



# IMPACT

**Academics Without Borders (AWB)** is committed to helping people in the world's poorest countries by sending highly qualified volunteers to share their expertise and skills with these countries' universities. AWB volunteers contribute their time to a wide variety of programs that are initiated and partially financially supported by the local post-secondary institutions. Our volunteers improve the education offered and research done by local academics, who in turn educate others to become doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, researchers, and scientists, thus cascading the benefits of each program out through the society. The presence of a cadre of trained local professionals helps mitigate the devastating effects of natural disasters and the processes that cause poverty, laying the foundation for a stronger future.

## CREATING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



Marion Steff

AWB has been working with State Islamic University (SIU)—Yogyakarta since 2009. During 2009-2010, the AWB volunteer, Marion Steff, worked with the Centre for Disability Studies & Service (CDSS) to establish programmes for students with visual impairments. In 2012,



Lisa Fisher

AWB volunteer Lisa Fisher spent a year working with the CDSS to develop services for students with hearing disabilities. Both programs were very successful and the Centre was able to recruit and train student volunteers to work with students with disabilities.



Muhrisun Afandi

In 2014, Muhrisun Afandi, the current director of the CDSS, contacted AWB to help the Centre move from a volunteer-based system to become a fully professional disability office.



Earllene Roberts

The Centre hired two support staff members and AWB recruited volunteer Earllene Roberts, an experienced professional in inclusive education, to work closely with the Director in making that transition. Earllene's main task was to work with the Centre's staff in developing a training package to increase understanding in the University of the Centre's role.

She also helped form the Disability Faculty Liaison Committee, whose members, representing the university's eight faculties, work with the Centre to develop methodologies for accommodating disabled students academically. Earllene also developed procedures for communicating these students' needs to the University's faculty.



Irmalia Nurjanah

Typical of the students with disabilities who benefit from the CDSS programs is Irmalia (Irma) Nurjanah. Irma is studying Community Development and Communications in preparation for a career as a radio announcer. Born with low vision, Irma experienced an embolism at age 15 and became completely blind.

After losing her sight, Irma had to reorganize her whole life, adapting to a new way of experiencing the world and

new ways of learning and engaging with her friends. However, her natural drive and intelligence soon reasserted themselves. Counseled by the blind director of a local NGO that advocates for students with disabilities, Irma attended an inclusive high school, where she excelled in her studies and graduated at the top of her class.

Irma is a leader and an advocate in the CDSS community at SIU - Yogyakarta. She believes that the services it provides, together with the sense of community and belonging that it offers, have been crucial to the academic success of the students in the programme.



### OUTCOMES

1. SIU—Yogyakarta offers the classroom and religious services and library resources necessary to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
2. CDSS-trained volunteers to work with students with disabilities as note-takers and in other capacities.
3. Management guidelines are in place for assessing ways to accommodate individual disabled students' academic needs, along with procedures for communicating those needs to faculty members and helping implement them.
4. The number of students with disabilities attending SIU—Yogyakarta in 2015-2016 was 53 and is increasing by 10 to 15 each year, with 35 graduating in the last two years.
5. The 31 who graduated in 2014 are employed in various occupations, including teaching at special schools and working at NGOs and the Ministry of Social Welfare. Some are self-employed and several are pursuing further studies.

## The Developing World Needs Your Help

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