

Board of Governors

2021-22

Together there is deep experience in governance/board work, finance, education, business management, project management, financial investment, education, human resources, health, counseling, coaching, entrepreneurship and fundraising.



Pekka Holopainen
Chair

Pekka Holopainen, from Finland, is a retired lawyer with 5 grown children who attended local and international schools in Finland, Portugal, Sweden and Germany. As an attorney, Pekka specialized in corporate governance, contracts, dispute resolution and risk management.

Pekka served 7 years on the Board, 3 years as the Chair, at the German School of Helsinki, from where his children graduated. From his service on the Board at DSH and the role of the Board at ICS, his view is that "the Board's focus needs to be on strategy level matters and not so much on day-to-day operative tasks. When the Board takes decisions the criteria for the decisions need to (be) on what is in the best interest of the school. Also, the Board must ensure that the finances of the school are on a sustainable level and path." He is a graduate of the University of Helsinki, and obtained his MBA from the London Business School. Now resident in Addis with his spouse, the Ambassador of Finland, Pekka will serve a 2-year term.



Karin Steiner
Vice Chair

Karin was elected to the Board by members of the ICS Association. At ICS she is engaged in the Mother Tongue program, supports our Scouts groups and often organizes and assists at international community events. She has a business background in Communication / Marketing and Event Organization. She has two children at ICS in grades 8 and 3.



Michael Zink
Treasurer /
Finance Committee Chair

Michael is the Board Treasurer. Following a very successful banking career within Citigroup and a 27-year odyssey around the globe (including 8 years in Africa and time as a Peace Corps Volunteer) with his wife and four kids, Michael now dedicates much time to voluntary service for educational institutions. He contributes significant board governance expertise to ICS, having served on the Board of Directors of several Citigroup subsidiaries, and is also a member of the Board of Trustees at Case Western Reserve University. Michael is also a guest lecturer on the Advanced Management Program at the Kellogg School of Management of Northwestern University.

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Emily White
Secretary



Ruth Anne
US Embassy Rep



Dennia Gayle
Governance Committee Chair

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Emily White is the Regional Refugee Coordinator for the Horn of Africa based at the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa. Emily has ten years of diplomatic experience, with prior postings in India, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Washington, D.C. Before joining the U.S. State Department, Emily was a lawyer focusing on labor, employment, and immigration issues. She also was an educator at La Jolla Country Day School in San Diego, California for over four years, where she taught history, geography, and managed community outreach programs. Emily holds a law degree from the University of California, Berkeley and a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania. Her son is at ICS in EY5.

Ruth Anne Stevens-Klitz is the U.S. Embassy Representative member to the Board. Currently the Counselor for Public Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ruth Anne previously served on the boards of the bilateral Fulbright Commissions in Germany and Egypt and has over two decades' experience with the Department of State promoting international education in previous assignments in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. Ruth Anne holds a B.S. in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and a Master's in Security Studies from the U.S. Army War College. She has three children at ICS in grades 8, 4, and 1.

Dennia Gayle, from Costa Rica, is a resident of Addis and parent at ICS and works at the United Nations Population Fund. She is an executive with over 15 years of international public health, development and humanitarian experience across Latin America, The Caribbean and Africa. Dennia has expertise in data-driven strategic planning and performance-based management; finance proficiency and operational excellence with a focus on efficiency, productivity and innovation. She is a transformational leader and team contributor; public speaker and writer.

Dennia brings to the ICS Board a wealth of knowledge, skills and competencies from her work as a UN Diplomat, and from one of her first jobs as Counselor at a school in Costa Rica that had some of the same principles and commitment to education that she sees in ICS. Dennia, who was a Fulbright scholar, is a graduate of the University of Costa Rica, and Tulane University. Dennia will serve a 4 year term.

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Hanania Negede
Member

Hanania was elected to the Board by members of the ICS Association. Hanania has sixteen plus years of management experience with various companies and organizations such as a startup owned by IBM and Kaiser Permanente, LVMH and an International NGO. Hanania also recently completed a Global Executive MBA program at Duke University. She has one child at ICS in grade 2.



Rudy Muller
Member

Rudy Muller is an American retired father of 2 grown children who attended international schools in Singapore and France. His professional experience as an attorney and business executive in the US, then France and Singapore includes working for multinational corporations, and as a founder owner of an investment firm.

Rudy's international school governance and Board management experience includes 5 years of service on the Board of the Singapore American School from 2008 - 2013 (serving for 3 years as the Board Chair), working with a 12 person board supporting 4,000 students, 600 employees and an annual budget of US\$100 million. Rudy brings strong leadership that is based on integrity, transparency, delegation, accountability and teamwork. He seeks to promote confidence and encourage higher performance in executive management teams while building consensus.

Rudy is a graduate of Lemoyne College, Georgetown University Law Center, and the General Management Program at CEDEP/ INSEAD Resident in Florida, USA, Rudy will serve a 4-year term.

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Yohannes Tsehail
Member

Yohannes Tsehail is an ICS alumnus and former substitute teacher at ICS. He is currently a Senior Advisor to H.E. President of Ethiopia, Sahle-Work Zewde. He manages the President's chairmanship of the International Commission on the Futures of Education convened by UNESCO, to rethink education in a world of increasing complexity, uncertainty, and inequalities. Yohannes believes in ICS's progressive, personalized learning mission and welcomes the opportunity to give back to his alma mater which helped shape his intellectual and personal development.

Previously Yohannes was a Managing Partner of Veritas, a leading policy advisory, investment, and management consulting firm in Ethiopia. He was also Director for the Center for Development Consulting (CDC). During his time in the US, he served as the Chief of Staff and Legislative Director for US Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, and worked as an attorney in New York at Cleary Gottlieb. Yohannes is a graduate of Texas Southern University and Harvard Law School. A resident in Addis, Yohannes will serve a 4-year term.