

# LASE

## connections

Fall 2023

### Remembering Lloyd Haertling



Beginning in 1974, Lloyd Haertling was the Executive Director of LASE when the organization was known as Lutheran Special Classes. Lloyd went home to God just this past July.

Lloyd had a huge heart for those with special learning needs. In his

last days, he couldn't speak or hear well, but he could write. His daughter, Lori, shared that one of the last things Lloyd wrote was one of his favorite quotes, that she later cross stitched for him: "In each of us there is a specialness that is a gift to others." Thank you Lloyd and the Haertling family for sharing your gifts, passions, and love for those with special needs. The Haertling family has requested gifts to LASE in memory of Lloyd and his incredible impact. You can give in Lloyd's memory by going to our website at [lutheranspecialized.org/donate](https://lutheranspecialized.org/donate).



### The FORE-tieth Annual Golf Tournament

A hole-in-one heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated in the 40th Annual LASE Golf Tournament Evening Program!! This year was tricky, with the tournament itself being rained out, but our incredible committee chair team, Aaron and Laura Telle, our



**Top photo (from L to R):** Jackie Smith, Karen Abeln, Amanda Ermer, Erin Pohl, Leslie Vangel, Karen Wittmayer, BJ Wiemer, Kelly Malady



**Bottom photo (from L to R):** Laura Telle, Aaron Telle, Carl Winters, Tom Dankenbring, Dave Drewes

dedicated committee and all of our LASE supporters really stepped up. You showed up at the evening auction and together raised over \$95,000 for the kids!! Glory be to God!

### Introducing LASE's Winter Event: It's In The Bag! A LASE Brunch Auction

New name; same mission. Please join us for our newly reimagined winter event: It's In the Bag! A LASE Brunch Auction. We took all of your feedback from previous years and we are so thrilled to invite you to join us on Saturday, November 4th, 2023 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Westport.

We are also thrilled to announce that our winter event committee has a new Chair, Alayne Smith! Alayne says "Our November 4 event has a new look, but the same focus—helping the children of LASE. Join us for brunch and a Silent Auction that includes lots of unique items!"

Please go to [laseinthebag.maxgiving.bid](https://laseinthebag.maxgiving.bid) to register!



## LASE MISSION STATEMENT

LASE builds life-changing success for students, schools and communities through Christ-centered innovative specialized education.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Diana Meers, Chair  
Terry Schmidt, Vice-Chair  
Bill Hauk, Treasurer  
Drew Stevens  
Reverend Dr. Josh Hatcher  
Bette Schlie  
Sue Torbeck  
Jackie Smith  
Executive Director  
B.J. Wiemer  
Program Administrator  
Erin Pohl  
Development Manager

## GRANT SUPPORT

**THANK YOU**  
to the following  
LASE Supporters:

- ▶ Cardinals Care
- ▶ Employees Community Fund of Boeing St. Louis
- ▶ Wayne C. Kaufmann Foundation
- ▶ St. Louis Christmas Carols Association
- ▶ Lutheran Women's Missionary League



## Renewed in Knowledge: LASE Specialized Education's Vision for Growth

Dear Friends,

As we embark on a new chapter at LASE Specialized Education, we draw inspiration from the words of Colossians 3:10: "Put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of our Creator."

These words hold profound significance in our mission to educate children with special learning needs. Our commitment to renewing knowledge and nurturing each child's unique potential resonates deeply with this verse. We believe that every child, regardless of their learning challenges, possesses the spark of creativity and the capacity to learn and grow.

Per our strategic plan, we are making substantial investments to ensure that our ministry not only thrives, but excels. We have welcomed a Program Administrator to craft high-quality LASE programs, including early childhood intervention and support for twice-exceptional learners. Our educators are undergoing enhanced professional development to better serve our students, and we are expanding volunteer opportunities, including board members, to broaden our reach.

Your continued support is invaluable in helping us realize this vision of renewal and growth. Together, we can empower these remarkable children to shine brightly, renewed in knowledge, and inspired by the image of our Creator.

In His Service,

Jackie A. Smith, M.A.  
*Executive Director*



LASE Executive Director,  
Jackie Smith



## Christmas Cards for a Cause

Looking for a way to ensure all children have access to the services offered by LASE? Here's one great way to do that! This year, for the entire month of October, LASE is selling a limited amount of handmade Christmas Cards in which all proceeds go to the Meghan James Memorial Scholarship Fund.

The Meghan James Memorial Scholarship Fund provides scholarships for students to access LASE's specialized learning programs. Meggie's challenges and joy-filled victories continue to enable children with special learning needs to thrive and succeed. We have learned so much from the life she lived to the fullest as a blessed child of God! Please visit [lutheranspecialized.org/donate](http://lutheranspecialized.org/donate) to get your handmade Christmas Cards today!



## The 2023 LASE Insight Series

In August, LASE welcomed Dr. April Duncan, founder and CEO of BMH Connect, to talk about the mental health effects of COVID-19 on Students and Teachers.

Dr. April spoke to 153 local educators to help identify distress and/or trauma in students and provided a toolbox of strategies to help students while taking care of their mental health inside and outside the classroom. One participant said, "I learned a lot about what trauma actually looks like and some of it was surprising! It will help me to identify this in my future students and know appropriate ways to address situations."

*The mission of the LASE Insight Series is to provide educators with high quality professional development to increase their toolbox of skills and strategies for meeting the unique needs of struggling learners.*



## LASE is RENEWED! Renewed in knowledge in the image of our Creator.

*"put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of our Creator"—Colossians 3:10*

Welcome back to school and to the start of the 2023-2024 school year. We are so excited to see some old friends and welcome some new ones in our classrooms. Here at the LASE office, we have a few new faculty members we'd like to introduce you to:



**B.J. Wiemer**

"There are no 'mistakes' among our students—each has been perfectly created in the Father's image according to His purpose for their lives." With her extensive experience and unwavering dedication to serving unique learners, B.J. brings a wealth of expertise and a deep commitment to fostering academic excellence in specialized education.



**Gabrielle Symmank**

"So far, both my experience at LASE, as well as at Lutheran North, has been so welcoming and joy-filled! It has been sweet getting to know the students and truly becoming a part of this community!"



**Kelly Templeton**

After spending 30 years in Special Education, mainly in the Francis Howell School District, Kelly says, "Teachers helped me so I want to help my students. [I chose LASE because] I can help all students and talk about our Christian beliefs. I can actually pray with my students, not just for them"

## LASE HIGHLIGHTS!

### Welcome Drew Stevens to Board



#### LASE is so thrilled to add Drew Stevens to our Board of Directors.

Drew says, "I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to volunteer on the board of LASE Specialized Education because I believe in the transformative power of education and the profound impact it can have on the lives of individuals with special needs. Throughout my personal and professional journey, I have come to realize that education is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor, and it should be tailored to meet the unique needs of every individual. By volunteering on the board, I hope to actively participate in shaping the strategic direction of an institution that shares my values and aspirations."

### Highlighting Holy Cross Collinsville

#### We are so proud to highlight Holy Cross Lutheran Church and School this fall.

In partnership with Holy Cross Lutheran School, LASE is proud to spotlight a shared commitment to nurturing young minds within a faith-based environment. The school's innovative approach, encompassing leveled reading, advanced math programs, and vibrant arts and music offerings, fosters both academic and artistic excellence. Holy Cross's devotion to addressing physical, recreational, aesthetic, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional needs underscores their comprehensive approach to education.


As collaborators in the journey of education, LASE celebrates Holy Cross's dedication to creating well-rounded individuals, combining faith, knowledge, and compassion. This partnership encapsulates our mutual endeavor to shape the leaders of tomorrow through holistic, Christ-centered learning.



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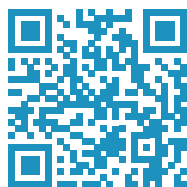
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## The Kids Are Calling! Will You Answer?

**LASE needs YOUR help to keep going. There are a few ways to get involved:**

- LASE now has monthly giving! Show your dedication to specialized education for kids by signing up to auto-give each month at [lutheranspecialied.org/donate](http://lutheranspecialied.org/donate)
- We are currently seeking passionate and enthusiastic volunteers for a multitude of areas from donating an item for our various silent auctions, to working the event and everything in between. Please fill out our volunteer survey by going to [bit.ly/LASEVolunteer](http://bit.ly/LASEVolunteer) or scanning the QR code here:



## Leaving a Legacy to LASE Through the Generous Services of the LCMS Foundation

**LCMS  
Foundation**  
TODAY | TOMORROW | FOREVER



Your thoughtful contribution can help ensure the sustained growth and success of LASE Specialized Education for generations to come. Thank you for making a significant difference in the lives of the children we serve. Please contact LCMS Foundation Gift Counselor, Teresa Nelson at (319) 351-6529 or [Teresa.Nelson@lfnd.org](mailto:Teresa.Nelson@lfnd.org) to start a conversation about how you can make a meaningful difference through your generosity.