to express my mind in French language, since I speak little French, I could sense a feeling of unity

everywhere, what differs is the social cultural and economic experiences of the individual who stutters. Here people who stutter often cannot afford the cost of speech therapy so you find people dropping out of therapy midway. In Nigeria, there is scarcity of trained speech therapists and there is no postgraduate program for therapists to improve their skills. It will be of great help and encouragement to have international support in area of sponsorship for therapists' further training to improve skills. There is also the need for specialization, which has not been encouraged because of scarcity of therapists.

I hope to work with the stuttering association in Nigeria to put a structure on ground that will encourage collaborative work with foreign therapists and the International Stuttering Association. The inauguration of the African League of stuttering Associations, which was done during the conference, is also expected to encourage more work on stuttering in Nigeria and Africa as a whole.

The conference was a great experience for me because it has encouraged me in my work and also given me opportunity to meet professional mentors. I look forward to having collaborative work with therapists from other countries as I await the next conference. I use this opportunity to say thank you to the conference organizers for a job well done and hope Nigeria can host the regional conference in the nearest future.

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among all the delegates from Africa and other parts of the world. Though our colors and language differ, we were all united for a common course- Stuttering. As people shared experiences and discussed the challenges of stuttering at the congress, the wall off language barrier literally crumbled and it became clear that whether you are white or black, whether you speak English, French, Spanish or any language for that matter, stuttering carries the same face. And that is it is a source of concern for the person who stutters and those around him.

The congress brought together speech therapist, psychologists, geneticists and a host of other professionals, which to me is an indication of the depth of socio-emotional, psychological and genetic significance of stuttering. In Africa, it is time for us to rise up to take a firm stand on stuttering and put in place every necessary support system that would bring relief to people who stutter. There is an adage in my language that it is the one who has a load to carry that would initiate its lifting before someone else would support him. It's true we need support for people who stutter in Africa but we must be ready to put in all the commitment and hard work required to fulfill this mission

## Report from Pakistan

There were times when I used to think that why I have to go through this, why it was always me and why I always went to bed thinking about insecurities that I have regarding life. I joined various online groups for stammering but again I wondered why such groups don't exist in Pakistan and then one day I don't know how while browsing through internet I typed PAKISTAN STAMMERING on google and the first link in the result window was of PSA. This is how I came to know about this novel organization and about its support group meeting programs. And then I attended my first support group meeting and wow it was fun. Meeting new people who were just like me but with a positive attitude towards life and it gave me a chance to express my feelings and the chance to say everything without any hesitation and without fighting a battle in my mind as to which words I should choose for my speech. And I still remember after attending the meeting on that day I went to a pharmacy to buy some medicines which I was postponing for days despite of the fact that I was severely ill because I had anticipated beforehand that I won't be able to speak the name of medicine but I was

My attendance at the second African Stuttering Congress has helped to further strengthen my resolve to be an advocate for people who stutter and play my humble part in educating and enlightening all who care to listen. I am grateful to the ISA Board for the financial support I received, without which it would have been difficult for me to attend. I look forward to being part of the next congress and particularly look forward to Nigeria hosting it.

Funmi Olatidoye

Volunteer Coordinator

Stutterers Association of Nigeria

determined on that day and I did it. The point of discussing all this is that the support meeting changed my thinking though I am not a fluent speaker but still I have made some progress towards self acceptance and of course towards a confident life. But still there is much to achieve. It becomes much easier when a team strives towards a common goal instead of a single individual practicing breathing exercises alone and ending up in frustration (this is what I used to do). So team up. At the end I would like to summarize this as

*I often used to wonder  
Why was I chosen, why!  
And I wished that I could die  
But then I met those guys  
Who helped me realize  
That it's nothing to be shy  
Just spread your wings and fly  
And you can touch the sky :-)*

Umer Javed Chughtai  
Student Of 4th year (MBBS)  
Rawalpindi Medical College, Rawalpindi

## Stuttering Isn't Funny

The title of this text may seem strange to you. To say that stuttering isn't funny, that it's not funny to see someone stutter, that may not make sense to many people in our society. Stuttering, and consequently, the people who stutter, has been for centuries a motive for teasing, intolerance, aggressiveness and discrimination. There are sayings that as early as ancient Greece, the stutterers were placed in cages and were forced to talk to entertain the crowd. From what we feel, it's possible to observe that currently little has changed. It's true that there are no more cages, but stuttering is still seen as

funny and discriminated. But there is another side of the story that everyone should be aware of.

In our daily lives it's common for us to suffer prejudice and to be targets for teasing because of our stuttering. During school, our difficulties many times aren't taken into account and we are obliged to present our work orally so we can be evaluated and receive our grade. When searching for a job, this too is almost always difficult because we are supposedly discarded (since this isn't officially recognized) because of the stuttering; or we stop searching to avoid exposure, to avoid the other



person finding out what we want to hide the most, because we fear the listener's reaction.

The rejection we feel at school, at work or even in our families many times is reinforced by the media. In soap operas and television programs, for example, a character who stutters is always seen as comedy, never in a dramatic way. TV Programs of this type motivate the daily teasing we suffer because of the way we talk. Because of this, situations in which we need to communicate become even more difficult and are feared even more. They become our greatest difficulty, our biggest problem, which generates suffering. That's why stuttering isn't funny.

It's understandable that you, a fluent person, may find our different way of talking a bit strange, because for most people talking is absolutely spontaneous, and easy. Because of this "easiness" to speak, the majority of the people think that to stop stuttering you just have to want to stop, but it's not like that. Living stuttering for many years, considering that speaking is something challenging, generates specific movements in our conscience, in our brain. To change this means to have special treatment.

The sooner speech therapy is initiated, greater are possibilities of success. If you have a child or a student that is stuttering, the first thing to do is to accept his way of speaking. It's clear that the child has some difficulty. He who has difficulty does not need punishment, but understanding and help. The second thing is to take him as soon as possible to a speech therapist that specializes in stuttering.

The adult who stutters needs your understanding the same way a child does. There are no rules to talk with someone who stutters. Respect and attention are basic requirements for any interactive process.

With the will to be recognized by society, the Brazilian Stuttering Association (Associação Brasileira de Gagueira) organized on October 18<sup>th</sup> the "1<sup>st</sup> Brazilian Meeting of People Who Stutter" in Rio de Janeiro. This city was chosen in honor of Machado de Assis, "carioca" (born in Rio de Janeiro), one of the greatest names in the Brazilian Literature and also a person who stuttered. Our event follows a world-wide trend: the meeting of people who stutter to discuss their peculiarities, difficulties and challenges.





# Letter from Croatia

We had a very good media coverage here in Croatia. There were parts of prime time TV and radio programs on stuttering the day prior to and on the ISAD - national and local - articles in several national and regional daily newspapers and on dozen internet portals.

Here are some of my screenshots:

We held a press conference at the Children's Hospital in Zagreb, where people from the City Health Department and the Croatian Ministry of Health and Social Care provided financial support to our Association from now. They said that our initiative for Stuttering Awareness Day being proclaimed in Croatia by our government was already in procedure.

At the following public tribune we had an interesting exchange of experiences with stuttering and examples of successfully overcome fears of stuttering, presented and discussed by parents, PWS, their spouses, SLTs and teachers. I haven't got pictures yet to present to you, but they will soon be on our website.

Good to know ISAD was celebrated and accomplishing it's target all over the world.

All the best,

Suzana

## Recent Activities and News of Nepal Stutters' Association

These days Nepal Stutters' Association (NSA) is working in the field of Awareness, Lobby/Advocacy, strengthening the organization and building the capacity of the members.

Recently, a Symposium organized by National Federation of Disabled Nepal (NFDN), and Supported by UNDP & JICA "National Symposium of the Disabled People" on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2008 was held. Its main objective was to identify the core problems of the different categories of the disabled people and to pressurize the Nepal Government to address the issues of disabled people in the new constitution. From Nepal Stutters' Association (NSA), I was the participant and presented a paper as follows:-

### Problems of the Stutters:-

- Social discrimination/exclusion and humiliation.
- Denial and rejection in job opportunity so economical situation is very weak.
- Lack of awareness in society
- Only (12-14) speech therapist all over Nepal and mostly staying in Katmandu, however, expected number of stutters in Nepal is more than 250000. (1% of the population as per world Survey)
- Electronics media are using stutters as a fun/comic character to laugh at.
- Stutters are excluded in the society.
- Speech Therapy is expensive and available only in Kathmandu and some urban areas.

### Issues to be addressed in new constitution:-

- 7 categories of disability identified by the Government should be addressed in the new constitution.
- Presence of stutters should be made mandatory while formulating the legislation/rules and regulation based on new constitution

- Guarantee of State Annual budget allocation for stutters in red book.
- Job guarantee of stutters on written examination basis and (no oral interview).
- Electronic Medias both audio and visual should be aware about disability right and not project stutters as a comic character.
- Free speech therapy should be provided to stutters in Government Hospitals in all 5 regions.
- State should provide job oriented skill trainings and some money is needed to stutters to establish themselves.

Recently on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, on the Occasion of **Stuttering Day**, NSA has done a partnership agreement with Stuttering Association of Denmark (FSD). It is great achievement of NSA, till date no one organization has done this type of the partnership agreement in the field of disability.

It has following objectives:-

1. Information/knowledge sharing
2. Experience sharing
3. Guidance
4. being in touch with the international network
5. Technical support – (related to the field of stuttering)
6. Financial support for project implementations
7. Capacity development opportunities
8. International marketing and fund raising
9. Cultural exchange
10. Provide support for reimbursing the expenses of the board and secretariat members
11. Respect each others culture
12. Lobby for NSA in the international arena etc

Stuttering Association of Denmark (FSD) has made a promise to continue its financial support to the NSA for 2009-011



The group of Ambassadors, working in districts of NEPAL





Ambassadors are learning a Street Drama for the Awareness program in their districts.

## **Ssstutter – A Documentary**

Not long into their year in Vancouver Film School's Film Production program, director Bruce Oothout and producer Youssef El-Khoury had a documentary to make and a subject in mind: stuttering. Both had stuttered when they were young, and here was their chance to open some eyes.

The result is a nine-minute documentary called "Ssstutter". The original plan called for many interviews, and Oothout and El-Khoury began reaching out to the Vancouver speech therapy community. Then they found Hannah Seaman.

The 16-year-old from Langley, BC was a revelation - direct, articulate, and instantly likeable – and the filmmakers realized that the best thing to do was to simply put her on screen and let her speak for herself.

"People were riveted, moved, amazed, by Hannah," Oothout says. "Her courage, her character, her will; it was hard not to be both deeply impressed and somewhat in awe of her as a person."

"So we went with that."



# Pictures from Beijing, 2008



## TESTIMONY OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE "ASSOCIATION PAROLE BEGAIEMENT/DRC" AT THE TIME OF THE SECONDD AFRICAN CONGRESS OF OUAGADOUGOU 2008

This testimony relates to my personal experience as a stammerer and in my quality of president of an association framing of the stammerers of Democratic Republic of Congo.

For your control surface, the Democratic Republic of Congo is a country in the middle of Africa, with the dimension of Europe of West joined together with its sixty millions, inhabitants. It abounds in the enormous and diversified potentialities ground and basement (ores) with a remarkable hydrography, but most of its population lives in poverty.

Settings with share activities of the association, I am employed in a company classified among important of my country. It counts fifteen thousand paid of which more or less three hundred are in the category known as of the leaders. Indeed, my work do not prevent from concluding the activities of the association. On the contrary, it contributes to its financing so much is little. You will agree with me that the financial backers of the funds became sceptics as for the helps to allocate with young associations, and the contributions of the members are unimportant.

For the reinforcement of my capacities, I tried with three recoveries to take part in France in the intensive course on the therapeutic treatment of the stammering. That was without success because of the refusal of delivery of visa. Of premium on board, I wanted to take to me to the Westerners, but after blackberry reflexion, I realized that the fault falls on us African because of the breach of trust. We think that the Europe and the United State of America are terrestrial paradises, then with a little will, we can transform the Africa in an "eldorado" where the Westerners would come to ask for asylum. With this intention, I invite the African in order to banish the complex and to work together for a better future of our continent. In spite of the organized missed intensive courses each summer in France, I did not discourage myself.

As in all the companies of the world, the accession with the row of the leaders in the company where I evolve, is conditioned by competences (intellectual capacities). Moreover, the eloquence is an asset considered well, if not determinant in order to direct well, manage the personal under his responsibility. That is not obvious for we who are stammerers of birth, we test the enormous difficulties to climb the levels.

With the first conference of Africa held in Douala / Cameroon in 2005 to which I took share, there were several recommendations with the place of the stammerers. The recommendation which drew my attention was that emitted by Mrs Anne Marie SIMON, speech therapist Frenchwoman at the time of a workshop animated by it. She exhorted the stammerers to overcome the fear, to avoid timidity and to speak as a public. Previously, I was very timid and I could not even hold to me before an assembly such as in this hemicycle of the second African congress of Ouagadougou 2008.

With my return to the country, I started into practice to put this recommendation and some time afterwards, that bore fruit, hierarchical my bosses hoisted me with the row of the leaders. Currently, my ambition is not limited only to the simple leader, I wish being present one day where the great decisions of my company are caught.

Reason for which, I make a point of very sincerely thanking all the speech therapists who contribute to the improvement of the conditions of the stammerers through the great structure of the International Stuttering Association (ISA). I also thank the two pioneers of Africa as regards stammering, I quote Doctor Dao MOUSSA of Burkina Faso and Mr Joseph LUKONG of Cameroon for the furnished efforts in the organization of the conferences and the activities of associations of the stammerers in Africa.

Please to the Eternal God to bless the imposing work of the International Stuttering Association.

Thomas BETADI KINTOMBO ([betadaf@yahoo.fr](mailto:betadaf@yahoo.fr))



# Pictures from Cameroon



A PWS receiving an attestation of participation after the one week intensive therapy session from Gordon Skinner.



Joseph Lukong and Gordon Skinner in front of a hospital in Cameroon





A lecture to student teachers on how to help children who stutter in Schools.



At a special needs teachers training college in Cameroon.





Having a meal at the home of Joseph Lukong



Watching one of the SFA video tapes. Straight talks for teachers