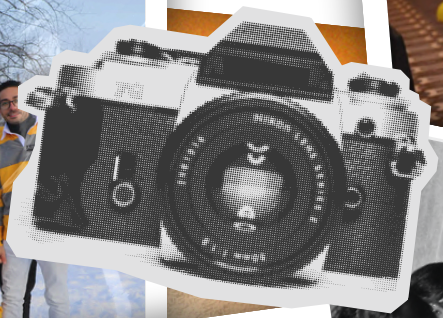
75 YEARS OF VIVID LEADERSHIP



AIESEC'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

STORYBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

75TH ANNIVERSARY STORYBOOK PREFACE..... 3

LETTER FROM PAI 2023:CHESTER SHUM 4

SHOWCASE VIVID STORIES..... 5

ALI TAHIRI - MOROCCO - 1988..... 6

ALYSHA ALVA - CANADA - 2022..... 8

ANTE STJEPAN GLAVAS - CROATIA - 1990..... 10

ARJUN BHAGAT - INDIA - 1980..... 12

BARBARA WHITEHEAD - UNITED KINGDON - 1959..... 14

BEENISH MAQSOOD - PAKISTAN - 2008..... 16

BERND M. THOMAS - GERMANY - 1956..... 18

BOGDAN-LUCIAN GABOR - DENMARK - 2023..... 20

CHESTER SHUM - UNITED KIGDOM - 2020..... 22

DAVE OSTREICHER - LATVIA - 1994..... 24

DENO NAICKER - SOUTH AFRICA - 1985..... 26

DISHENG CHENG - HONG KONG - 2020..... 29

DMITRII KOSINTSEV - MONGOLIA - 2019..... 31

HIRO KINASHI - JAPAN - 1960..... 33

HUGO PEREIRA - INDIA - 2011..... 35

JOAN WILSON - CANADA - 1981..... 37

JOHN TUTEUR - UNITED STATES - 1964..... 39

JUAN CAJIAO - COSTA RICA - 2003..... 41

KAJ VERNER SLOT - DENMARK - 1951..... 43

MANISH ARORA - DENMARK - 1999..... 45

MICHAEL SEWARD SUTTON - NEW ZEALAND - 1979..... 47

MILOS MOTOSKA - CZECHOSLOVAKIA - 1966..... 49

MOHAMED AKSOY - TÜRKIYE - 2019..... 51

OLENA LOBOVA - UKRAINE- 2011..... 53

RAY KEMPER - CHILE - 1985..... 55

RICARDO OBREGON - COLOMBIA - 1969..... 57

RONG-I WU - TAIWAN - 1962..... 59

SHARMIN VOHRA - PAKISTAN - 2006..... 61

UGOCHUKWU MODUM - NIGERIA - 2013..... 63

VILSON VELOSO - HUNGARY - 2016..... 65

VIVID STORIES(ORDERED BY ENTITY ALPHABETICALLY AND CHRONOLOGICALLY) 67

LETTER FROM PAI 2024: ANA LEONOR FERNANDES..... 168

THANK YOU TO THE 2023 VIVID LEADERSHIP TEAM..... 169

75TH ANNIVERSARY STORYBOOK

PREFACE

Dear AIESEC,

In life, there are special moments when time seems to stand still that leave a deep impression on us. Perhaps it's the chance encounter that blossoms into a lifelong friendship or witnessing the ripple effects of impact you were able to create, or maybe it's because, for the first time, you truly felt like you belonged. For me, these moments have been found in AIESEC. Since 1948, AIESEC has been shaping young people into the leaders our world needs by providing them with impactful and meaningful experiences. Experiences that are so memorable that they are inherently vivid.

When creating the 75 Years of Vivid Leadership campaign, I wanted to create a campaign that could represent all AIESECers and their impact stories, no matter how big or small, to showcase our collective journey within this organization. The 75th Anniversary Storybook is ultimately my **love letter** to AIESEC. It celebrates a diversity of experiences over the decades that see impact through resilience amidst tough times, long-lasting friendships, impact in communities, self-growth, and so much more. It was such a moving experience being able to sift through the hundreds of stories we gathered during 2023 and consolidate them into this inspirational and immersive anthology as one of my final projects in AIESEC.

The storybook is split into two main sections: The Showcase Stories Collection and the Stories Collection. The Showcase Stories Collection highlights standout stories and is sorted alphabetically by name, as seen in the table of contents. The Stories Collection is sorted alphabetically by entity name and then chronologically within the entity sections. As you sift through the stories, you can note that the entity names and the years written alongside the submissions of stories are in reference to when and where they had the experience mentioned in the story.

As you read, I encourage you to reflect on your own AIESEC experience and the opportunity AIESEC gives you to create these experiences for the young people around you. I hope you can come back to these stories during your AIESEC experience when you are in need of advice, resilience and strength from past generations. Let this storybook be a testament to the impact we create, the leaders we create, the legacy we create, and, most importantly, **the vivid leadership** we create here at AIESEC.

Vividly Yours,

Alysha Alva
Global Head of Public Relations
AIESEC's 75th Anniversary Manager
AIESEC International 2023

A LETTER FROM
CHESTER SHUM – PAI 2023

Dear AIESEC,

Since 1948, AIESEC has expanded into a global youth movement, engaging more than 1 million young people since its inception. Now, present in 100+ countries and territories, AIESEC is a diverse community of like-minded individuals from every walk of life.

Whether it was facilitating exchanges through physical pieces of paper, fax machines, or online, taking a chartered plane to attend a conference or a virtual one during the COVID-19 pandemic, AIESEC has moved alongside the world and created memories that have impacted the lives of many generations. No matter the era, the moments we recall from AIESEC are undoubtedly full of joy, challenge, growth and fulfillment. AIESEC has given us opportunities, lessons, experiences, and friends for life.

Inspired by our legacy and our people, “Vivid Leadership” encapsulates the spirit of our organization: vibrant people and vivid experiences. As much as we can try to quantify the value of AIESEC, it is the stories of each individual that make up the essence of our organization.

On behalf of the AIESEC International Team 2023, it is my honour and pleasure to present to you AIESEC’s 75th Anniversary Storybook. I would also like to acknowledge and appreciate the effort of the 75th Vivid Leadership team that helped turn this ambitious idea into reality.

For all those reading, I hope this storybook reminds you of your own AIESEC journey, and that no matter where you are in the world, keep writing your story.

Once an AIESECer, always an AIESECer.

AIESECly Yours,

Chester Shum
Global President
AIESEC International 2023

75 Years of Vivid Leadership

SHOWCASE STORIES

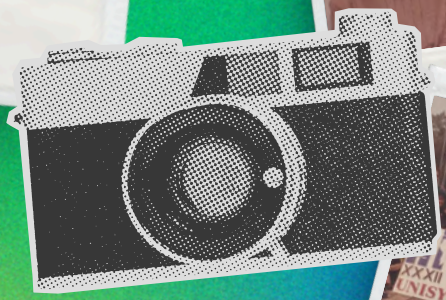
COLLECTION

“Back then, we started with seven members and it is amazing to see that now AIESEC in Morocco has over 15,000 alumni.

Ali Tahiri”

ALI TAHIRI

AIESEC in Morocco - 1988



FROM SEEDS TO SUCCESS:
Building AIESEC in Morocco

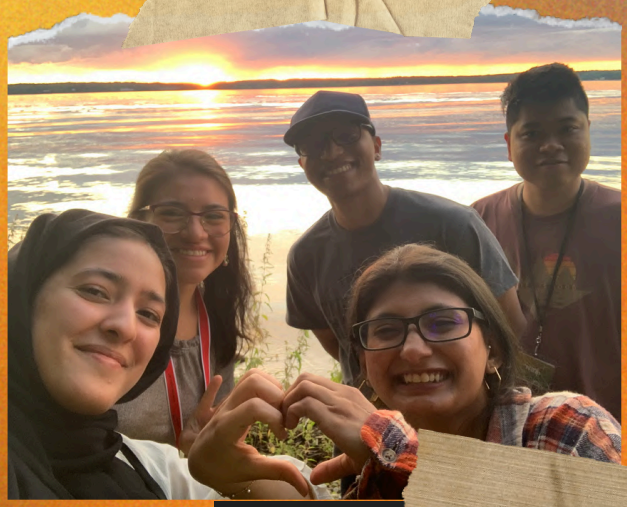
Starting from scratch to build AIESEC in Morocco was the greatest challenge in my life. The story started in 1986 when I joined the International High School of Management in Casablanca. Mr Bennani (may his soul rest in peace), the President of the board, asked me if I could take responsibility for a new association. Mr. Bennai had signed a partnership with an association (AIESEC) in a Canadian CEGEP (college) in Montréal. This association would enable students from Morocco to do their traineeship abroad and students from Canada and other countries to do traineeships in Morocco. I thought the idea was fantastic, and I saw the exchange program as an excellent tool to recruit members to our newly created association.

Thanks to AIESEC International, we had the support of Vincent Martin from France and Chacha from Uruguay to work with us on the Compendium and Statutes for AIESEC in Morocco. A few weeks after we started the initiative, we were recruiting new members and opened 7 Local Committees in Rabat, Casa, Fes, Marrakech, Agadir, Tangiers and Oujda. After a couple of months, we were already organizing our first international meeting for the North African Leadership Development Seminar in Casablanca with more than 150 participants from all over the world; it was just amazing. Our first sponsorship came from a company owned by Mr. Akhnouch, who is the current Prime Minister of Morocco and an AIESEC alumni from when he studied in Canada at Montreal University.

Back then, we started with seven members and it is amazing to see that now AIESEC in Morocco has over 15,000 alumni. My journey in AIESEC has shown me how resilience always pays off in the end.

ALYSHA ALVA

AIESEC in Canada - 2023



Leaders who have experienced amazing moments in the organization create vivid experiences for members.

Alysha Alva

LEADING WITH RESILIENCE:
My Journey as President of AIESEC in Canada

One of the experiences that was the most challenging and rewarding role I ever had was leading as the President of AIESEC in Canada for the 2021-2022 term. My term as President was one of the most memorable years in my life thus far. During this year, we had many ups and downs. We, as a national team, knew we wanted to focus on rebuilding the AIESEC culture in Canada after the pandemic so that it could strengthen the leadership pipeline for the organization for generations to come. One of our biggest strategies was to do this through conferences. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and the number of COVID-19 cases in Canada, we had to facilitate many of our national conference touchpoints virtually. When the time came around to conduct our biggest national conference to be hosted in Toronto, Canada, the risk of COVID posed to be too much, and unfortunately, we had to turn this conference hybrid.

After this conference, we sat as a national team and tried to ideate around the legacy we wanted to leave for our entity. One thing we continued to unanimously agree on since the beginning of the term was to rebuild the culture of AIESEC in Canada and provide an atmosphere for our membership where they could feel safe and see AIESEC in Canada & their Local Committees (LC) as their home away from home. This led us to come up with the idea to host AIESEC in Canada's first-ever Summer Leadership Camp. Within the span of two months, we put together a plan, got the approval of our board of directors, found a host Local Committee, put together an organizing committee and started working on the theme and content of the conference. Every session at the conference tried to achieve four things: develop leadership, create leadership pipeline, reconnect people to AIESEC and build long-lasting friendships.

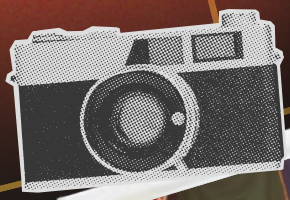
The amount of effort my team put into making this experience memorable for all our members was truly inspiring and amazing for me to see as their team leader. That year, 200 AIESEC in Canada members attended Summer Camp & every single session delivered to the membership was among the highest-rated conference sessions of the year. One key moment for me was delivering my last AIESEC Essence session as the President of my entity. To this day, this is one of the best and most moving sessions I have ever been able to deliver, and just being able to look around the room and see all the future leaders of AIESEC in Canada is a memory I will cherish forever.

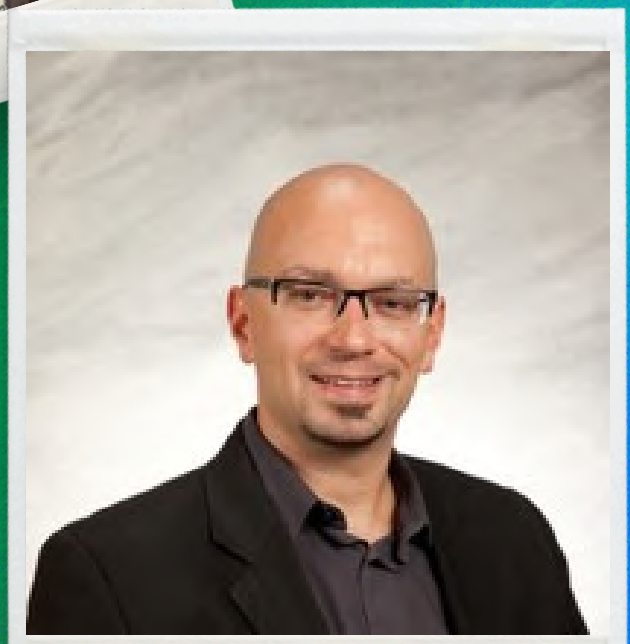
At the end of this experience, I realized a couple of things:

AIESEC is a youth mobilizer. The organization gives youth the unique opportunity to identify problems in their community, find ways to use the platform AIESEC offers, and turn them into solutions. Leaders who have experienced amazing moments in the organization create vivid experiences for members. It is our duty to continue creating these vivid moments so that future generations can feel the same impact. Anything is possible when you put together a group of determined and inspired young people.

AIESEC was truly leading the youth movement in a country in desperate need of leadership.

Ante Stjepan Glavas





ANTE STJEPAN GLAVAS

AIESEC in Croatia - 1990

FROM CONFLICT TO HOPE:
AIESEC's Impact in Croatia

In the early 1990s, Eastern European countries faced an unstable political period. When Ante first joined AIESEC, a war was happening in Croatia. The war had destroyed Croatia's community and economy and emotionally disheartened a lot of people. At that time, AIESEC was taking an important role in universities as well as the Croatian community.

AIESEC was founded after WW2, based on the idea of peace and fulfillment of humankind's potential. This mission gave Croatian AIESECers a sense of hope and peace for their country, and this was ultimately their driving force within the impact they achieved through AIESEC.

Ante witnessed and was involved in the entire process of AIESEC's impact in Croatia. From his point of view, despite the lack of financial resources in the country due to the war, AIESEC in Croatia was performing extremely well, raising easily over 100 traineeships and organizing over 100 projects yearly. They were truly leading the youth movement in a country in desperate need of leadership. AIESEC gave Ante a sense of hope for the future. Therefore, he believed that "anything is possible; believe in what you are doing, and you can achieve it."

After Ante experienced the power of AIESEC, he built a career in helping people. Today, he is the executive director of business and an agent of World Benefit at Case Weatherhead School of Management in the United States. He was also one of the members of the Supervisory Group of AIESEC International in the 2010s.

“

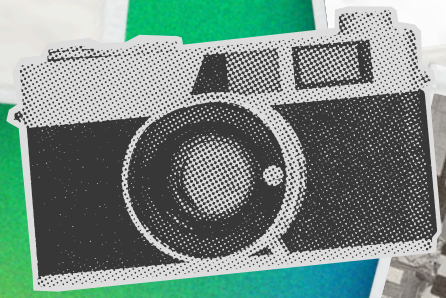
AIESEC gave me the opportunity to learn with the freedom to fail, and that is what allowed me to flourish.

Arjun Bhagat

”

ARJUN BHAGAT

AIESEC in India - 1980



REVIVING AIESEC:
Rebuilding Dreams of Impact in India

After a short period following its founding, AIESEC in India closed down in the 1970s. A few years later, Arjun gathered with other students to re-establish AIESEC in India again.

Arjun did his first internship in Canada before becoming heavily involved in AIESEC. He learned more about the organization in Canada and decided to get more involved upon his return to India in 1980. At this time, he started the initiative to re-establish AIESEC in India.

It was not easy for Arjun to re-establish AIESEC in India. He did not come from a business background and had no idea how to run an organization or search for business partners. The only way he could think of setting up AIESEC was to look for people with different skills and talents and put them in different positions. After having built a capable team, his next major challenge was to motivate them to put in the time and effort to build what was, at that point, nothing more than a vision and a dream.

Arjun motivated his team by creating an environment where they enjoyed working and socializing together. Additionally, he spent a substantial amount of his time and resources educating each member on the purpose and vision of what it was they were building and why this was important, both at an individual and societal level.

Arjun said, “AIESEC didn’t directly teach me business skills; AIESEC gave me the opportunity to learn with the freedom to fail, and that is what allowed me to flourish.” He has leveraged business skills in all his ongoing businesses and investment ventures to this day. Today, he is the Chairman and CEO of Calibrated Group and the founder of the AIESEC Alumni Association in India.

BARBARA WHITEHEAD

AIESEC in the United Kingdom - 1959

The work in AIESEC shaped Barbara's global mindset and taught her to communicate with people from all cultures as individuals and without preconceived ideas or prejudices

Barbara Whitehead

CHARTING NEW FRONTIERS:
AIESEC's Global Expansion

In the late 50s and early 60s, not many girls studied economics and business, and Barbara was the only girl in her faculty. She was immediately recruited by AIESEC and served as secretary of the LC, of the UK national team, and of the international Presiding Country Committee (PCC), which rotated annually between different national teams, before being elected to the first International AIESEC Secretariat (IAS).

Barbara worked for AIESEC at a turning point in its development. It had been centred in Europe, with North America a recent addition, but the time had come for the extension to the rest of the world. Promotional missions were sent to Asia, Latin America, Central America, and Africa.

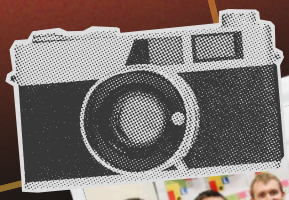
The PCC system was inadequate for this growing association, and more structured management was needed. In 1959, the Swiss national team proposed locating the newly legislated permanent international secretariat in Geneva, and Barbara participated in the negotiations with the Geneva authorities. In 1960, the Barcelona Congress approved the Geneva location, with the first Secretary General working under the Presiding Country Presidency (UK, of which Barbara was a member).

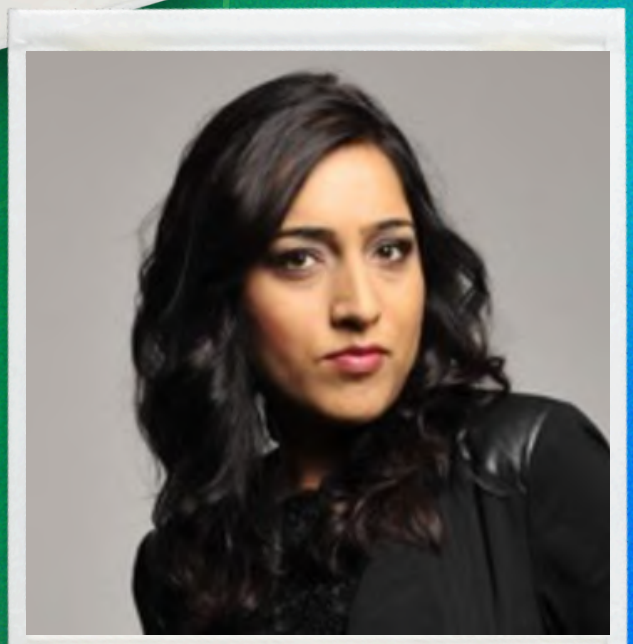
In 1961, the Marseille Congress elected Victor Loewenstein, the first independent Secretary General with a team of four, three of whom had traineeships in Geneva, and Barbara, who worked full-time in the Secretariat. As Barbara recalls, the Congresses focused mainly on the traineeship exchange programme. They were like mini stock exchanges, with AIESEC members bargaining, persuading, and arguing as they tried to match up the traineeships to be exchanged, waving their coloured forms and totting up the statistics.

The work in AIESEC shaped Barbara's global mindset and taught her to communicate with people from all cultures as individuals and without preconceived ideas or prejudices. This was valuable preparation for her 33-year career in the UN. AIESEC was not just a stepping stone in Barbara's career – it also gave her long-lasting, valued friendships. 50 years after Barbara joined AIESEC, she is still influenced by it. She has worked with the alumni movement and within AIESEC Alumni International (AAI), of which she is a Founder Member.

“Through my experience, I've paved the way for young girls back home to dream big and recognize the opportunities that AIESEC offers for personal and professional growth.”

Beenish Maqsood





BEENISH MAQSOOD

AIESEC in Pakistan - 2008

BEYOND BORDERS:
Women Empowerment Through AIESEC

In 2008, I joined AIESEC at my university in Pakistan, driven by the clear and compelling mission to bring youth together through exchange programs. The idea that bringing young people together can break down barriers between cultures really resonated with me. Hailing from Pakistan, where travel barriers are pronounced, my primary goal was to participate in an exchange program. This would not only allow me to share insights about Pakistan but also immerse myself in diverse cultures while gaining professional experience.

In 2010, I was selected for a year-long exchange internship in Germany, an experience that profoundly shaped my trajectory. I was one of the first girls from Pakistan to go to Germany as a management trainee. My experience started on the very first day when AIESECers from six other nationalities welcomed me to the accommodation. Living with this diverse crew, I became a cultural sponge, soaking up stories, histories, and life lessons every single day. The professional exposure in an environment starkly distinct from my native culture bolstered my confidence and expertise.

Post-exchange, I got a working contract at the same company, opening doors otherwise limited in my home country for many women. Over the past thirteen years, I have forged a career in technology, achieved financial independence, and explored over 50 countries. This transformative experience broadened my perspective on cultural commonalities, highlighting the shared humanity that transcends geographical boundaries. It taught me the importance of fostering understanding and inclusivity.

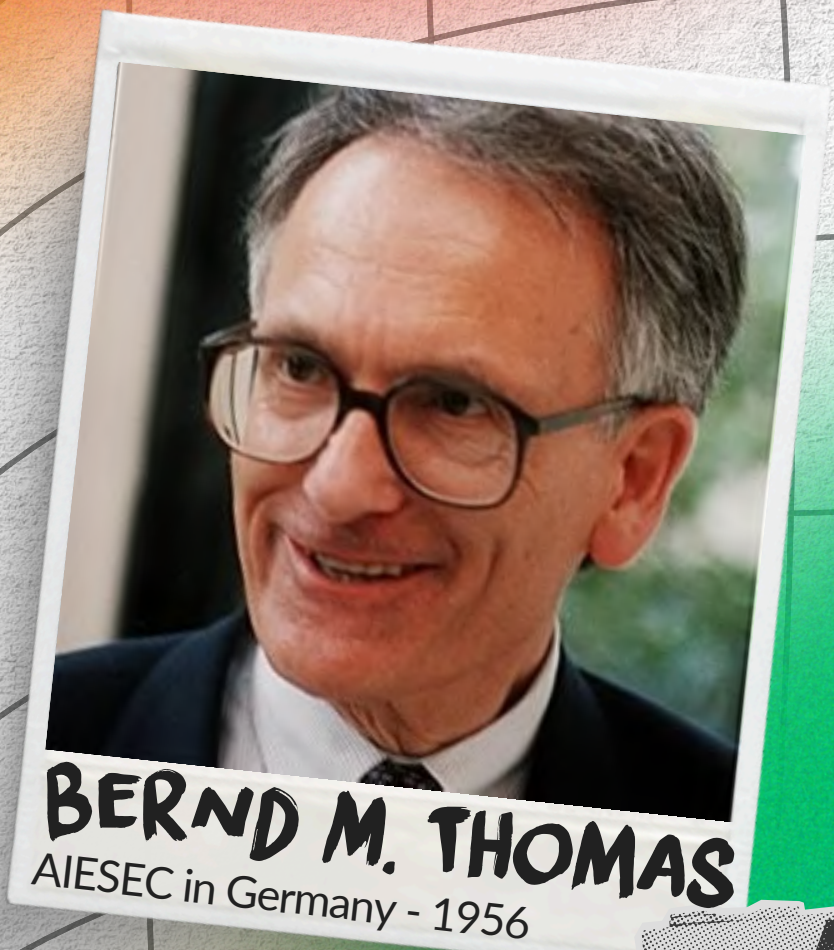
Through my experience, I've paved the way for young girls back home to dream big and recognize the opportunities that AIESEC offers for personal and professional growth. A self-assured and financially independent woman is better positioned to contribute to positive change in any culture, making a meaningful impact on those around her. And I am thankful that I got this chance via AIESEC.

“

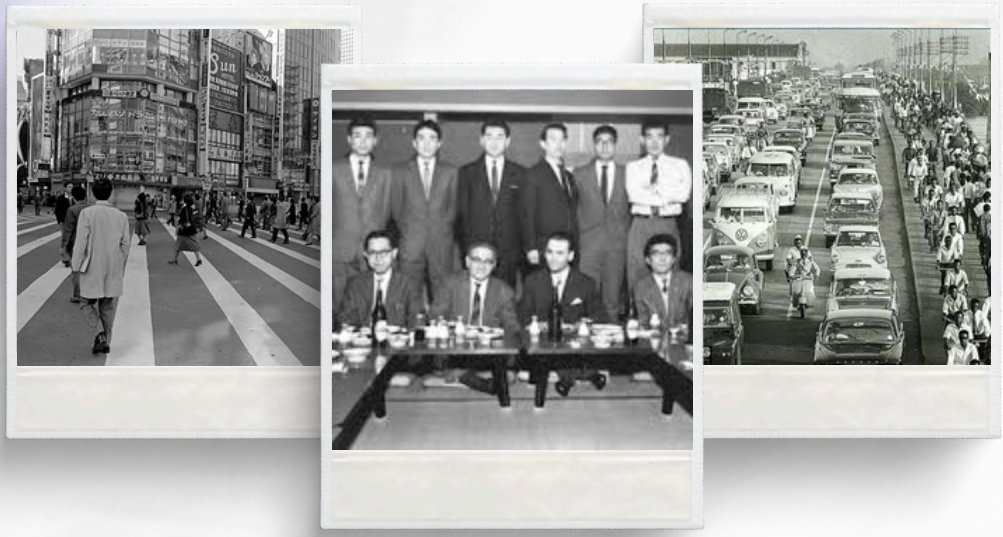
AIESEC has helped Bernd exercise civic responsibility, orientated him to an international professional and private life, and provided skills for his outstanding sales and marketing career.

Bernd M. Thomas

”



A LEGACY OF GLOBAL LEADERSHIP:
The Formation of AIESEC International



Bernd is a cross-decade AIESEC member and has witnessed the changes in AIESEC from the 1950s to 1960s and beyond. He joined AIESEC in 1956 as the President of the Local Committee Mannheim, Germany, and was elected German National Committee President in 1957 and the tenth International President of AIESEC in 1958.

Recollection of his days in AIESEC brought him back to 1956 when AIESEC had 17 member countries. AIESEC management on the national and international levels rotated between local chapters. Standing as a Presiding Country Committee candidate meant doing a complete business start-up created from scratch for a year with location, facilities, staffing organization and finance, as well as advisory support. AIESEC members were motivated by winning friends and building a new world after the war.

At AIESEC's International Congress in 1959, he was able to ensure a permanent AIESEC International Secretariat with a longer tenure and a more professional process to be put in place within two years. This enabled AIESEC to grow and diversify its services and embrace full geographic expansion. In 1962, as an alumnus, he volunteered as the AIESEC International envoy to Asia and initiated AIESEC in India, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan.

Bernd went to France, the USA, Nigeria and Japan on AIESEC traineeships. AIESEC has helped Bernd exercise personal leadership and civic responsibility, orientated him to an international professional and private life, and provided skills for his outstanding sales and marketing career in the automobile industry. Experience at the crossroads of international business and public policy was instrumental when he became Plenipotentiary of the Board of BMW Group to the European Union; later Secretary General of a European Industry Association in Brussels and Board Advisor to the Competitiveness Institute in Barcelona.

BOGDAN-LUCIAN GABOR

AIESEC in Denmark - 2023

Overcoming these moments only served to fuel my passion and push me further, resulting in the person I am today: Someone who still has a long way to go but knows they will make it.

Bogdan-Lucian Gabor

A JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY:
Bogdan's Leadership Journey with AIESEC

Too afraid to talk to others, never thought my point was worthwhile, and never thought I was skilled enough; this is how I would define 16-year-old me in my third year of high school. It was not until my introduction to AIESEC that this mentality would change.

It all started when one of my best friend talked about being part of this cool new project called GROW. He would never stop speaking about it during breaks at school, and before I knew it, I signed myself up. There I was, in a room with a bunch of other high schoolers and three international volunteers who were most likely nearing the end of their studies. This was the first time I ever interacted with people from India, Mexico, and Hong Kong. We were working on a lot of different topics, from leadership to cross-cultural understanding and the importance of empowering others, and I was mesmerized.

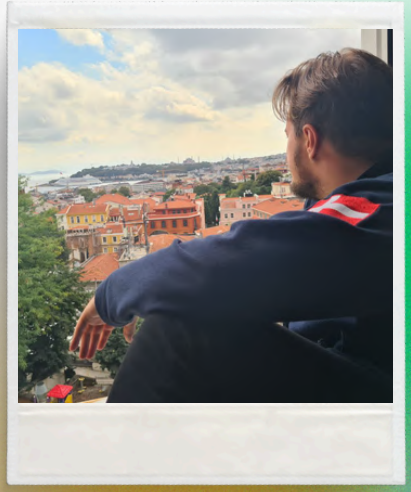
I was suddenly talking - in front of everyone, and for the first time, a large group of people were staring at me but weren't laughing or gossiping, but were nodding, complimenting, and reassuring me. My words had worth. The kid who was afraid of talking to others was suddenly sharing his deepest passions and fears with a group of people he had barely met hours before, and it was beautiful.

After six weeks, the project ended, but I wanted more. I became an ambassador and an Exchange Participant Buddy for the next project. Before I knew it, I was delivering classroom presentations on this project and gathering new participants. While some may have thought it was ridiculous to see a 16-year-old trying to sell them something, for once, I did not care. I was making an impact.

Little did I know that one year later, I would be helping organize this event again; two years later, I would join AIESEC while studying abroad in Denmark; and three years later, I would fulfill one of my dreams I had ever since primary school - visit Japan through AIESEC. Not only did I visit Japan, but I also gained work experience during my internship there. I was not done yet, though; I wanted more. That is when I decided to go to China with AIESEC and support children with education on sustainable production and consumption.

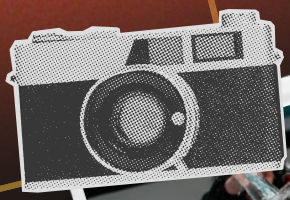
After these experiences, I made a decision: If I want to take this impact further, I need to go further myself. That's when I became a team leader, followed by the position of Local Committee Vice-President. I lost the Local Committee President elections but did not lose my goal from sight. I became part of the National Office of AIESEC in Denmark and, shortly after, the Member Committee President of AIESEC in Denmark.

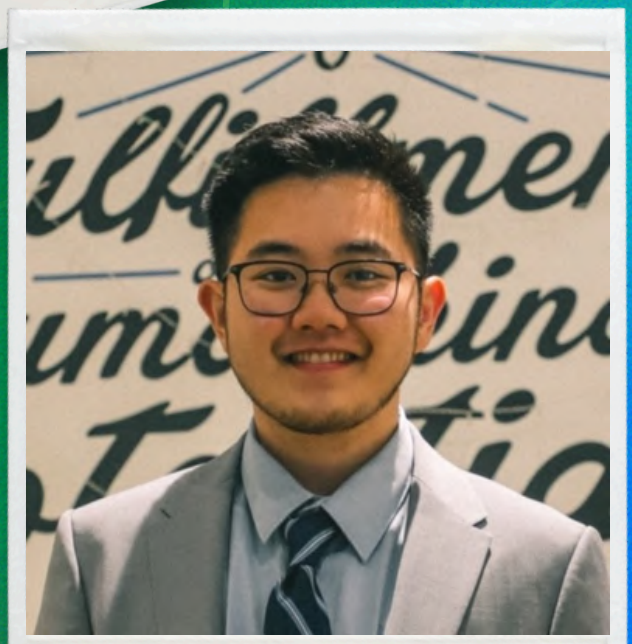
During that time, I went through some of the most beautiful moments in my life, faced some of the toughest and hardest moments in my life, and was the happiest I've ever been, the saddest I've ever been, and the loneliest I've ever been. Overcoming these moments only served to fuel my passion and push me further, resulting in the person I am today: Someone who still has a long way to go but knows they will make it. Someone who still wants to drive that impact further. Someone who doesn't leave people behind or forgotten. A boy who values joy, freedom, and positivity when things are uncertain. Someone who is not yet done.



“Remember, even within hardship, AIESEC is only ever as much as you put in, and it will reward you immensely if you choose the right thing to do.

Chester Shum”





CHESTER SHUM

AIESEC in the United Kingdom - 2020

ADVERSITY THROUGH CRISIS:
Leading AIESEC UK Amidst the Pandemic

It was January 31st, 2020, a cold rush of water poured down my head as I was elected President (MCP) of AIESEC in the UK. In that election. I spoke of upscaling our exchange programs and empowering our members. I answered questions about Brexit's impact on AIESEC in the UK and the changes that came with the graduate visa. Little did I know that two months later, March 2020, would tip the world upside down, including AIESEC's.

By May 2020, my budget had been thrown out of the window several times, and it was looking like there was no way we would be able to end the year in profit. The most challenging moment, however, was coming to the conclusion that I had to cut one member of my team to cut costs. My team had only been elected for merely two months, some coming from afar with a dream to work in the UK. Like a doctor breaking bad news, I made the most difficult apology and told one of my team members that they were no longer part of the team.

Though challenging, this was a time to regroup and innovate. Looking back 10-20 years prior, AIESEC in the UK had several high-level partnerships with big corporations and recognition from the UK government. It was unfortunate that we seemed to have lost some of those connections. With exchanges coming to a pause due to travel restrictions, it was the right time to explore bringing back External Relations as a function of the national and local teams. Within a week, I had re-evaluated the strengths and background of myself and my team members, and so it was set: I was going to take on finances, outgoing volunteering and internships were combined, and a new position of PR & partnerships was created.

We held down the fort with a team of 6, down from 9. Corporate sales continued in whatever capacity we could, held online gatherings with our local team members, delivered a number of virtual training summits, and managed the exchanges that had been delayed or refunded. We also dreamed of holding an in-person YouthSpeak Forum, the first in 5 years. While that was not possible, we held a virtual one with 200+ attendees and a huge range of speakers from different backgrounds, including NGOs, corporates, influencers, the LGBTQ+ community, the disabled community and more. Although it was not what we had initially envisioned, this kickstarted a wave of efforts to make AIESEC more externally known and relevant. We also piloted an initiative called “Agent of Change,” a series of events that Local Committees can hold, exposing university students to social and global issues to develop them into changemakers. Naturally quite pessimistic, this experience was a huge lesson in quite the opposite. I learnt that with every crisis, however bleak, always comes opportunity.

Through these 12 months, we had many unknowns to work around. Naively, we thought we would be able to host our national conference by October 2020, and when that didn’t happen, we thought January 2021 would be the one. In the end, June 2021 came around, and the best we could do was a small hybrid summit. There were days and weeks when we would be stuck at home because of national lockdown, delivering conferences isolated in a room with COVID, or simply feeling hopeless because we weren’t seeing any progress. We made many sacrifices, and many other AIESECers made, to keep AIESEC alive.

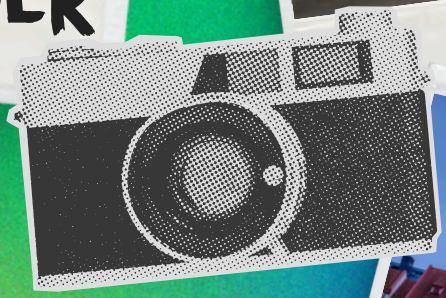
To whoever is reading this, I wish that you and the AIESECers around you do not forget the tradeoffs our generation had to make to keep AIESEC alive - the people who couldn’t experience an exchange, the people who couldn’t experience a conference in person, the people who never made it to their next AIESEC experience because they were cut to save budget, the people who never received an exchange participant from abroad… That said, there are greater sacrifices from generations beyond ours: the people who had to work for AIESEC in secret due to fear of external persecution, the people who continued to make AIESEC work despite an ongoing war, the people operating AIESEC with close to no resources…AIESEC is strong because of its people and the legacy they leave behind. Remember that even within hardship, AIESEC is only ever as much as you put in, and it will reward you immensely if you choose the right thing to do. My final word: do not be afraid to challenge the status quo. As the world evolves, so does AIESEC. This mindset led me to where I am today, having applied and been elected as the President of AIESEC International with the platform “Break the Norm.”

This experience taught me that it is OK to be uncomfortable in a leadership role, and sometimes the best thing to do is to let yourself be vulnerable.

Dave Ostreicher

DAVE OSTREICHER

AIESEC in Latvia - 1994



EMBRACING VULNERABILITY:
Memorable Moments from Conference Touchpoints

I arrived at the hotel in Latvia past dark. It was cold, and I was tired, but as soon as I opened the door to the hotel room where the facilitators were gathering, excitement for what we were about to create together made me forget all about any jet lag or numb fingers. We were the facilitator team for Latvia's National Motivation Seminar 2004, and we were about to craft an agenda that was going to change the lives of young leaders - myself included.

Our pre-conference work together proceeded without much fanfare. Although we had come from Latvia, Poland, Ukraine, Madagascar, Britain, and elsewhere and had done a bit of pre-planning via email before arriving at the conference venue, as any AIESECer knows, the real magic - and the real work - begins when the team is face to face.

A few days later, we had crafted an agenda that we were sure would inspire.

One of my sessions was an exercise that visualized peak experiences in one's life to find the essence of those experiences so that one could replicate them! I was fortunate to take Professor Kim Cameron's cutting-edge work (with his permission, of course) during these early days of his work in the Positive Organizational Scholarship at the University of Michigan.

However, all did not go completely according to my plan. At the end of the visualization activity, we dismissed folks for a break, but one woman stayed behind in the auditorium. Coming down from the stage to approach her to see if she might have some lingering questions, she broke into tears. You see, her peak experience was the love she felt from her father in the time she was able to spend with him before he passed away.

Not being trained or experienced in how to comfort someone in a deeply emotional state, all I could do was listen. It was then that one of my facilitator partners saw what was happening, and came to be another literal shoulder to cry on.

This experience taught me that it is OK to be uncomfortable in a leadership role, and sometimes the best thing to do is to let yourself be vulnerable. Simply being an ear to listen or a shoulder to cry on is harder than trying to talk through the uncomfortableness or offer answers - to which there clearly were none. Sometimes, the most powerful events in our lives are not the ones with rainbows, unicorns, and spaceships but the ones that elicit deeply visceral feelings that cannot be described in words.

However, I can describe how I felt that day. Being supported by the facilitator team both immediately and then later on that evening when we debriefed on the day. I still see those facilitators - whom I consider to be the best team I have ever worked with - on social media now and again. I am ashamed to admit I don't remember the same level of detail about the woman whom I hope we comforted on that day in the aftermath of that powerful session. One thing remains crystal clear for me, though: if she carried on her father's love in her life, the world has become a better place for her efforts, plain and simple. And isn't that what the world needs from us AIESECers each and every day? A little more love toward our fellow humans.

DENO NAICKER

AIESEC in South Africa - 1985

Even within the turbulence of Apartheid, AIESEC stood as a beacon of unity, defying racial segregation and political divides.

Deno Naicker

LEADERSHIP AMIDST APARTHEID:
AIESEC's Legacy of Unity in South Africa

My journey at AIESEC began in 1985 at The South African University of KwaZulu-Natal. Having been elected Vice President (Exchange) (1985/86), Local Committee President (1986/87) and AIESEC Regional Advisor (1987/88), this experience culminated in being selected as one of seven AIESEC South Africa delegates for the International Congress (1989) to be hosted in Quebec City, Canada. Following the advancement of my career, my AIESEC journey has been reaffirmed in my active role within a Board of Advisors while also mentoring students in major cities in the United States in Chicago, San Jose and Austin.

This, in itself, may otherwise appear to be an unremarkable feat. However, my formal introduction to AIESEC was during "Apartheid," a turbulent period in South Africa which involved the legalized racial segregation of Blacks, Whites and other people of colour. As such policies were enforced within public education, local housing and other public spaces, such restrictions also impeded one's freedom of movement and the general interaction of people across racial lines. This period was known for various political protests and labour unrest until the election of Nelson Mandela, the first Black president to lead a democratic, multiracial and socially reformed government in 1994. As a person of Indian descent whose great-grandparents immigrated to South Africa in the 1880s, assuming a position of leadership as a student enrolled in a predominantly "White" South African University during Apartheid was not an insignificant accomplishment.

As a member of the hosting committee for the AIESEC South Africa National Conference, my first few months in AIESEC were especially challenging. In 1985, many attempts were made to find hotels for our conferences that were willing to face legal repercussions for accommodating our racially diverse students from 26 Local Committees. Personally, this had also been the first time I would formally interact with individuals outside of my own racial background. Though our political and life experiences differed immensely, we were ultimately unified in the spirit of AIESEC's ideals that did not tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender or other personal identifiers.

Given the immense challenges of operating within the political turmoil that was present in South Africa at the time, AIESEC's approach against the division of people on the basis of political beliefs had been especially evident. As a result, I had to reconcile my political goals involving social liberation in order to interact with my peers, irrespective of their chosen political beliefs. With common interests in mind, like the International Exchange programs and other projects that benefited our student population, this was the essence of AIESEC's principle of "Unity in Diversity" that had been put into motion. AIESEC's ability to unify diverse students across polarizing political and social divides is as relevant in today's fractured society as it was with founding member countries in 1948, after World War II, and the subsequent launch of South Africa's AIESEC division a mere ten years later in 1958.

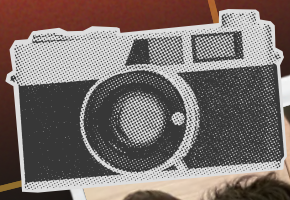
As one of the seven elected delegates who had been chosen to represent AIESEC South Africa at the International Congress (1989) in Quebec City, Canada, this had been an especially formative experience. Having never travelled internationally before, it was truly astounding to be part of an amazing global conference that consisted of 650 delegates from 69 separate countries. It had been phenomenal to witness the international exchange and matching program at work as we spent our days trading our "Pinks" and "Greens" (incoming and outgoing exchange participant documents) while enjoying our time at various country-hosted booths. The nights were filled with lots of food, good drinks and dancing while many of us participated in regionally themed events each night. We were fortunate to be part of a group of 100 delegates that travelled on buses for a study tour lasting two weeks to a number of different Canadian locations from Quebec City to Toronto.

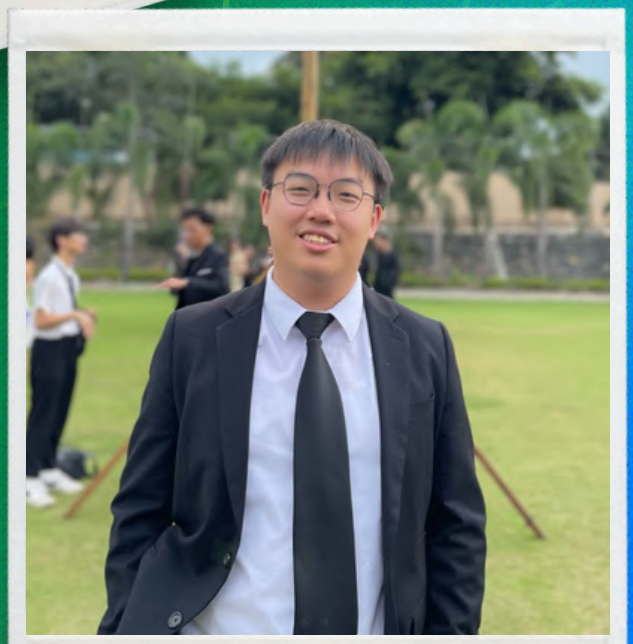
With my first international experience coinciding with my time at AIESEC, I have been consistently fascinated with global travel while working in a number of different countries. Eventually, such experiences led me to permanently relocate to the United States in the year 2000. Even so, my AIESEC leadership experience played a significant role in securing my first job in South Africa with Price Waterhouse, with subsequent senior leadership positions at AON/Hewitt, Cisco Systems Inc. and Indeed, Inc. in the United States.

It is an amusing irony that my role in AIESEC, where I first experienced matching "Pinks" and "Greens," has now come full circle 30+ years later at my work with Indeed, Inc., where "helping people get jobs" is made possible through the process of matching job seekers with respective employers. I am truly grateful for my experience in AIESEC, as it allowed me to develop both personally and professionally while recognizing my existing support for widespread diversity and inclusion. Through the shared experience of AIESEC, I have made many worthwhile friends and work colleagues over the years. Nevertheless, my greatest joy would be in giving back to the next generation for all that I gained through AIESEC. Here's to the next 75 years of AIESEC!

“AIESEC plays an irreplaceable role in contributing to the development of leaders who will shape a brighter future for all, be it in Hong Kong or in our world.

Disheng Cheng”





DISHENG CHENG

AIESEC in Hong Kong: 2020

FINDING INSPIRATION TO IMPACT:
AIESEC in Hong Kong Operating Amidst the Pandemic

Back in 2019, I joined AIESEC because I thought the world needed leaders. Growing up in a typical Asian elitist background, I grew up in an environment where winning showed excellence, and any forms of losing were not well-received. I wanted to be one of the great leaders who created a legacy. AIESEC is what taught me that there is so much more than just winning.

Among the AIESEC Local Committees (LC) in Hong Kong, AIESEC in CUHK held a prominent position, but it had not received the coveted "Best LC Award" for nine consecutive years. As the Local Committee President (LCP) at that time, my primary objective for the year was to bring that prestigious award back to my home entity. Leading my Executive Board, a passionate and vocal group of individuals, we embarked on a relentless pursuit to resume exchange operations despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our efforts yielded remarkable growth across all functions, garnering recognition through various local awards for our operations. However, halfway through our term, the COVID-19 situation actually took its toll, and burnout started to affect our LC. In Asia at this time, there were heavy travel restrictions and it led us to question the significance of running exchanges. We thought, "We can't even leave our flats; is it safe to send students abroad? Is exchange even realistic in developing leadership at this time?"

As the pandemic slowly died down, the president (MCP) of AIESEC in Hong Kong back then shared a profound statement that deeply resonated with me. He said, "Even if we can only run one AIESEC exchange, we will do it. Because by doing so, we are opening the world to one Hong Kong youth and transforming one young person's life."

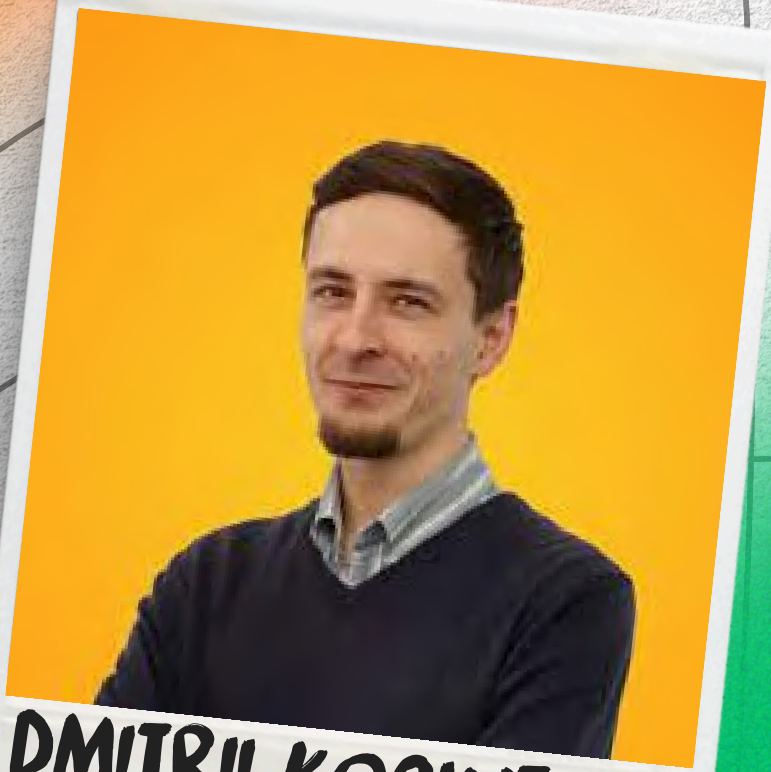
Looking back, I now realize the immense power behind those words as I reflect on my journey as the MCP right now. I have come to understand that true leadership success cannot be measured by mere KPIs, MoS, or numerical excellence. The impact we create is defined by the people we influence and the community we foster. The leaders the world truly needs are those who possess an open-minded outlook and continually seek personal growth that transcends conventional boundaries. They are individuals who possess the audacity to believe that anything is possible and are willing to take bold steps to make a difference. These are the leaders I firmly believe AIESEC has the capacity to develop.

My journey with AIESEC has been an eye-opening experience from where I was, challenging the conventional notions of leadership that I had grown up with. It has taught me that leadership is not solely about winning accolades but about inspiring others, creating meaningful change, and empowering young individuals to become catalysts for a better world. AIESEC's mission aligns perfectly with the qualities I believe the world needs in its leaders—those who are visionary, adaptable, and unafraid to make a difference.

With this in mind, I believe AIESEC plays an irreplaceable role in contributing to the development of leaders who will shape a brighter future for all, be it in Hong Kong or in our world.

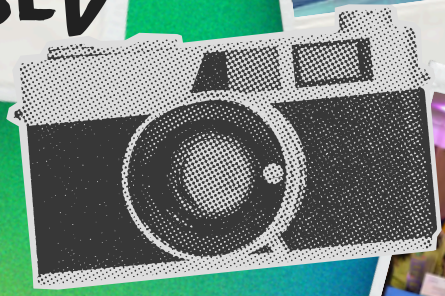
“This experience taught me that it is OK to be uncomfortable in a leadership role, and sometimes the best thing to do is to let yourself be vulnerable.

Dmitrii Kosintsev”



DMITRII KOSINTSEV

AIESEC in Mongolia - 2019



EMPOWERING LEADERS:

Creating the Next Generation of Leaders in Mongolia

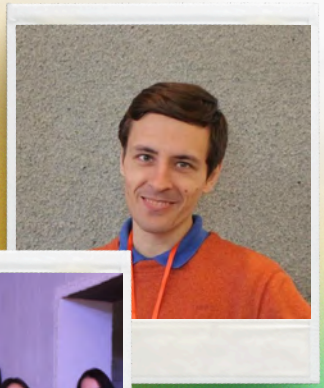
In 2019, as my term as the leader of AIESEC in Moldova was coming to an end, I did not feel ready to leave AIESEC. I decided to seek another opportunity as a leader of a national team, leading me to apply for AIESEC in Mongolia.

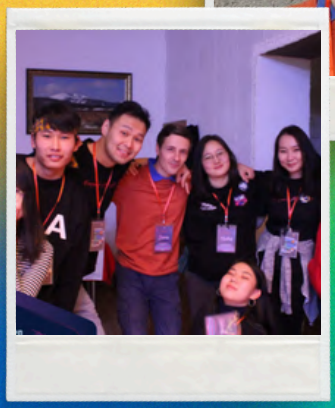
The application process was swift but chaotic. I was unfamiliar with the people and had no prior knowledge of how the entity operated. Additionally, the time difference made communication challenging. I had numerous concerns, particularly regarding my ability to recruit a team. The fact that they were still searching for a Member Committee President (MCP) in June indicated that individuals were hesitant to take on leadership roles. Nevertheless, my determination to gain this experience kept me going.

At that time, the entity was significantly behind the usual timeline for national team recruitment. Only one person had openly expressed their intention to join the team. The situation appeared quite daunting. Gradually, we managed to recruit two more people to the team, plan effectively, and organize our first national conference. Coming from a larger entity, I had concerns that our results might be seen as too modest as AIESEC in Mongolia.

I arrived in Mongolia in July 2019 with just a few weeks to accomplish tasks that typically took several months. Fortunately, I received great support from an AIESECer who had applied to be an MCVP. Together, we managed to recruit two more members to our team. Our first national conference occurred approximately three weeks after I arrived in Mongolia. It was organized rapidly by a small team of three people, an unusual situation for me. I was extremely stressed because I doubted people could pull off such an event on such short notice. However, they proved me wrong, and I was delighted.

Throughout the term, we faced various challenging situations, but every time, people came together to resolve problems that initially appeared insurmountable. These moments continually reminded me of something a former MCP had shared with me, 'People in Mongolia have immense potential, but they are often hesitant to tap into it. AIESEC inspires them to take the first step.'





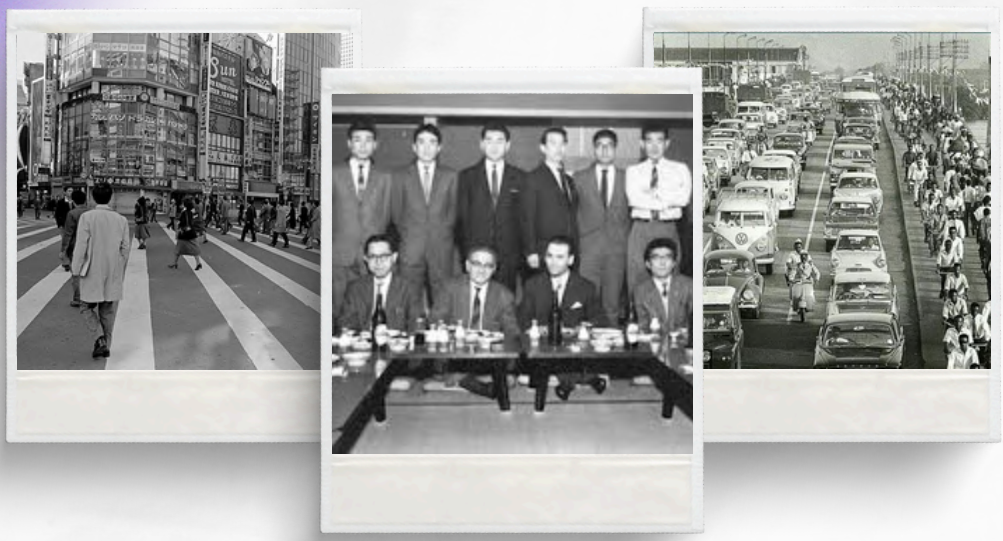
In January 2020, one of my team members was selected as the next MCP. He became the third local MCP since AIESEC was established in Mongolia in 2008. He worked diligently to recruit a complete team, and half a year later, they successfully organized their first national conference. It was the most rewarding national conference because I witnessed people taking responsibility for their entity. I felt incredibly grateful to our members because they didn't give up and gave their best to strengthen the entity.

Sometimes, it's impossible to control or change the things we dislike, but we always have the power to change our attitude. AIESEC in Mongolia taught me how an entire entity can actively shape its future. To this day, they demonstrate leadership and continue to grow. Their growth may seem gradual, but it is undeniably steady."

HIRO KINASHI
AIESEC in Japan - 1960

> Under Hiro's direction, AIESEC successfully expanded to Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore.

IMPACT WITHOUT BORDERS:
AIESEC's Expansion into Asia Pacific



Hiro Kinashi is one of the significant AIESEC members in the 1960s. He joined AIESEC in 1965 because he wanted to make friends across universities and challenge himself internationally during his college life. His choice to join AIESEC was just the right thing to accomplish his objectives.

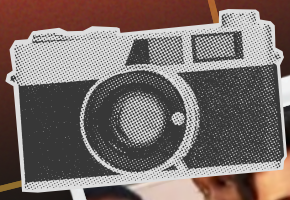
One year after he joined AIESEC, he was assigned the responsibility of overseeing AIESEC in Asia, as AIESEC in Japan was delegated this responsibility in the International Congress in 1966. In that decade, AIESEC underwent a large expansion in Asia. Under his direction, he successfully expanded AIESEC to Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore. He was specifically responsible for consultation with teams working in Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, and he helped them understand AIESEC and increase the number of exchanges. In that year, he brought study tours to Asia, which helped to build the brand of AIESEC in Asia, while also allowing students to travel and explore his region.

As the Asian Regional Coordinator (equivalent to Director of Asia), Hiro also organized a series of Asian Congresses. The purpose of this congress was to cooperate with all AIESEC member countries in Asia before attending International Congress. During the congress, countries would discuss their future plans, how to increase traineeship numbers and also plan further expansion in Asia.

He gained a lot of friendships in AIESEC and wanted to find a way to continue to network with all the alumni together. Thus, Hiro established a database for AIESEC Alumni in Japan, creating a network of more than 7000 Japanese alumni.

“This journey underscores the enduring power of AIESEC: to forge life-long connections and empower individuals to be catalysts for positive change.

Hugo Pereira”



HUGO PEREIRA

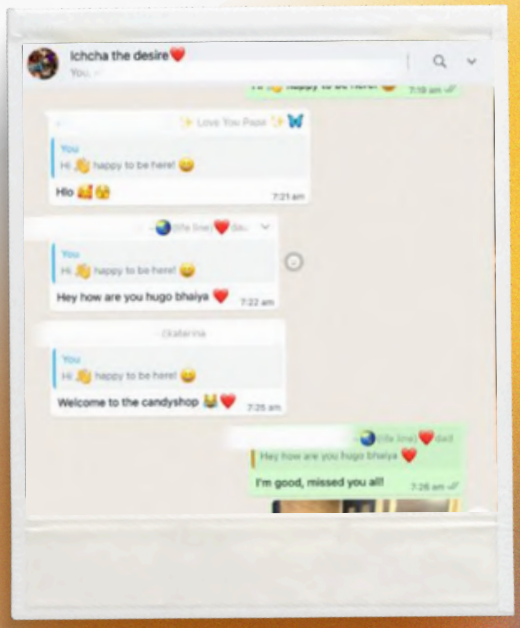
AIESEC in India - 2011

PURPOSE THROUGH VOLUNTEERING:
A Story Impact from India

After an enriching journey with AIESEC, culminating in a transformative President of AIESEC International experience, I took a moment to contemplate my next steps. The AIESEC journey, while deeply immersive, often felt like a bubble, somewhat disconnected from the real-world challenges in the corporate and societal spaces. This realization led me to extend my AIESEC adventure through a unique blend of a volunteer and a corporate internship in India – a country I had always felt drawn to, especially since the AIESEC 2015 midterm ambition launch at International Congress in 2010. I was eager for a challenge and chose to work with ICCHA, an NGO dedicated to educating underprivileged children in slums, alongside supporting a marketing media agency affiliated with the NGO in professionalizing their sales and marketing strategies.

My days were split between the agency and, from mid-afternoon, the NGO and slums, directly engaging with the children. Over three months, we achieved remarkable milestones: securing a full-time English teacher and creating a community built from AIESEC interns as societal educators, enriching the children's learning with diverse subjects like space, history, and geography. During this period, I received recognition from Western Union and Facebook as the world's most connected person via Facebook, thanks to my AIESEC network. The prize money of about 3.5k USD was donated entirely to the NGO, ensuring the sustainability of our educational initiatives.

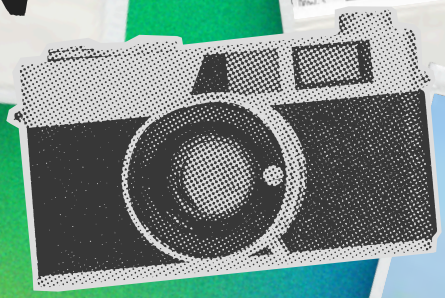
But the true magic of this experience unfolded over time. Years later, I returned to India for a friend's wedding and revisited the slums with my mother, who was on her spiritual journey. The children, who remembered me affectionately as Bhaya (brother in Hindi), greeted us. It was a deeply moving reunion. The most impactful moment came in 2023 when former volunteers reached out to me on Instagram. The children, now grown up, expressed their gratitude. Many had transcended their challenging beginnings, thanks to the education and ambition instilled in them. They now had careers and financial stability, a testament to the lasting impact of our work.



This journey underscores the enduring power of AIESEC: to forge life-long connections and empower individuals to be catalysts for positive change.

“The wonderful thing about AIESEC is that you can be halfway around the world and run into someone you know

Joan Wilson”



PAVING THE WAY:
Powerful Women Leadership in AIESEC

Joan Wilson is an important woman in AIESEC's history, as she became the first woman from a non-European member country to be AIESEC International's Secretary General in 1980. Among the highlights of her term were trips to Eastern Europe and South Africa, two regions where the political situation was very different from what it is today. Joan helped to rebuild the National Committee of AIESEC in Poland after the team members died in a plane crash returning from the 1980 International Congress in Chicago. In 1981, AIESEC in South Africa's membership was under review because of the government's apartheid policy. Joan visited and met with students in the then-segregated universities. AIESEC was one of the few programs available for non-white students to travel abroad, and for that reason, she recommended to the global network that South Africa remain in AIESEC's international member network.

Joan was President of the local committee at the University of Toronto in her graduating year, and went on to become President of AIESEC in Canada, where she helped to secure AIESEC's first grant from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). AIESEC gave Joan the opportunity to enhance her communication skills, especially when dealing with business people and gain an international perspective and ability to function in different cultural situations.

After her involvement with AIESEC International and a traineeship in Switzerland, she returned to study and work in Canada. Today, Joan is Vice President and Corporate Secretary of Sun Life Financial, a leading international financial services organization headquartered in Canada.

Quote from Joan Wilson: "Some of my closest and long-standing friends today are people I met in AIESEC. For example, a colleague from AIESEC Canada is my son's godmother. The wonderful thing about AIESEC is that you can be halfway around the world and run into someone you know. In 2005, I met up with an old Montreal AIESEC friend while visiting the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, and then I saw my traineeship companion in Hong Kong. Once you have experienced AIESEC, you come to see the world as a really small place."

JOHN TUTEUR

AIESEC United States - 1964

> **Probably my greatest debt to AIESEC is for giving me the opportunity to meet my wife of 57 years.**
>
> John Tuteur

AIESEC:

SHAPING LIVES AND LOVE STORIES SINCE 1960

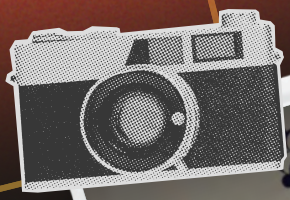
AIESEC had a major impact on my life. From the first meeting of the Yale Local Committee that I attended in 1960 until I retired as National Committee President in June 1964, AIESEC influences shaped my Yale activities, my educational priorities and my choice of life partner. My interest in languages was strengthened with my first traineeship in 1961 in Monaco. I learned a second language for my traineeship in Forte dei Marmi, Italy, during the summer of 1962. Attendance at the President's Meeting in Lund, Sweden and conferences in Berlin, Princeton and Rome introduced me to the world of international, non-governmental organizations. My year as National Committee President in 1963-1964 was filled with contacts with other AIESEC leaders, knowledgeable professionals in the private sector and the experience of leading an energetic and thriving group of students.

I shook the hand of Attorney General Robert Kennedy in Washington when he spoke to our AIESEC trainee group visiting the capitol. I can still feel the energy that flowed through that handshake.

Probably my greatest debt to AIESEC is for giving me the opportunity to meet my wife of 57 years, who happened to live across the street from my apartment when I was in New York for my stint as National Committee President. I am pleased that AIESEC is still going strong in the United States 50 years after its inception here. I am proud of whatever small part I played in keeping the torch burning. John Tuteur, National Committee President, 1963-1964

“My PAI term came on a moment of change for the world dominated by the impact of the Global Financial Crisis, the Mumbai Terror Attacks, the Russia-Georgia War and the Beijing Olympics. Back then, the AIESEC network proved to itself how resilient we are when we worked together for the same purpose.”

Juan Cajiao



JUAN CAJIAO

AIESEC in Costa Rica - 2003

AN ANTHOLOGY OF AIESEC'S IMPACT:

Juan's Journey with AIESEC Through the Years

The Beginning of a Transformative Journey

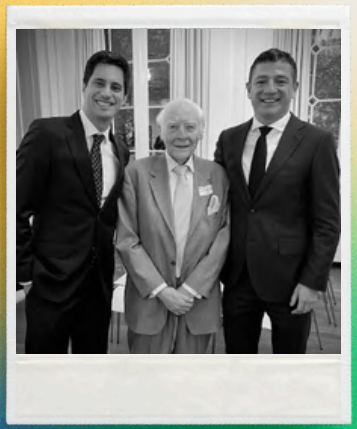
In 2003, my journey with AIESEC began in Costa Rica, where three dedicated members were striving to revive the organization. This marked the start of the most transformative period in my life. My path soon led to Cluj Napoca, Romania, for a six-month internship that ultimately extended to 1.5 years. During this time, AIESEC Romania played a crucial role in my development, demonstrating how AIESEC enables individuals to achieve their best selves while making a meaningful impact. It was a period of significant personal growth, surrounded by individuals who shared my purpose and values, where making a difference was intertwined with enjoyment. This experience shaped my understanding of AIESEC's power and set the tone for my future roles.

A Journey of Growth and Impact

After returning to Costa Rica to complete my degree, I joined the Member Committee as VP of Talent Management, inspired by my experiences in Romania. This role and my interest in sustainability took me to Mainland China in 2006 as VP of CSR (Sustainability). There, I had the opportunity to be part of the team that awakened the global giant. My focus on building partnerships with multinational companies to bring interns to NGOs propelled me towards AIESEC International. With financial support from friends, I travelled to Egypt to apply for AIESEC International, marking another pivotal moment in my life.

Elevating Legacy and Embracing Leadership

In 2007, as AIESEC's International Director for Iberoamerica, my team significantly enhanced the Social and Business Entrepreneurship Program, 'Ser Mas,' in the region, affirming that purpose comes before performance. My election as President of AIESEC International for 2008-2009 was a significant milestone. During my term, amid the Global Financial Crisis, the Mumbai Terror Attacks, the Russia-Georgia War, and the Beijing Olympics, the AIESEC network demonstrated remarkable resilience. We celebrated AIESEC's 60th anniversary, re-launched The AIESEC Way, surpassed our performance targets for the first time in years, and witnessed the Local Committee Presidents of AIESEC in the United States take charge of their organization's destiny.



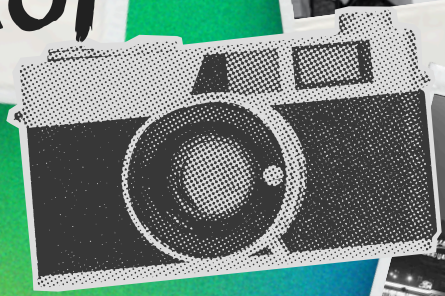
The Lasting Impact of AIESEC

AIESEC profoundly changed my life. It helped me discover my identity and capabilities, and more importantly, the value of leadership in unlocking the potential of teams, organizations, and communities. Today, I apply these lessons in my corporate and entrepreneurial ventures, focusing on reducing food waste and enhancing global supply chains. However, the joy and fulfillment I derive from the friendships and family born from my AIESEC network are my most cherished treasures.

“They felt that through such international student exchange, they [could create] cultural understanding [and] harmony in the world. While this thought is quite common today, AIESEC was a pioneer student organization in the world after the Second World War.”

KAJ VERNER SLOT

AIESEC in Denmark - 1951



FOSTERING GLOBAL HARMONY:
AIESEC's Founding Vision

Kaj Verner was one of the founding members of AIESEC and the second Presiding Country Committee President (PCCP) in Demark in 1951; without his efforts, AIESEC would not be the success it is today.

Kaj recalled that after World War II, it was difficult for people to cross the country in Europe. He and the other seven founding members saw a large demand from university students who would like to travel in the summer. I

t was his initial thought that prompted Kaj and his friends to start an initiative to exchange students between countries. They felt that through such international student exchange, they could make international friends and gain cultural understanding to create harmony in the world. While this thought is quite common today, AIESEC was a pioneer student organization in the world after the Second World War.

Today, AIESEC has a rich history spanning 75 years, from seven founding countries in Europe to more than one hundred countries and territories globally. At the 60th Anniversary, Kaj said he was surprised about the huge growth AIESEC has experienced over the years, and he never imagined that it would reach today's heights, but he is very proud of it.

For the near and distant future, Kaj envisioned even more young people joining AIESEC all over the world and exploring AIESEC as a training ground for young leaders to create a positive impact on society.

MANISH ARORA

AIESEC in Denmark - 1999

> AIESEC shaped me into a global citizen, fostering empathy and understanding across cultures.
>
> Manish Arora

A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY:

From AIESEC Jaipur to Aalborg, Denmark

I was part of AIESEC Jaipur's (India) Local Committee (LC) during the late 90's and served on the Executive Board. I was fortunate to get an offer to work and live in Aalborg, Denmark as part of the AIESEC exchange program. I took the first international flight of my life and arrived in Denmark in the fall of 1999. I was warmly greeted by the Copenhagen LC members, who had arranged for me to be shown around the city to ensure I got to know the local culture and some basics of being Danish. I then drove to the city of Aalborg, where a place was already rented for me and made ready by the local AIESEC team members. It felt so welcoming to be with the AIESEC community members, who were so kind and nice to ensure my first international experience was the perfect one.

The local committee members made me feel at home by taking me grocery shopping and teaching me the basics of the Danish language. It helped to have a local who could help me understand the nuances of daily life in a small city where very few people spoke English.

I started my internship with a company called Dator A/S, which was a technology startup that builds software for airport baggage handling systems. I loved working at the company as the team members were so nice and welcoming, and I got to work on very interesting projects. I ended up building the user interface for the baggage check-in system for a European airport, which was up and coming at that time. The integration with the working culture was seamless, except for some challenges with the language, as all technical and business documentation was in Danish and all meetings were in Danish as well, except where there was a need for the team to switch to English.

I started attending Danish language classes at a local language school in the evenings after work, as I wanted the full and authentic experience of living in the country; hence, it was important to be able to converse in the local language. I had so many enriching conversations with my AIESEC LC members where we could exchange ideas and experiences, as India and Denmark are vastly different countries. A question I often got asked was, why don't Indians eat cows, and if we don't eat cows, what do we do with them? It was funny to hear this coming from a culture where cows are part of our daily lives, as milk is a staple food and a source of many Indian dishes.

I am so grateful to AIESEC that it provided me with an opportunity to become a local chapter member, learn to do "corporate calls, "become confident to talk to professionals and raise funds, and the ultimate opportunity to work and live in a totally different country where I had to learn every basic thing from scratch. It made me a more sensitive human being and more empathetic to people who might be new to an environment and need help and support from someone local.

When I came back to India, my local LC members had already lined up a job for me in a software company in my city, which helped me re-integrate into the local environment very quickly.

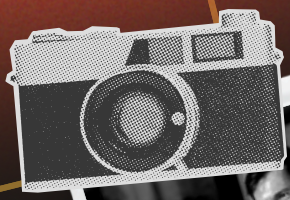
I credit AIESEC to a large extent for who I am today – a global citizen who has understood the importance of diversity and empathy at a very young age and has seen the true power of human connectivity, which only comes when people learn to let go of their preconceived notions and become open to embracing new ideas and new ways of doing things. I will forever be indebted to AIESEC for shaping me into who I am today.

“

Thank you to an organization whose existence has been an important catalyst for me to become the person I am now, with friends and understanding that encompass the globe.

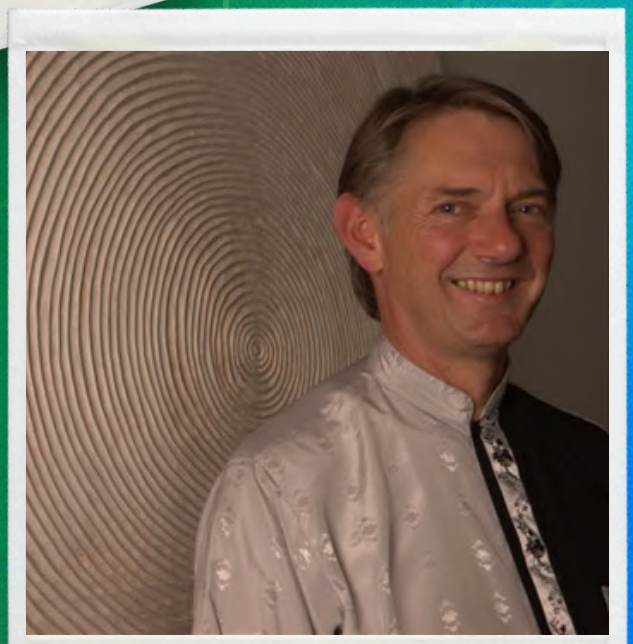
Michael Sutton

”



The People of AIESEC-International

AIESEC



MICHAEL SEWARD SUTTON

AIESEC in New Zealand - 1979

PIONEERING INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN THE 1980S:

AIESEC's Technology Evolution

One cannot go through the history of AIESEC's information systems without coming across Michael's name, thanks to his prominent role as the MATCH exchange system controller in the 1980s. AIESEC turned Michael from an accounting and business management student to a successful individual in the information technology industry.

Michael first joined AIESEC in 1979 in New Zealand. Due to the geographical challenges of New Zealand – being isolated from most parts of the world and with very different university calendars and weather cycles, which are opposite to other northern countries -- it was a challenge for students to attend International Congresses and get updated AIESEC information. That year, he saw the potential of the informational system used to run AIESEC's exchange program at that time – MATCH. He wanted to see it evolve into a near real-time database-driven system. Students could use university computers and link with each other via existing data networks to create a new generation of services that would enhance AIESEC's relevance and capabilities internationally.

The MATCH system successor, AIESEC's first computer matching program (STRES), was a technological breakthrough at that time, with Michael spearheading new visions and ideas. Michael was the system controller of the electronic MATCH system during the International Congress in 1983 and 1984. Even today, he feels great appreciation for the support of all those AIESEC members of the 1980s who saw the necessity of creating the new system.

Combined with Michael's AIESEC traineeship experience at 3M Management Information Systems Group in Zurich, his business management background and his interest in information technology knowledge, he returned to New Zealand and established private development companies which have been engaged in a number of cutting-edge projects in information systems.

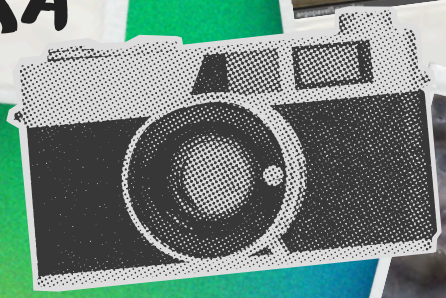
"Thank you to an organization whose existence has been an important catalyst for me to become the person I am now, with friends and understanding that encompass the globe." – Michael Sutton

“AIESEC broadened my perspective and gave me the courage to speak out, even in challenging times.”

Milos Motoska

MILOS MOTOSKA

AIESEC in Czechoslovakia - 1966



FROM ACTIVISM TO INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT:
An AIESEC Journey

Between 1962 and 1968, I was a student at the Prague School of Economics. At this time, no universities from any communist country were present in AIESEC. After 15 years of a centralized and Russian-guided economy in Czechoslovakia, it became evident that my country was behind the leading economies of Western countries where it used to belong before World War II. The state of my country and its economy resulted in more and more open criticism. I also got involved in raising my voice as a member of the student body at my university, in student media, by writing letters to our political leaders and by offering private lectures. Speaking out at this time was not safe, and not much came from it.

I learned a little about AIESEC in 1964 from students from Yugoslavia. They explained that joining AIESEC might help to broaden our perspectives since we would be able to travel outside of the communist world. After this, I was in the first group of Czech students allowed to visit AIESECers at the University in Köln am Rhein in Germany in February 1965. Here, I got to meet with the German National AIESEC team. They told me all I needed to know about AIESEC, and that resulted in an invitation to the AIESEC Congress in 1966, where two Czechoslovak economic faculties (Prague and Bratislava) joined AIESEC as the 42nd member country. After returning from the Congress, I was elected in 1966 as the first National President of AIESEC in Czechoslovakia. Since then, I was honoured to become part of the AIESEC Hall of Fame in 2007.

After the downfall of communism and the return of a market economy in Czechoslovakia in 1989, I left a comfortable and well-paid government job and established one of the first Public Relations Agencies in Czechoslovakia and joined an International PR Association. All my life, work and most of my contacts were and still are AIESEC and AIESEC- ers worldwide. AIESEC broadened my perspective and gave me the courage to speak out, even in challenging times. Thank you to AIESEC for giving me the opportunities that have guided me in life.

MOHAMED AKSOY

AIESEC in Türkiye - 2019

> It was an experience where I found myself at the forefront of life-changing moments, moments I didn't fully appreciate until they had passed. This is what makes AIESEC truly special for me.
>
> Mohamed Aksoy

A VOLUNTEER TO A LEADER:
My AIESEC Journey in Türkiye

I initially joined AIESEC with the primary goal of going abroad for a volunteer project. However, my amazing experience pushed me to join AIESEC as a member. As I began my membership journey, something extraordinary happened that made me want to become a more significant part of the impact we can create in AIESEC in Türkiye. It was an experience where I found myself at the forefront of life-changing moments, moments I didn't fully appreciate until they had passed. This is what makes AIESEC truly special for me.

My journey began before the pandemic in an expansion Local Commitee (LC), Eastern Mediterranean in Cyprus. It was an incredible introduction to AIESEC, where we had over 200 exchanges, and our projects were centred around saving sea turtles. Imagine over 200 exchange participants from more than 35 countries worldwide coming together on one island to save sea turtles during that time, united by a shared vision. This was the first time I witnessed the profound ripple effect that AIESEC can create.

As I continued, I moved to LC Ankara, where I faced the challenge of a different language and the discomfort of being in a foreign country where I didn't know the language. Despite this, the people in LC Ankara helped me grow and made me realize that within AIESEC, there's a home for everyone in the world. AIESEC embraces individuals regardless of their background or beliefs.

My journey within AIESEC took me to new heights as I advanced through leadership roles, ultimately becoming the VP of Incoming Global Volunteer in Ankara. This role was one of the most rewarding experiences, with responsibilities for over 50 exchanges. The impact extended beyond these 50 individuals, reaching over 100 students, members, and society through the work related to Global Volunteering and the Sustainable Development Goals.

It was during this time that I gained a profound understanding of the values of Global Volunteers and the immense responsibility that comes with it. It was at this point that I made the decision to apply for the National Team in Türkiye to continue shaping the Turkish Experience, the Global Volunteer Experience, and the overall impact we can create. This journey with AIESEC has been a remarkable one, full of personal growth, global connections, and a deep sense of purpose.

“

I firmly believe that none of these achievements would have been possible without my AIESEC experience, network and skills developed in the organization.

Olena Lobova

”

OLENA LOBOVA

AIESEC in Ukraine - 2011

FROM AIESEC TO CEO:
Olena's Journey of Transformation

When I joined AIESEC, I was studying Computer Science at the university in my hometown, a field I was somewhat pushed into because it seemed fitting for "a smart girl who is good at math." While I didn't entirely dislike my studies, I wasn't convinced that programming was something I wanted to do for the rest of my life, and I had no idea what I really wanted to do. AIESEC didn't just help me try other fields and find what I liked to do and what I was good at; it also helped me find my first job and define my future career.

As the VP of External Relations in my Local Committee, I met a young entrepreneur who was building a game development company (iLogos) in my town. They sponsored one of our projects (Career Forum), and our collaboration led the CEO to offer me the opportunity to join his company and help him grow and develop it further. This is how I became COO at the age of 21!

With my programming background, I knew nothing about management except for what I'd learned in AIESEC. Yet, I managed to build a 300-person company that was one of the leading companies in the Ukrainian gaming industry, and in four years, I became a CEO.

The fundamental values I developed in AIESEC — networking, learning, and social impact — became foundational principles at GDBAY, the company I co-founded five years ago. GDBAY is currently redefining the way professionals in the gaming industry all around the world build business connections, pitch projects to investors, and get their games funded.

Driven by the desire to create a positive impact in my community, I also became an advocate for the Ukrainian gaming industry, co-organized our country's first-ever booth at a major international show and hosted several charity events to support Ukraine during challenging times.

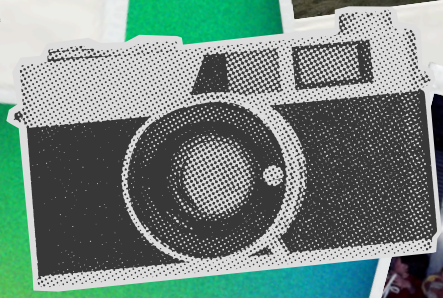
I firmly believe that none of these achievements would have been possible without my AIESEC experience, network and skills developed in the organization.

“AIESEC helped me see the world, introduced me to incredible life-long friendships, exposed me to different cultures and broadened my perspective on the global society.”

Ray Kemper

RAY KEMPER

AIESEC in Chile - 1985



FROM TENNESSEE TO CHILE:

AIESEC's Impact on Ray's Global Journey

Growing up in a small town in Tennessee, I had very limited exposure to outside cultures. I joined AIESEC at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville when I saw a flyer on a cafeteria table promoting international business. I was studying Marketing with a minor in Spanish. In my time, there were many study-abroad opportunities which I couldn't afford. However, AIESEC offered a unique program where you could work, learn and get paid!

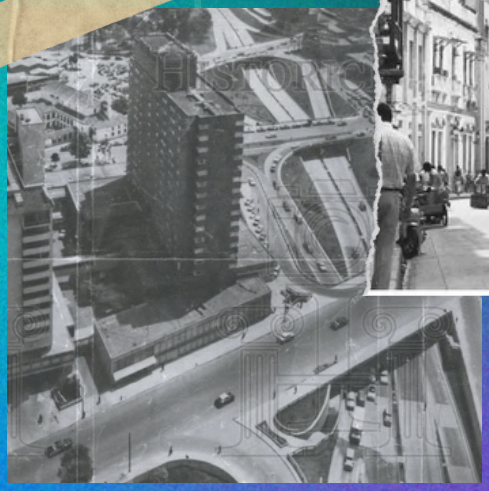
AIESEC-Tennessee was a group of business students who were operating the local chapter like a small business. For each internship we raised from local companies, one of our chapter students got to participate in the exchange process. There was no better motivation for working hard and having a great time doing it. The experiences of marketing to local companies, preparing business proposals, managing a local budget, recruiting, training and mentoring new members, and hosting and attending events around the U.S. transformed my college experience. Instead of just studying business skills, I was putting them to use every day in my AIESEC chapter. In AIESEC, I became the Local Committee President, a National Committee Rep for the South and finally, a National Vice President for the Southern Region for a one-year paid term. AIESEC prepared me for the real world by building my skills, business experiences and confidence.

My internship took place in Santiago, Chile, where I was a Marketing Researcher for a MasterCard affiliate. Chile had been under the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet for 18 years. The famous 'Si' or 'No' vote took place where a general election was held to determine if Pinochet would become a democratically elected official for the next 4 years or 'No' to hold an open election with other candidates. It was a turbulent historical time and a crash course on Latin American politics. I met many wonderful people during the traineeship. Flash forward 20 years, and my former internship boss at MasterCard actually entered politics, became a senator and later the President of Chile for two terms! (Sebastian Pinera)

AIESEC helped set my career on a global path, as all of my work experiences included strong global components. It helped me see the world, introduced me to incredible life-long friendships, exposed me to different cultures and broadened my perspective on the global society. Hei Skoal!

RICARDO OBREGON

AIESEC in Colombia - 1969



> AIESEC has the vision of the world becoming more united, and I put the AIESEC way into my everyday life.
>
> Ricardo Obregon

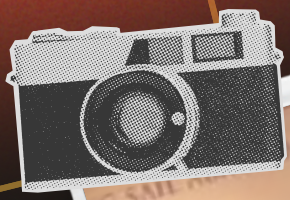
EXPANDING IMPACT FOR COLOMBIA:
The Growth of AIESEC in Colombia in the 70s

When Ricardo first joined AIESEC in 1969, AIESEC in Colombia still operated on a small scale with only one local chapter and a small group of members. From there, he became the Local Committee President. During his term, he realized that in order to grow his local chapter, it could not just focus on exchange, which was the major activity in AIESEC at that time.

Ricardo believed that the member base was a very important part of an organization. Therefore, he started the initiative of developing external events in Colombia. AIESEC in Colombia began offering different student services at universities, and this not only attracted student involvement but also created an avenue for a better understanding of AIESEC. Moreover, Colombian AIESEC members organized a theme project, the "World Energy Conference," which was very successful in the early 1970s. Under Ricardo's direction, there was a huge growth in AIESEC in Colombia, including expansion to five more local chapters. He later became National Committee President in 1972 and Advisory Council of AIESEC International a year later.

As AIESEC has a strong global image, Ricardo said, "AIESEC has the vision of the world becoming more united, and I put the AIESEC way into my everyday life." Since his time in AIESEC, Ricardo has been the CEO of Juan Valdéz Coffee, a growing coffee company in Colombia. He is currently the Chairman of the Board of Santander Bank. He feels that AIESEC is very much like a company; it has a good learning environment, and it is the best preparation for young people entering the real world.

“Taiwan was very isolated from the international arena. Thus, the AIESEC international traineeship program was an extremely new concept in Taiwan.”



RONG-I WU
AIESEC in Taiwan - 1962

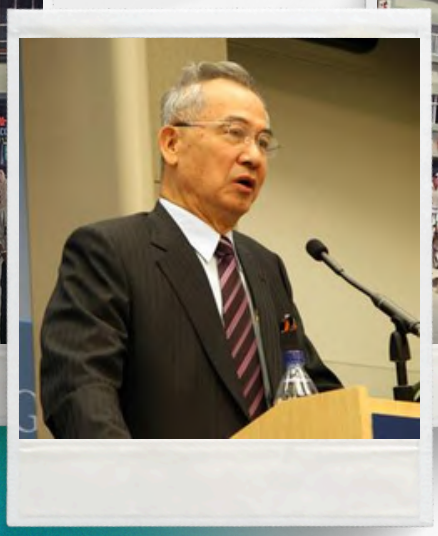
BRINGING GLOBALIZATION TO TAIWAN:

The Origin of AIESEC in Taiwan

In the 1960s, AIESEC International was doing large expansion globally. One of their focus regions was Asia Pacific. In 1962, German AIESEC envoy Bernd Thomas visited Taiwan to promote AIESEC. Rong-I was a first-year graduate student and received a request from his professor to set up AIESEC at his university. This was the beginning of AIESEC in Taiwan.

Taiwan was very isolated from the international arena. Thus, the AIESEC international traineeship program was an extremely new concept in Taiwan. Therefore, Rong-I spent a lot of time explaining AIESEC to the Government Ministry of Education, Business sectors and Professors. Moreover, he put a lot of effort into promoting the international traineeship programs to Taiwanese business companies and raised funding for financial needs. He finally secured a partnership with one of the biggest corporations in Taiwan that gave full financial support to the organization. AIESEC in Taiwan expanded quickly under Rong-I's direction, and he was able to open four local chapters within one year.

AIESEC influenced Rong-I to become globally minded; years after AIESEC, he set up the Taiwan Institute of Economic Research. He later went on to become the chairman of the Taiwan Stock Exchange and the vice prime minister for Taiwan in 2005. Rong-I Wu now serves as senior advisor to Tsai Ing-wen, the current President of Taiwan, and as Chairman of Taiwania Capital Management Corporation, the investment arm of Taiwan.

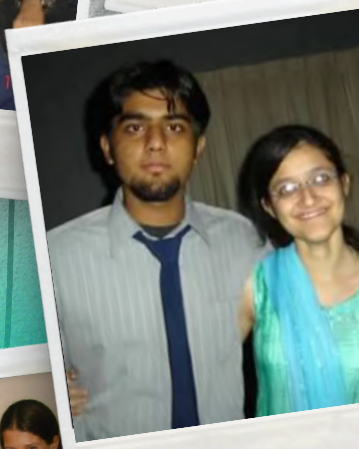


“Being a part of the team setting up AIESEC in Pakistan, I had the opportunity of a lifetime to interact with the youth of the country, which was my biggest motivation to visit.”

Sharmin Vohra

SHARMIN VOHRA

AIESEC in Pakistan - 2006



BREAKING BARRIERS:

A Journey from India to Pakistan with AIESEC

Being a part of AIESEC taught me to dream big and strive to turn it into reality. It made me strong and compatible with the external world.

After my graduation, when I announced that I wanted to go to Pakistan rather than taking up a white collared job I was being offered, it was a big storm in my family. My Indian parents were like, "Are you nuts? Aren't there any other countries that you want to go to than the most unsafe one on the planet? Have you lost your senses? Have you seen anyone going there alone at this age, and you being a female?" However, they had to give up, as I was pretty adamant. They understood where my heart lies. But considering the complex political and historical context of the relationship between India and Pakistan, not all Indian parents are brave enough to send their kids, especially daughters, to Pakistan.

I remember my heart was actually pounding with fear when I landed at Karachi airport for the first time. I became very conscious of myself as I was not wearing a burqa and, above all, was wearing a pair of jeans and a T-shirt. I found my friends having the same food, speaking the same language, even the slang, and watching the same Bollywood movies. In fact, I found myself to be just one of them. I served as the Member Committee Vice President for Incoming Exchange for both the corporate and the NGO sectors. In Pakistan, I got very warm welcomes from both the corporate companies as well as the non-government organizations as soon as I used to share with them about my nationality. I have met so many new people during my visits, and I was met with nothing but kindness, which helped tear down the stigma I was raised to have and also helped ease the minds of my parents.

Being a part of the team setting up AIESEC in Pakistan, I had the opportunity of a lifetime to interact with the youth of the country, which was my biggest motivation to visit. I have an invaluable treasure of stories to be cherished for my entire lifetime. Today, it has been almost 18 years since that most adventurous landmark of my life. During this time, I still hold the records of being the only Indian to have a 6-month Business Visa to Pakistan, the only Indian to cross into Pakistan on foot alone and an extremely proud peace youth ambassador. In these 18 years, AIESEC in Pakistan has matured being one of the strongest member countries in the entire AIESEC network. The seeds which we had planted with our blood, sweat and tears have grown up into fruit-bearing trees spreading peace around and living by the vision of AIESEC.

UGOCHUKWU MODUM

AIESEC in Nigeria - 2013

> As I reflect on these transformative years, I am not just an AIESEC alumnus; I am an attestation to the legacy of AIESEC's vivid leadership, shaping lives and inspiring generations.
>
> Ugochukwu Modum

ACTIVATING LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA:
A Seven-Year AIESEC Leadership Journey

Embarking on a seven-year journey with AIESEC was more than a commitment; it became a life-altering journey that shaped my worldview, professional trajectory, and sense of purpose. The defining moments were many, from being in charge of the leadership development of passionate young people in Lagos, Nigeria, to teaching underprivileged pupils in Sunyani, Ghana, to directing the National Entities in Ethiopia (operations) and Cabo Verde. Each experience became a chapter in a narrative of personal and communal transformation.

Teaching in Sunyani was a poignant start. The exchange programme involved not just imparting knowledge but also engaging with the community. Witnessing the positive impact on students and the community underscored the potential for education to catalyze change. This instilled a deep sense of purpose and gratitude, sparking the fire for more significant roles within AIESEC.

Leading a group of passionate leaders in Lagos and later directing the National Entities in Ethiopia (operations) and Cabo Verde provided a canvas for leadership and team management. It was here that I honed my skills in inspiring and guiding diverse teams. AIESEC's commitment to cross-cultural exchange enriched my communication skills, fostering a global perspective that extends beyond borders.

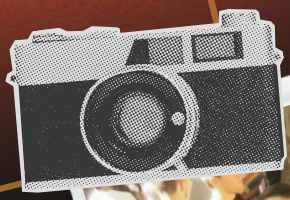
The skills cultivated through AIESEC have been transformative. Leadership and team management skills have translated seamlessly into my role as a Management Consultant. Cross-cultural communication proficiency is a cornerstone of my global interactions. Project management skills honed during impactful AIESEC projects now form the bedrock of my approach to consulting projects.

Adaptability, resilience and excellence, developed through navigating the dynamic AIESEC environments, are virtues that guide me through the complexities of my professional journey. My AIESEC story is one of gratitude, as diverse perspectives, cultural insights, and leadership experiences in challenging environments have defined who I am today. AIESEC's enduring impact has instilled in me a commitment to positive change, global collaboration, and a belief in the transformative power of leadership and community impact.

As I reflect on these transformative years, I am not just an AIESEC alumnus; I am an attestation to the legacy of AIESEC's vivid leadership, shaping lives and inspiring generations.

From my single local position as a starting point, today Eaton has hired and impacted over 80 trainees in the last seven years of partnership in different countries, with trainees working in different sides of the business.

Vilson Veloso



INTERCONNECTED LEADERSHIP JOURNIES:

AIESEC, Eaton, and Personal Growth

The story between AIESEC and Eaton and my personal/professional story are 100% interconnected. When I finished my AIESEC term back in 2016, I was managing AIESEC in Brazil as the National President. Back then, it was a dream for me to work in an international company that values AIESEC alumni. My objective was to move abroad for a few months to have international experience, and in my field as an Electrical Engineer it was not easy to find international opportunities.

I knew the Eaton brand because I had worked before in the industry in my hometown, where Eaton components were present. I saw an opportunity from a local chapter of AIESEC in Hungary for an Electrical Engineer who spoke German, English, and French in the new building Eaton had created in Budapest to start the Customer Experience Center. I decided to try to use my personal AIESEC network to bring my CV to Eaton's hiring manager, even though I didn't speak German or French. Luckily, my CV ended up in the hands of one the greatest Director Eaton ever had, and that person, despite my mismatched profile, was triggered by the beginning of my CV where I wrote, "I'm a value-driven person…". Such a sentence made her call me just to ask, what are your core values? This question triggered 2 hours call because this leader didn't know AIESEC, and the interview for a Professional Internship also became a pitch to talk about what the organization is and why I was applying. After the call, she asked me, "When can you move to Hungary?"

That was the start; I decided to take the job because the call was so inspiring that this leader convinced me that Eaton would be my next home. I completed my visa process and moved to Budapest in June 2016, one month after my presidency in AIESEC finished. After that, life happened. Eaton grew a lot, and my career followed along. I joined as an intern for a 6-month project to start a pilot Technical Support department in Hungary, centralizing processes all over Europe. After this time, I was hired as a Technical Support Engineer, then several promotions happened, and I ended up managing over 35 people in Hungary in departments such as Technical Support, Field Services, and Sales Support. I saw our small Budapest center from a few employees become a huge center with over 700 people in just a few years.

In parallel, I had great connections with AIESEC International, where the global Business Development team was from my team back in Brazil, and I made the proposal to make AIESEC and Eaton an international partnership. We signed the contract back in 2017, and a few new trainees arrived. From my single local position as a starting point, today Eaton has hired and impacted over 80 trainees in the last seven years of partnership in different countries, with trainees working in different sides of the business such as HR, Engineering, Marketing, Production, Supply Chain and Sales. These interns have also been a great supply of talent for the Graduate Leadership Program.

From my side, Eaton trusted my AIESEC alumni profile, promoted me in different areas, and financed my Executive MBA that I did at Corvinus University of Budapest, a place where the local chapter that opened the position I applied for was. In 2020, I was transferred to Vienna-Austria and held different positions. Today, I'm responsible for the Service Product Management department in the field of Energy Transition and Software services, with a revenue of over $40 million, leading a team with people in different countries and making sure Eaton has a key role in the Energy Transition in the planet, that allows EMEA customers to accelerate to a low-carbon energy future. On a personal level, AIESEC helped me find my wife, who is also an alumnus, and we have a young 10-month-old AIESEC baby. In my daily life, I use AIESEC learnings and values, and I'm truly grateful for everything that AIESEC and Eaton have done for me.

75 Years of Vivid Leadership

STORIES

COLLECTION

AIESEC IN AFGHANISTAN

Sayed Ahmad Fahim Masoumi - AIESEC in Afghanistan - 2015

I joined AIESEC in 2015 as part of AIESEC in Afghanistan. I found AIESEC to be an inspiring organization because it could allow me to impact the youth in my community and country. Introducing the concept of volunteering in Afghanistan through AIESEC, empowering Afghan youth to work with AIESEC, and taking part in global exchange programs gave me a sense of accomplishment.

As a result of my AIESEC journey, I have developed so much as both a leader and a person—I am far more open-minded, I am driven by vision and lead with passion, and I find ways to make a difference in the lives of those around me every day. Working with an organization that contributes to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals has made me more conscientious and passionate about a range of global issues, such as human rights, gender equality, climate action, and quality education.

This journey made me open-minded, driven by vision, leading by passion, and making a difference every day. My current focus is on human rights, gender equality, climate action, and quality education in Afghanistan.

AIESEC IN ALGERIA

Rania Sadi- AIESEC in Algeria - 2019

Five years ago, my incredible AIESEC journey kicked off when I joined the Global School 2018 hosted by AIESEC in Benak, Algeria. Little did I know that this experience would become the foundation for the next chapters of my life.

From the time I jumped on the AIESEC journey in 2018, every leadership role seemed to seamlessly flow into the next. Starting as a dedicated member, I climbed the ladder to team leader, then assumed the role of Vice President, which was one of the most remarkable journeys in my whole life, and eventually, it fueled my motivation to apply to be the President of my home Local Committee (LC). This last stint turned out to be the ultimate challenge, pushing me personally and professionally beyond all expectations and expanding my comfort zone in a drastic way.

What made the journey truly remarkable was the sense of family embedded in our LC. Our alumni, especially, were the backbone, ever-involved and motivated. They formed a robust support system, keeping the flame of belief in growth alive within me during the toughest times. Our Benak family, bound by a shared passion, bridged generations, creating enduring connections that are the heart and soul of our LC.

After my term as president, I deliberately allowed myself the space to reflect on myself and my past experience, learn, grow, and embrace new opportunities. This reflective period not only provided insights into myself but also deepened my understanding of the world around me. It was during this time that I took on the role of Marketing Director for AIESEC in Belgium.

In my current position, I've found an unparalleled connection to AIESEC, exceeding any previous involvement. This connection and commitment inspired me to take on yet another leadership role, one that I consider to be the most challenging and daring decision of my entire AIESEC journey: applying to be the President of AIESEC in Belgium.

As I am writing my story, I am still in the process and don't know what the future holds. Therefore, as I step into this new adventure, I'm confident that the future holds promising opportunities. AIESEC, true to its essence, continues to provide leadership experiences in the most practical and challenging ways possible. I stand as a living testament to the transformative power of these experiences, eagerly anticipating the journey ahead and excited to contribute to the ongoing legacy of leadership within AIESEC in Belgium.

Amir Ismail Otsmane - AIESEC in Algeria - 2020

In 2020, a day of celebration with my Executive Board turned into a night veiled by a sudden lockdown. Amidst this abrupt upheaval, there was no roadmap from the MC level. Yet, in those midnight hours, our team convened on Messenger, using filters to infuse levity into our discussions. Far from succumbing to panic, we joked and brainstormed strategies for the unforeseen journey ahead.

The dawn brought clarity—a department meeting convened to devise a new value proposition and reimagine our LC's trajectory. In a week that felt like a whirlwind, the spark of innovation birthed our first online project, "You vs. COVID." This initiative aimed to educate and equip individuals to navigate the challenges posed by the pandemic. Miraculously, it launched on April 1st, a testament to our team's agility and resolve.

The results were beyond our wildest expectations. "You vs Covid" resonated widely, drawing 4,000 sign-ups, hosting 16 impactful online events, and initiating eight significant projects. Before the lockdown, we managed to conduct four physically attended events—a testament to our adaptability in adverse circumstances.

The Marketing department witnessed an astounding 1100% growth, surpassing the previous year's benchmarks. This exponential growth necessitated restructuring, dividing the department to accommodate the burgeoning demand—a testament to our team's dedication and hard work.

Amidst the chaos, what shone brightest was the unwavering commitment of our middle managers and members. Their relentless pursuit of AIESEC's mission, working day and night even before the crisis, remained the cornerstone of our success.

This experience etched invaluable lessons in my journey—a testament to the power of resilience, adaptability, and collective strength. As I tread forward as President of AIESEC in Finland, this story remains an anchor, reminding me of the heights we can achieve when met with challenges head-on. The legacy we create is not just about weathering storms; it's about thriving amidst them, emerging stronger, and leaving an indelible mark on the tapestry of our organization's history.

AIESEC in Argentina

Fernando Kamachi - AIESEC in Argentina - 2010

My AIESEC experience started like anyone else's at my Local Committee. There, I met a diverse group of people with some common interests and a strong organization with a distinct culture.

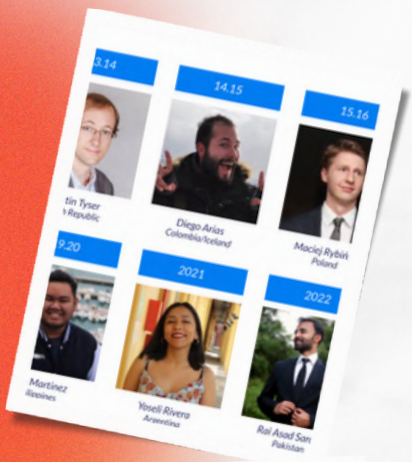
I still remember my 'learning weekend' at the onboarding event, where we did an activity of privileges (one step forward, one step backwards), one that I did again on a DEI initiative in my office this year. AIESEC was, for me, a crash course on leadership; we had the latest tools and trends in business at the time and goals to grow our impact in ways that drove us to innovate in a very agile way.

In my time at AIESEC, I was Local President and Member Committee President. We got back full membership and voting rights for the Member Committee, and that year, we split AIESEC's presence in the Southern Cone by stabilizing and strengthening the financial sustainability, leadership pipeline and presence of AIESEC in Chile, Argentina and Uruguay. This was hectic, probably the busiest year of my life. After this, I took those international experiences that I had worked so hard to facilitate and went to Brazil for a volunteering opportunity and then on to India and Hungary for professional internships.

My year in India was another forming year—very intense, very different, and a lot of learning! Then, I arrived in Hungary to work for Schneider Electric. To this day, some eight years later, I still work for Schneider Electric, an impact company where I find alignment with my core values and a clear purpose behind my work. I have been able to progress in my career through the skills and competencies I developed while in AIESEC.

While I was never hesitant about the value of my AIESEC experience back in the day, I now can confidently say how much it's influenced the type of work I do, where I do it and how I'm able to drive impact in my immediate and larger area of influence. I recently wrote to my manager: "I don't do a job. I make a difference." That is what I took from AIESEC into the leader I am today. If you are currently in AIESEC, don't underestimate the impact this organization can have on you, your friends and our communities around the world. That impact is needed; you are needed.

Yoseli Rivera - AIESEC in Argentina - 2021



I learned about AIESEC at university when the vice director suggested AIESEC for an exchange. After I had a volunteering experience, I was determined to join AIESEC and the Finance department, which was associated with my field of studies.

I initiated my AIESEC path in finance at the very beginning as part of the support team of my national entity, where I was the one tracking transactions of all Local Committees and making reports. This experience made me wonder what other opportunities were out there, and checking all finance folders and my own National VP of Finance reports, I found something that caught my attention: the Global Finance Board Report

The Global Finance Board was created in 2012, and since its creation, all the chairs have been males until 2021. Little did I know that five years later, I would be the Global Finance Board Chair for AIESEC, and not only that, but I would be the first female in that position! We often relate finance with males, but I had the opportunity to reach the unthinkable and empower more female leaders.

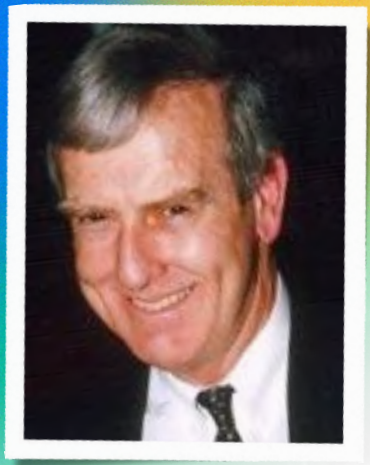
During my transition period on the board and across my term, my team and I were able to institutionalize what we now know as the EFB: entity finance board, where more members like me have more opportunities to develop in finance.

I have been in AIESEC for almost eight years, and I have been in finance also for almost eight years. AIESEC has given me the opportunity to be ready for new heights not only on the technical side but as a leader. This is the story of how I embraced the true meaning of being a #ProudFinancier

AIESEC IN AUSTRALIA

Frank Opray - AIESEC in Australia - 1971

In June 1971, after completing a B.Com at the University of Melbourne, I left Melbourne, Australia, with my wife to take up a traineeship with a prominent carpet manufacturer, Associated Weavers, in Bradford, UK. The role was on product and reseller market research throughout the north of the UK. The objective was to better understand the image Associated Weavers enjoyed with its reseller market and to use this information to improve customer relationships. Subsequently, a second role was undertaken to do the same exercise in London with retailers there. Thereafter, a permanent role at Associated Weavers was offered to me but this had to be declined as we had commitments to return to Melbourne.



This traineeship helped me acquire skills in servicing the company's information needs, which led to subsequent employment in the carpet manufacturing industry in Australia, a subsequent career in industrial market research, and eventually, the establishment of my own consultancy, Washington Services, which has consulted for some decades to international schools in Asia and Europe on establishing philanthropic programs.

Consultancies have also been conducted to assist international schools in establishing and enhancing their alumni relations programs and conducting feasibility studies for prospective new international schools throughout Asia.

Michael Gonzaga - AIESEC in Australia - 2022

Having grown up in a very conservative and homogenous background, I unconsciously acquired the belief that people who were different from me were to be avoided. I was always told to stay away from anyone with ideological or religious beliefs that differed from mine. However, AIESEC exposed me to an environment where people from all backgrounds and walks of life cooperated and worked together. Because of this, I became more aware of who I was and how my differences from other people could actually benefit our team dynamics. It also helped me gain a deeper understanding of what I cared about and changed my beliefs about what kind of people I wanted in my life.

My story in AIESEC in Australia is a story of the legacy we were able to create for our entity in my Member Committee President term.

In our entity, we realized our impact on local youth would be limited as long as we were only present in the more privileged universities in the country. AIESEC is for everyone because anyone can lead, and our physical presence within the nation should reflect that. We, therefore, changed the internal processes for expansions and encouraged four incredibly brave individuals to become Local Committee Presidents at newly established committees around Australia — some of which were at campuses that had literally never had AIESEC chapters before that point (Edith Cowan University, Australian Catholic University, Deakin University, and Murdoch University).

This also gave our members a chance to take up new challenges they wouldn't normally face in an established committee, as the operations within an expansion are very different given the new markets and environments they need to explore and acclimate to. This was a calculated risk since we were aware that new expansions don't always work out, and unfortunately, some of these expansions did end up falling through. However, some are still making amazing contributions to the Australian plenary and have the potential to continue growing and thriving.

Having the opportunity to inspire leadership in others and help them realize their potential through AIESEC made me feel grateful and powerful to be part of such a profound change. In AIESEC in Australia, we believe that we need to #GoBeyond and challenge our limits. Ultimately, the legacy we should create is one of inclusivity and acting for a better tomorrow.

Neil Edward - AIESEC in Australia - 2023

My initial journey with AIESEC began when I was 17, in the transition between high school and university. When I heard of AIESEC, I saw this question that asked what impact I was going to create. As a first-year university student who was rather naive, I was confused when posed this question because I was not sure how I, as a 17-year-old, could make an impact. Regardless, I jumped into the unknown world of AIESEC.

This would mean joining meetings at night, meeting students from other parts of the world, and making friends with people whom I never really thought I would have the chance to interact with due to the vast differences we had. It would mean I would experience the lows of AIESEC with having my first Local Committee disbanded, being put in a different environment, and having to be in four functions in four semesters. It would also mean that I would experience the highs that AIESEC has to offer, like being recognized for my achievements and seeing my own personal and professional skills develop over the years. After my two-year-long journey, I am now the Local Committee President (LCP) for AIESEC in MONASH.

As my National President once said, many people join AIESEC initially for selfish reasons. As time goes on, they start to realize that the organization's cause is bigger than just themselves, and that initial selfish reasoning to join the organization becomes selfless. This was definitely the case for me. Now, as an LCP, I am ready to shape the local experience in my area and create an impact on the lives of other young people to help develop them into future leaders of AIESEC and the world.

AIESEC IN AUSTRIA

Elina Ivanova - AIESEC in Austria - 2023

1059 days. 1059 days being part of the world's largest youth-led organization. 1059 days striving for peace and the fulfilment of humankind's potential. After almost three years of impacting and being impacted by young leaders, I have a lot of stories to tell. However, one chapter stands out—the International Congress in India 2023.

From the outset, public speaking wasn't always my forte. I remember joining my first Local Committee Meetings: my shaking hands held sweaty notes as I rushed through presentations, avoiding eye contact with my audience. As someone sincerely drawn to meaningful conversations and public speaking, I recognized the need to refine my skills. I reached the peak when I decided to apply for the panellist role at Youth Speak Forum 2023 in India. I remember writing the application and afterwards preparing for the interview, hardly believing I would be selected to speak in front of 300 young leaders from around the world on the topic of SGD17. I was overwhelmed with joy when I got the email saying I had been selected for the role.

The forum came sooner than expected, and I can still remember how nervous I was backstage. I also felt proud of myself, understanding the impact I was going to have on others. The rest of the forum felt like a fairy tale for me—the moment I was on stage, words coming out of my mouth—so smoothly and so natural. Nevertheless, people actually listened to me and appreciated me for who I was and what I had to say.

Being a panellist at the forum reinforced a fundamental truth - I realized that AIESEC is a platform, and we get to choose what to do with it. This experience not only showed me the transformative potential of AIESEC but also highlighted the responsibility we have as young leaders to take action. As I prepare to say goodbye to AIESEC after three years of activating leadership, this story should be a tribute to the platform that empowered my voice and, in doing so, made me an advocate for a positive change.

AIESEC IN AZERBAIJAN

Zahid Mammadli - AIESEC in Azerbaijan - 2020

When I first stepped into AIESEC, it was merely an afterthought—a box to check in my list of extracurriculars. No ambition beyond that. However, through Incoming Global Volunteer, I delved into countless experiences with many exchange participants (EPs). Our tracking system was primitive, at best, back then. Yet, amidst this chaos, I started to realize something.

Each encounter with these EPs revealed a bigger purpose. Witnessing the joy in their eyes and looking at their transformative journeys, I felt something within me. A longing to contribute more to AIESEC inspired me to join the Executive Board (EB) of my Local Committee (LC). The timing, however, couldn't have been worse.

Our country was engulfed in a war during the very period of EB elections. My family was stranded on one end, inaccessible, while I found myself submerged in responsibilities beyond measure. I was heavily burdened at this time, but it fueled my desire to continue impacting communities and young people in my country since that was what was needed. Amid the chaos and turmoil, we persisted. I applied for the Local Committee Vice President of Incoming Global Volunteer and got the role. Leading the LC amidst a national crisis and a global pandemic seemed impossible, but somehow, we persevered.

Through the haze of war, the turmoil of a pandemic, and the clash of conflicts, this journey made me into someone beyond my wildest aspirations. Fueled by this, I aimed for a higher position—National Head of Incoming Exchange. After a long term full of massive challenges later, the realization dawned: there's more yet to offer, more to impact.

So, I dared to dream bigger, reaching for national team experiences abroad. Presently, as the National VP of Outgoing Exchange of AIESEC in Switzerland, I stand here proving the narrative that sometimes, even the smallest step can give birth to the most monumental impacts.

AIESEC IN BAHRAIN

Ritaj Mohamed - AIESEC in Bahrain - 2023

AIESEC has had a profound impact on my life, surpassing all my expectations. If I had told my 17-year-old self about all the things I've accomplished through AIESEC, she would have been in disbelief. Looking back, every experience I've had with AIESEC has left a huge mark on me and presented me with opportunities I never thought possible.

Currently, I am the Local Committee Vice President of Member Experience.

My first semester was a daunting experience, as I had to juggle my job, my diploma degree, and my family responsibilities. It was a challenging period of time, and I felt like everything was about to crumble. But I persevered because AIESEC teaches us resilience, organization, and multitasking. Thanks to the flexibility of my role, everything started to work out, and as the second semester came, everything became a bit easier. I had managed to finish my job contract and started making proper schedules to balance out work and life. I had friends who were my teammates and always had my back. I wouldn't have been able to make it this far without them.

While I do wish that my first term was a bit easier, I'm grateful for everything that has happened thus far. My experiences have motivated me to impact others and help them in any way I can. AIESEC is not just a place for developing yourself; it is also a place where you can develop others, and when you're able to do this as a team, it creates a family that you would never have dreamt of.

AIESEC IN BELGIUM

Kathy Zielinski-Campbell, Cynthia Carriere-Hammersley, Tuomo Rintamäki, Per Otto Hyland - AIESEC in Belgium - 1979

This submission is from the four members of the 1979/80 International AIESEC Secretariat, then located in Brussels, Belgium.

Where was AIESEC then? AIESEC had just celebrated its 30th Anniversary at the Grand Hotel in Saltsjöbaden, Sweden, where AIESEC was founded in 1948. The exchange program code was rewritten from students searching the pool of internships to internships searching for the best-qualified student from the AIESEC student pool. Projects, for the first time, engaged more AIESECers than the traditional exchange programme. With surplus funds, AIESEC acquired its first IBM word processor on its way to digitalization.

What impact has AIESEC had on us as individuals? Running an international secretariat serving students, companies, and institutions in 58 countries provided invaluable management lessons, most of which were not available anywhere else. It also gave us personal connections and a global perspective on how young people around the world have similar ambitions and dreams. We have all worked professionally and lived in many countries. Without our AIESEC experiences, some of these opportunities probably would not have been offered to us, nor would we probably have had the courage to accept. Over the last 45 years, we have kept in personal contact, met up for a 25th-year reunion in Brussels, hiked the Grand Canyon in 2008, and much more. We now Zoom quarterly.

Our message to those thinking about joining and becoming active in AIESEC - 'Just Do It' .... It will change your global perspective, personal connections, job opportunities and life!

Kathy Zielinski-Campbell, LC Edmonton, Canada
Cynthia Carriere-Hammersley, LC Boulder, USA
Tuomo Rintamäki, LC Tampere, Finland
Per Otto Hyland, LC Stockholm, Sweden

Thierry Doyen - AIESEC in Belgium - 1982

AAt the first National Conference, after I joined my Local Committee (LC) in Belgium, the national team staff pulled me out of the group and asked me to become the National Committee Public Relations VP because their candidate had to resign for family reasons. I knew nothing yet about AIESEC, but they said they saw my style in action and I'd be perfect, they'd train me, and I'd go to International Congress (in Birmingham, UK, in 1982). I said YES, and my life was forever changed.

I attended 13 international meetings in my 4 years at AIESEC in Belgium. I had a big voice and quickly became the song leader/entertainer in AIESEC everywhere I was! My best memory was, in 1983, getting up on stage at the Gala Banquet for the 35th anniversary of AIESEC at the Grand Hotel in Stockholm (where AIESEC had been founded in 1948) and having all the attending Fortune 100 executives and their spouses, in their tuxedos and beautiful gowns, following and repeating after me our famous "Singing in the Rain" dance song. I was 22 at that time, and having these millionaires and billionaires, impeccably dressed, "knees together, bum back, head up, tongue out," and dancing the song to my direction, THAT WAS SO COOL!

If you don't know the song, here's a clip of me leading it 40 years later at the 75th Anniversary celebration of AIESEC in Atlanta, USA: aies.ec/thierrydoyen. Get up and join along!

After my time at the national office, I went back to my Local Committee to apply what I had learned. This allowed the LC to grow exponentially! In 1984, we organized an STP (Seminar Traineeship Program). This program generated tons of responsibilities for members to sign up for and own a key chunk of the grand project; it allowed us to raise 30 or so internships in businesses related to the STP topic banks, export, retail, F&B, credit insurance, transport, trade organizations, etc.). We organized seminars with great speakers, open to the public, and company visits, and that helped raise the awareness and recognition of the value of AIESEC. We had TV, radio, and newspapers covering it that year. It really helped establish our LC even more and made us desirable for new members and business partners alike.

As a result of all my extracurricular activities through AIESEC and my being so out there in the business world promoting our program, I had ten incredible job offers from some of the most desirable companies in Belgium months before graduating. Instead of settling in Belgium, I went on a 1-year AIESEC internship at IBM in New York, followed by a 1.5-year AIESEC internship at Apple in Cupertino. Note: I also did a summer internship in 1983 at Leo Burnett (one of the biggest advertising agencies at the time) at their European HQ in London (UK). After my internship at Apple, I was hired permanently there and had my career in high tech in Silicon Valley. Thank you, AIESEC!

While interning at Apple, I recruited 14 students from AIESEC San Jose (our local host chapter) to send them, in pairs with a technical and a marketing person, to run the program we developed at HQ, in our key subsidiaries Canada, UK, Germany, Italy, France, Japan and Australia. The magic of our AIESEC connectedness made the program that much more successful.

I did not marry an AIESECer, but our son founded AIESEC Davis. He has since hired a bunch of AIESEC interns at the startup he joined in Montreal, Canada, called TickSmith (later renamed Revelate).

In closing, yes, I think the AIESEC blood truly flows in my veins and will forever! Once an AIESECer, always an AIESECer! It was awesome to attend the 75th Anniversary of AIESEC in Atlanta in October, reconnect with some old friends, and make many new ones. Sadly, I was not able to attend the Rotterdam event, which I had also signed up for. See you all at AIESEC's Centennial Celebrations! Yes, I know, I'll be 87 or 88 by then, but I'm planning to be there!

HEJ SKÅL !!!

AIESEC in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Lamija Lešo - AIESEC in Bosnia and Herzegovina - 2020

In the challenging year of 2022, I embarked on a remarkable journey to take over AIESEC in Bosnia and Herzegovina - Local Committee (LC) Sarajevo as LC President (LCP), an LC with a mere seven members. The odds seemed stacked against us, but with determination, we set out to revitalize the local committee.

Our core team consisted of four dedicated individuals who formed the Executive Board, each bringing unique skills to the table. To kickstart our revitalization efforts at LC Sarajevo in 2022, we recognized the importance of fostering a strong and vibrant organizational culture. We decided to begin by bringing our local committee members together through a series of coffee dates. These informal gatherings proved to be the perfect platform for bonding, sharing ideas, and building a sense of community.

As we sat in coffee shops, parks, and cozy corners of the city, the magic unfolded. Countless coffee dates with the entire local committee in attendance provided an opportunity for us to connect on a personal level. It was during these moments that friendships were forged, love for AIESEC blossomed, and an unbridled passion for our mission ignited. In the beginning, we welcomed around 40 new members into our LC Sarajevo family.

These young enthusiasts were inspired by our mission and vision, which fueled their desire to contribute. Remarkably, within just two months of joining the organization, four of these new members applied for positions on the National Committee. One of them secured the role, which is a testament to their dedication and potential, and others got their opportunities in EB.

Our story is one of tireless work, where individuals went above and beyond their job descriptions, driven by an unwavering belief in our mission to bring back colour and life into LC Sarajevo after a period of turmoil. It was a journey of resilience, teamwork, and unwavering commitment, showcasing the power of collective effort and shared vision.

Velida Arnautović - AIESEC in Bosnia and Herzegovina - 2022

Life surely takes us down different paths, including unexpected ones. Thinking back to my sugar cubes (encouraging messages left from friends, typically after a conference) back in 2022, every single one of those had a message of wishing to see me in the role of the President of Local Committee Sarajevo. Surprisingly enough, I couldn't resist, and here I am one year later, slowly approaching the end of my term.

During my term, I was led by my drive to help behind the scenes for everyone who dares to lead, be the one who steps up when there is a need, & provide support for my people when they decide to try. Ultimately, these three things became my AIESEC Why.

What I value most is the connection I have created with my members and the skills I have gained. It assured me that I love working with people, especially young people, and I want to continue in that direction. I managed to be not just their leader but a friend - which makes me happy. Truly knowing someone is a responsibility, and having someone open up to you is a blessing. My vision was to create a safe community for my people where they could be engaged and innovative. Wacky as I am, I even started something called "Cat Tuesday" to boost morale and create fun memories. The moral of the story is - little things matter. They were needed to empower our members to work and achieve something. The work is important, but the bond is what keeps the team going.

One of the most special and memorable moments happened at our last National Conference. I could not make the opening plenary of the conference in time. Like many other conferences, the opening plenary is where Local Committees dance their roll call to signify their presence. My Local Committee had to do it without me, and unfortunately, while they did know some of the moves, it was not their best performance. We did the roll calls again in the evening plenary, this time with me leading it since I knew all the dance moves. I thought it was funny; we danced and laughed, and I was ready to step off the stage, not noticing a thing. But once the dance was over, my team approached me with tears in their eyes. I realized that those were the tears of happiness, seeing their leader in front of them, showing them what to do, and leading the way. They said that I was the string holding them all together. Since then, this moment has been engraved deeply into my memory. Never have I ever in my entire life thought I would leave such a significant impact on someone.

After this term as Local Committee President, I was sure it was the end for me, and I was ready to let it all go...until the Europe Regional President's Meeting happened. I am not sure if I am ready to leave just yet. There's still a lot to tell, many things to do, and quite a few people to shape into leaders, but for now, my Local Committee Sarajevo is ready for the next chapter. A message to all those who come after me would be - don't overthink. Follow your instinct - our gut never lies. And enjoy - the ups, the downs, the best, the worst - buckle up and take all of it. Your journey will always be an up-and-down rollercoaster, and that, my dear, is the beauty of this ride.

Tajra Osmanagić - AIESEC in Bosnia and Herzegovina - 2022

Life surely takes us down different paths, including unexpected ones. Thinking back to my sugar cubes (encouraging messages left from friends, typically after a conference) back in 2022, every single one of those had a message of wishing to see me in the role of the President of Local Committee Sarajevo. Surprisingly enough, I couldn't resist, and here I am one year later, slowly approaching the end of my term.

During my term, I was led by my drive to help behind the scenes for everyone who dares to lead, be the one who steps up when there is a need, & provide support for my people when they decide to try. Ultimately, these three things became my AIESEC Why.

What I value the most out of it is the connection I have created with my members and the skills I have gained. It assured me that I love working with people, especially young people, and I want to continue in that direction. I managed to be not just their leader but a friend - which makes me happy. Truly knowing someone is a responsibility, and having someone open up to you is a blessing. My vision was to create a safe community for my people where they could be engaged and innovative. Wacky as I am, I even started something called "Cat Tuesday" to boost morale and create fun memories. The moral of the story is - little things matter. They were needed to empower our members to work and achieve something. The work is important, but the bond is what keeps the team going.

One of the most special and memorable moments happened at our last National Conference. I could not make the opening plenary of the conference in time. Like many other conferences, the opening plenary is where Local Committees dance their roll call to signify their presence. My Local Committee had to do it without me, and unfortunately, while they did know some of the moves, it was not their best performance. We did the roll calls again in the evening plenary, this time with me leading it since I knew all the dance moves. I thought it was funny; we danced and laughed, and I was ready to step off the stage, not noticing a thing. But once the dance was over, my team approached me with tears in their eyes. I realized that those were the tears of happiness, being able to see their leader in front of them, showing them what to do, and leading the way. They said that I was the string holding them all together. Since then, this moment has been engraved deeply into my memory. Never have I ever in my entire life thought I would leave such a big impact on someone.

After this term as Local Committee President, I was sure it was the end for me, and I was ready to let it all go...until the Europe Regional President's Meeting happened. I am not sure if I am ready to leave just yet. There's still a lot to tell, many things to do, and quite a few people to shape into leaders, but for now, my Local Committee Sarajevo is ready for the next chapter.

A message to all those who come after me would be - don't overthink. Follow your instinct - our gut never lies. And enjoy - the ups, the downs, the best, the worst - buckle up and take all of it. Your journey will always be an up-and-down rollercoaster, and that, my dear, is the beauty of this ride.

AIESEC IN BRAZIL

Madeleine Blankenstein - AIESEC in Brazil - 1980

The 1980s were a communication-developing decade; letters were still the preferred international communication medium, although landline telephones were starting to be commonly used. Madeleine, who spent most of her time in the exchange portfolio at AIESEC in Brazil, faced challenges within AIESEC in adapting to the changing reality of global communication herself.

One of the most practical problems at the time was the awareness of different opportunities and what was available to be filled. Another problem was the cost of long-distance phone calls, as many Local and National Committees could not afford the money to make calls.

With the challenge of slow communication, AIESEC could only arrange exchange traineeships once a year during the International Congress (IC). Madeleine mentioned that a lot of people wanted to apply to go on an exchange in Brazil, but only those who worked hard in AIESEC were allowed to do so. To create more opportunities for youth to be connected to available traineeships, in 1980, Madeleine organized the International Exchange Controller Meeting (ECM) in Brazil as the National Commitee Exchange Consultant. Leading up to this conference, she attended various meetings in Brussels and helped AIESEC International prepare the exchange program (punching computer cards) for the 1982 International Congress in Coventry, United Kingdom. Because of the effort she put into AIESEC in Brazil and managing the exchange program, she received two traineeships in the 80s, which was a very special case in Brazil.

During these two internships, one in Esbjerg, Denmark, and the other in Duisburg, Germany, Madeleine became involved in the activities of the Local Chapter, which enriched her AIESEC experience. She also took part in the AIESEC Alumni Congress in Venice in 1987.

Madeleine learned global communications and leadership skills from AIESEC. She went on to become a partner at Grant Thornton Brazil and at HLB Brazil. She also contributed to the launch and development of the AIESEC Alumni Association of AIESEC in Brazil.

Barbara Teles - AIESEC in Brazil - 2008

I started my AIESEC experience at a local level as a Local Committee Vice President. After one year, I became the National VP (MCVP) of Marketing of AIESEC in Brazil, one year before we hosted International Congress (IC).

We faced many issues in hosting the Congress in Brazil as we were in the middle of the 2008 financial crisis: the Organizing Committee and AESEC International (AI) were facing challenges in raising money. While I was MCVP, AI asked me to help the Conference Team since I had a large business network in Brazil. For three months, I played both roles: MCVP and the VP of External Relations for the conference. It was an intense and life-changing experience as the alumni group in Brazil started saying we would fail and bankrupt AIESEC in Brazil.

However, we proved them wrong. IC 2008 was very successful, and we were able to impact over 1000 people while also generating a profit amidst the financial crisis. Ultimately, our success was able to pave the way for a successful Alumni Congress and Incoming Presidents' Meeting.

Yan Nascimento - AIESEC in Brazil - 2016

To start my story candidly, I did not join AIESEC for the right reasons, but as I joined the organization, I evolved into who I am today. The fact is, to be asked about my long-term goals, my leadership references, and the impact I wanted to create in the world made me reconsider the 'party hard life' I used to have to know how to answer those questions and become a better version of myself.

I will never forget the e-mail I received on July 16th, 2016, saying I got selected to be part of AIESEC - I didn't know this would change my life completely. Coming from a less privileged reality in northeast Brazil, I was used to dreaming big but aware of how impossible it was; yet, my parents always kept pushing me to follow these dreams regardless of how many barriers life would put, such as learning English and being accepted to a university. However, the doors AIESEC opened to me are indescribable.

I've found a place where I was able to discover myself and accept my sexuality by having a diverse and safe environment around me. I got in touch with so many different cultures, I got to live challenges that made me build my personal and professional skills, and I got the opportunity to take a step further and live the impact we create while living in five countries and counting.

From a member who was too shy to make phone calls or present myself to someone, AIESEC gave me the strength to develop myself and my leadership during these intense seven years as part of the organization. Getting the incentive to jump from a four-month-old member to assume the responsibility and role of a Vice President was empowering and allowed me to trust in my leadership abilities. It was one of the most exciting experiences of my life, filled with accomplishments, realizations about myself, friends made along the way, and knowing that you are doing something good for the world. All of these experiences made me want to continue - and I did. Working at the Local level taught me so much. It taught me how to rebuild myself after failures, apply for new opportunities, face risks, and step out of my comfort zone to gain experiences that can change me for the better.

After my Local Committee experience, I decided to try something new and went to Germany and Türkiye to work for the national AIESEC team. At the end of my experience in AIESEC, I think the legacy I created changed things for the better in Türkiye. After more than fifteen roles, I can look back and know the young me is proud of who we became and excited to see what we will do with all these learnings.

AIESEC IN CAMEROON

Jean Paul Kenmoe - AIESEC in Cameroon - 2008

Cameroon was one of the countries implementing the Empowering Africa Program (EAP) launched by the Africa Global Network. In 2008, I was appointed Project Director of Young Entrepreneurs (YES) at AIESEC in Cameroon. This project was one of the EAP projects with the aim of fighting against youth unemployment and poverty. We planned to train young graduates on how to set up a business plan through what we called YES Seminars.

The YES Seminar had three main steps: intensive training on how to set up a business, effective business plan writing, and business plan presentations to award the best business plan.

We successfully organized 2 YES Seminars in AIESEC. This allowed us to impact 98 young people in our country and equip them with the skills they needed to be successful in business. Many thanks to the experts of the Cameroon National Employment Fund who worked alongside AIESEC to facilitate the training.

AIESEC IN CHILE

Ivana Lucía Calleros Fuentes - AIESEC in Chile - 2014

I had the opportunity to become an AIESEC Volunteer for three and a half months in Santiago, Chile, when I was about to finish my University studies. I was selected, along with another student from Brazil named Paula. We travelled there and helped out with the Robotics teaching program that the NGO Corazón de Chileno ran at that moment.

This was a life-changing experience for me. I had never been away from my country for so long and was completely immersed in a new culture. I also met a lot of other Chilean youth who were in the program with us. We travelled and taught the children how to use and make the robots work as they wanted. I learned that other people live differently and that there are things that we take for granted that are not available to everyone.

After this experience, the seed had already been planted in my heart. Since then, I have always tried to help others, travel, and meet new cultures. I have joined local volunteering projects and helped with what I could. I am very thankful to AIESEC for making that experience possible and making me who I am today.

AIESEC IN COLOMBIA

Ana Saldarriaga - AIESEC in Colombia - 2013

AIESEC in Colombia signed an agreement with the Bogotá City Hall to bring 100 interns to teach English in public schools within the city. The project, named "Shape Colombia," was not only designed but also successfully matched and delivered in record time, thanks to the collaboration of several partner MCs. In less than three months, we were able to match all the teaching positions.

The impact of the teachers was remarkable. The students' English levels significantly improved, and their overall retention rates at school saw positive changes. The project continued throughout the administration years at that time. It became a flagship example of the substantial impact that AIESEC has, not only on the interns but also on the communities they serve.

Remedios Lucio - AIESEC in Colombia - 2013

It was a life-changing moment when I flew to Medellin, Colombia to teach English with AIESEC. I was miraculously healed from Lupus at the age of 23. I never thought I would see myself living such a colourful beginning after battling the ghost disease, especially moving to a new country to teach English to underserved students and employees at Fundacion Censa.

It was a highlight of my life in my 20s. Colombia not only taught me about the culture and how to speak Spanish, but it also taught me how to live my life to the fullest. I experienced a slower pace of living, savouring the moment and being present. It was where I learned to appreciate life more after experiencing a harrowing medical experience. Living in Manila, where everything moves fast, you can't even take a breath.

I've met so many wonderful people bridging the gap, as we come from different cultures and religions. It opened my eyes to so many possibilities and changed my perspective on life. My mindset altered seeing the world in full view, knowing that there was more to life, having hope, giving chances, inspiring others, and making an impact in the world. My experiences with AIESEC in Colombia and Malaysia showed me how the differences in culture and tradition can bring together people from all walks of life. It led me to want to do more to promote inclusivity, peace, leadership, and cross-cultural understanding in the world.

AIESEC IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Abou Kassoum Ouattara - AIESEC in Côte d'Ivoire - 2020

During my term as the National President of AIESEC in Côte d'Ivoire, the biggest breakthrough my team and I had to go through was that the country was in the midst of ending the Second Ivorian Civil War. The universities were closed due to the crises, and as those entities were closed, I had the choice between 2 crucial options.

The first option would be to reach out to AIESEC International, telling the global entity that since there were members and active universities, we had to take a break and reopen AIESEC's activities in the country when the situation ended. The second option would be to continue with AIESEC's activities in Côte d'Ivoire while looking for new, best-adapted strategies. We chose the second option.

Through my AIESEC journey, I learned more about crisis management and going beyond comfort to focus on the results and the value you bring to society. I won the trust of an entity such as Microsoft in Côte d'Ivoire to work together on their citizenship initiatives by launching and implementing the YouthSpark program in the country to train 1000 young people. That program remained a legacy that I left to AIESEC Côte d'Ivoire. It allowed the next generations to benefit from the partnership and attract more companies to join the movement.

After my AIESEC experience, I also joined AIESEC Alumni Middle East Africa for three years, and currently, I am still serving the organization at the global level as an AIESEC Alumnus, where since January 2021, I have been working with the AIESEC Alumni International management team.

From that AIESEC journey, I can say that the more you give to AIESEC, the more AIESEC can give you. In other words, AIESEC is the safest self-investment that pays back what you put in in the short, mid, and long term. Make the most of your experience while you can!

Elisha Kenny Olukanni - AIESEC in Côte d'Ivoire - 2020

The biggest highlight from my AIESEC journey was my experience in Côte d'Ivoire as a national responsible for incoming exchange programs. Since it was a French country, I needed help with the language barrier, and my role there was more external facing with relevant stakeholders. At first, people didn't believe in me taking that role because it was a French country, and the work conditions were challenging. Food was not provided as part of this position, and I was the only National Committee member from abroad on the ground.

When the COVID-19 lockdown started in 2020, it took its toll on me; our national team lost our accommodation, which left me struggling to find my own place to stay for the remainder of my term, and life became extremely challenging. However, I wanted to build a legacy and continue to give my best for the entity till the end of my term. In less than five months, I grew the organization by over 600% in both Global Volunteer and Global Entrepreneur programs, achieved my one-year goal within a five-month period, and facilitated leadership and entrepreneurship in over 1000 youths across several African countries. I contributed to the lives of these youth by inspiring them, building their leadership, and helping them achieve their own goals.

I finished my term by achieving first in the Middle East & Africa region in overall growth, Incoming Global Volunteer, and Incoming Global Entrepreneur. Our entity also ranked third globally under my leadership.

AIESEC IN CZECH REPUBLIC

Michaela Hrušková - AIESEC in Czech Republic- 2019

Have you ever felt that you existed but were not truly living? Have you ever woken up with no reason to get up? Have you ever felt lost and ready to give up?

This was my every day with depression and anxiety, and I was going through every day without a purpose. Deep down, I knew it didn't need to be like this, but I had no idea what a different reality could be besides this.

I was angry at the world—a world that seemed to create so much pain, where people aren't able to live in harmony, where we're seemingly unable to protect our environment, and where being different can be a crime…

One particular night, maybe it was a sign from the universe, or maybe it was just a coincidence, I met someone who forever changed my life. That person asked my 17-year-old self about what I cared about the most. For the first time, I believed that I could do something more, that I could change the world. That my voice matters.

It might have just been another party for others. But for me, it was the moment when I met AIESEC. An organization that gave me a reason to get up every day and fight for a better future. A place where I am heard. A place where I met people who helped me to win the battles with myself. A place where I can be a better person every day.

While at AIESEC, I understood that AIESEC will never change the world. AIESEC will change the people who do, and thanks to Ivet and the day on 23rd October 2018, I can become that person.

I am forever grateful for that day and the changes AIESEC formed within me, so I made a promise to myself: to be there for others who are lost, to help them find a purpose, and to become the person who will change the world.

Because if not us, then who? If not now, then when?

It's been five years since the day AIESEC came into my life, five years since my first conference. Today, it has been five months since I started my term as the National President of AIESEC in the Czech Republic, and I will continue to make this promise happen.

Nishad Kinhikar - AIESEC in Czech Republic - 2022

A true journey of self-discovery and outstanding achievement starts only when you step outside of your comfort zone. Luckily, an AIESEC exchange provides a safe place to be the most comfortable, even outside your comfort zone, surrounded by like-minded individuals who become friends for life.

As a person who has completed multiple AIESEC exchanges in Russia, the Czech Republic, and Türkiye, I have experienced how an AIESEC exchange can mould you in such a beautiful way. It not only offers you the opportunity to see yourself grow but also gives you a chance to witness the beauty of a country & culture.
I still remember my first AIESEC Exchange in the Czech Republic; it was back in 2020. I was the only boy in a group of six girls from Taiwan, Georgia, Indonesia, Ukraine, South Korea and Thailand. Like any other young boy, I was scared of having conversations with them, scared of fitting in. But let me tell you one thing: we all came from the same background, we all were of the same age, and equally scared of starting a conversation with a complete stranger. And I think that's what offers you a perfect environment to open up to each other. Once we started connecting on our desire to impact the world, the rest was history!

The core beauty of an AIESEC exchange is that you experience it along with people from various cultural backgrounds who are here to do the same thing as you are. And that sometimes can be a great icebreaker! While doing so, you tend to be more comfortable stepping out of your comfort zone. You will find yourself more open, self-assured, and capable of doing things you might have always feared doing.

The relationships and connections you will form during an AIESEC exchange will last a lifetime and continue to provide you with support and inspiration. Once you return from your exchange, you will see yourself as a new individual who has discovered new passions, strengths, and goals.

So, is it worth going on an AIESEC exchange? Of course, yes! I wish you all the very best for your next amazing AIESEC adventure.

AIESEC IN ECUADOR

André Costa - AIESEC in Ecuador - 2023

During my term as 23.24 National President of AIESEC in Ecuador, one of my big dreams and goals for the entity was to make it more diverse and inclusive. Together with my team, especially with my Talent Management Vice President, we created all internal diversity and inclusion processes, a subcommittee to lead DEI strategies and ensure inclusion and diversity in the admission process for members of AIESEC in Ecuador.

AIESEC in Ecuador today can say that every day, it thinks more intentionally about the diversity of gender, sex, colour, race, religion and especially economic diversity when building up its membership and leadership body. Thank you, Member Committee of AIESEC in Ecuador 23.24, and the membership of AIESEC in Ecuador, for ensuring that we are a diverse entity of reference in the Americas and a reference for young people in the country.

Olga Alexandra Quimiz Moreira - AIESEC in Ecuador - 2023

For me, leaving my comfort zone filled me with fear, so I always avoided it. In 2019, my life changed abruptly as I was diagnosed with cancer "hocking lymphoma". This diagnosis affected my motivation, my self-esteem and made me feel as though there was not much more life to live for me.

Eventually, I tried to shake this negative mentality and ask myself what I wanted to do with my life. I wanted to be happy, I wanted to heal and that's when I started looking for help and a purpose. Once I accepted what I had and how I could solve it, AIESEC appeared like a light at the end of the tunnel, helping that small and hurt Olguita to believe in herself again, fight against an illness and stay alive.

In 2022, I accepted the challenge of being Vice President of Human Talent, and my self-esteem grew to the maximum. A group of 22 people believed in me and I could see the impact we were making in youth. My hope of being me again was rekindled. Thank you AIESEC, for giving me another chance at life.

AIESEC IN EGYPT

Ehaab Abdou- AIESEC in Egypt - 1993

Egypt became an AIESEC member country in 1982 and belonged to the African region within AIESEC. In 1991, AIESEC in Egypt organized the African Congress in Cairo, and twelve African member countries participated.

The congress was a big success and thus built a strong foundation for AIESEC in Egypt. Ehaab joined AIESEC in Egypt in 1993, and he continued to maintain the good results that they were achieving. His work was focused on external communications, which increased the number and scale of partnerships with government and corporate sectors within Egypt. In the mid-1990s, AIESEC International made a decision to fine-tune the global direction to focus on exchange; at the same time, Ehaab became the President of AIESEC in Egypt in 1995. He witnessed the AIESEC direction having a significant impact on the entire AIESEC network, including AIESEC in Egypt, where the exchange numbers saw a significant boost after this change.

In the 1990s, Ehaab was able to spearhead this push in exchange within AIESEC in Egypt. Ehaab was a young man full of dreams and passion for international social development, and AIESEC in Egypt was the first non-profit organization that he joined. After his experience with AIESEC, Ehaab focused his career on social development. He helped establish and became the first president of Fat'het Kheir, an Egyptian youth-led voluntary organization offering an innovative model in community development. He then moved on to become a lead project coordinator and senior consultant at the World Bank Group and is now a professor at Wilfred Laurier University in Canada.

Syed Umar - AIESEC in Egypt - 2016

Egypt emerged as an unexpected destination. Initially, I was more drawn to countries like Russia and Türkiye, but after talking to fellow AIESECers and their experience in Egypt, I was drawn to make the choice. It was the first time I visited a foreign country, and this experience brought me out of my comfort zone and changed me as an individual. I even visited different cities like Luxor, Aswan, Hurghada, Alexandria, Giza, Cairo, and Nasr, where people welcomed me with open arms and expressed their love for India. I also got to eat many local foods and complete awesome excursions such as horseback riding and scuba diving.

Due to this experience, I was an introvert but became an extrovert. It gave me a new perspective on life, as I was exposed to challenges I had never faced before, such as the language barrier, as 98% of people only spoke Arabic, and I spoke English. This ultimately taught me how to be solution-oriented!

By the end of this adventure, I found myself not only appreciating Egypt but cherishing it as a pivotal chapter in my life. The Pyramids of Giza, one of the seven wonders of the world, stood as a metaphor for the monumental shift within me. I had become someone who thrived on challenges, embraced diversity, and, most importantly, found joy in solving problems.

In essence, this journey completely changed me as a person, moulding me into a more confident, solution-oriented, and adaptable individual. It was an experience of a lifetime, etched into my memory and a constant reminder that the most profound transformations often emerge from the unexpected and the challenging.

Montserrat Pérez Sánchez - AIESEC in Egypt - 2021

When the 2020 pandemic forced me to cancel my academic exchange to Brazil, I thought I would never have an opportunity to travel again — until I found out about AIESEC. I started my journey as an exchange participant in Egypt in July 2021. At my Preparation Seminar, I remember asking my facilitator, “What exactly do you do as an AIESEC member? Is it a job?”

Of course, it wasn’t, but she mentioned that joining the organization gives you the opportunity to gain professional experience. At that time, I was almost a graduate student from college, and I just needed to do an internship before I could start the process of obtaining my title degree. I thought about her words a lot because, as a 22-year-old young adult, my lack of professional experience was very obvious.

Since that day, I had considered joining AIESEC, but I wasn’t completely sure about it. During my exchange, I decided to focus on discovering what I wanted to do in life. Through my volunteer experience, I tried to find ways to make an impact, something that AIESEC members cherish relentlessly.

There was a day when we travelled to Mount Sinai. That trip was meaningful to me not only because of the spiritual knowledge I gained from that experience but also because it confirmed what my next steps would be after I returned to Mexico. On our way back to Cairo, we had a 10-hour road trip, so we stopped at a small convenience store to buy snacks and water.

At the store, we got down from the bus and waited for the group outside. Outside the store, there was a well-decorated photoshoot spot on a small sandy land. Curiously, in front of the backdrop, there was a big black container with a painted transcription that said: “Spread love.” We decided to walk next to it, and then I noticed another inscription was painted on the container. This said: “Be the change.” It was not only the phrase that caught my attention; it was the fact that, at the bottom of it, sitting on a corner of the container, was a little girl with messy hair, dirty clothes and worn sandals. I was pretty sure she was no older than 7 years old. I smiled at her and started to talk with her as much as I could, considering the language barrier.

I knew my volunteer project couldn’t help her directly change her situation, but what gave me hope was that AIESEC had many other volunteer projects all over the world that were trying to solve the environment and the problems she was immersed in. Seeing her precisely below that inscription made me realize that the change will start only if I decide to take action on it, and joining AIESEC was my way to become a drop in the ocean that will try to purify society's indifference towards our world problems.

I joined the organization right after I returned to Mexico and never looked back. Since that day, I cherish as well the commitment of being the leaders that can actually change the world, and maybe my contribution is seen as a grain of sand in the Sahara , but I´ve been witness of the many leaders AIESEC is creating and I am sure this joint efforts will definitely not be in vain.

Nada Ararouchi - AIESEC in Egypt - 2023

Embarking on the journey as an exchange participant with AIESEC in Tetouan was a transformative chapter that left an indelible mark on my personal and professional growth. As someone fluent in five languages, the prospect of immersing myself in a new culture was both exhilarating and daunting.

My exchange experience was a mosaic of cultural exploration and self-discovery. AIESEC provided a nurturing environment that allowed me to practise my languages without the fear of judgment. Engaging with locals in Tetouan and fellow exchange participants from around the world not only enhanced my language skills but also broadened my cultural fluency. The city, with its rich history and diverse people, became my classroom, and every interaction was a lesson in understanding and appreciating differences.

Transitioning from an exchange participant to a member of AIESEC in Tetouan added a layer of depth to my experience. Joining the organization allowed me to contribute actively to its mission and further hone my leadership skills. Whether collaborating on community projects or organizing cultural events, I discovered the power of collective action and the impact it can have on both local and global scales.

One of the key takeaways from my time in AIESEC was the development of resilience and adaptability. Navigating the intricacies of a new culture and working with a diverse team presented challenges, but it also cultivated a spirit of resilience. The experience taught me to embrace uncertainty and view challenges as opportunities for growth.

Moreover, my involvement in AIESEC acted as a catalyst for personal development, fostering qualities that extend beyond the professional. The organization's emphasis on empathy and understanding translated into a broader worldview, shaping me into a more compassionate and globally aware individual. This newfound perspective became an invaluable asset not only in my professional endeavours but also in my daily interactions.

As I reflect on my time as both an exchange participant and a member of AIESEC in Tetouan, I am grateful for the profound impact it has had on my life. The journey was not just about learning a new language or understanding a different culture; it was about discovering facets of myself that were waiting to be unearthed. AIESEC, with its commitment to fostering global citizens and leaders, provided me with the canvas, the colours, and the brushes to paint a richer, more interconnected world. This experience has not only shaped my present but has also laid a foundation for a future where I can continue to contribute meaningfully to a more understanding and harmonious global community.

AIESEC IN GERMANY

Timo Ströbel - AIESEC in Germany - 2001

AIESEC provided a great learning experience for me as a young professional. Starting with local member work, followed by organizational committee work and then being elected Local Committee Vice President helped me gain a lot of experience around teams, social styles, collaboration, and ultimately, leadership. Attending international conferences provided great cultural exchange opportunities and learning about leadership and resilience.

I took these skills further on after my Master's degree in business administration, becoming a consultant but keeping connected to the impact sector. This helped me become a working group member of the UNGC, working on the principles of anti-corruption. I then joined a development programme as a consultant for international NGOs and foundations for four years. Six years ago, I took the next step in my career and moved to a smaller consultant company, where I founded our CSR activities, creating sustainable impact through skilled volunteering. We developed boot camps for social entrepreneurs, as well as long-term pro-bono consultant services to German food banks, where we helped them create a digital platform. I truly believe that all these steps were based on the foundation of the impactful & memorable experiences I gained with AIESEC - a great opportunity to develop others and to develop yourself, to become a global citizen.

Julian Krüger - AIESEC in Germany - 2010

Summing it up, my AIESEC journey has been a series of pivotal moments. Picture this – I took on the role of the first Local Committee President and found myself plunged into an unexpected challenge: reuniting a worried mother with her daughter on exchange in Africa. It was a whirlwind, but by the day's end, we located her safe and sound. That incident, though stressful, sparked a lasting commitment from the daughter, who later became a passionate supporter, sending others on exchange.

In the midst of these challenges, I uncovered layers of myself – how to navigate tough situations, handle responsibilities, and lead with a resolve I didn't know I possessed. I vividly recall a moment when a distressed team member called me in tears, and despite my own uncertainties, I reassured them, saying, "I'll take care of it."

AIESEC's impact on me is profound. Before, I was a self-convinced, egoistic 19-year-old; now, I'm more open, shaped and moulded by the experiences and opportunities AIESEC offered. It's not just an organization; it changed me for the better. Oh, and did I mention it's where I met my now-wife? Talk about life-changing!

Gratitude overflows for the memories, the learning environment that allowed me to make mistakes without fear, and the diverse friendships that reshaped my perspective. AIESEC wasn't just a chapter; it was a transformative journey, turning me into a more compassionate, open-minded individual.

So, here's to AIESEC, a pivotal force that shaped my personal and professional life. The journey continues, and each chapter adds a new layer to the story. Looking forward to sharing more!

AIESEC IN GHANA

Yuya Takahashi - AIESEC in Ghana - 2019

In August of 2019, I participated in a Global Volunteer exchange and visited Ghana. Initially, I joined AIESEC because I was attracted to this program, which allowed me to dive into a world I could never have imagined. Through the exchange program, I was able to see the world's reality through my classes at the local school and my daily interactions with the villagers. After 6 weeks of amazing memories, what has stayed with me to this day is the AIESECer I met at the LC House of AIESEC in KNUST.

Youseffu was a local Vice President for Outgoing Exchange in Burkina Faso and came to Ghana for his exchange experience as well. During my time in Ghana, I got to spend a couple of days with him. Getting to know him and his reason for going on exchange really resonated with me and influenced me throughout my AIESEC career.

He told me that he travels as an exchange participant to countries where he sends students from Burkina Faso because he wanted to fully immerse himself in the experience of being able to explore different cultures and make an impact. This is why he wholeheartedly believed in the value of the Global Volunteer experience. Although our native languages were not English, I could feel his passion and hope in his words. I was convinced at that moment that it was a miracle that a young man from a country I had never heard of before was running a program with such passion and that the possibilities were endless.

With his words in mind, I stepped up to many leadership positions in my Local Committee and entity, including Local Committee President and Member Committee President of AIESEC in Japan. Youseffu also stepped up for the Member Committee President role for the 23.24 term. We both decided to reterm as presidents and met for the second time physically in India at International Congress in 2023.

This story goes to show the beautiful human connections AIESEC can create and how it leaves a lasting impact on the leadership stories of so many generations.

AIESEC in Greece

Athina Papadimitriou - AIESEC in Greece - 2022

When I joined university, my teacher told me about a global organization called AIESEC, and he was convinced that if I joined, I would love it and it would transform my life. Since I trusted him a lot, a few months later, I found myself applying.

As I was excited to get an acceptance letter because I had never failed in anything before in my life, a rejection email showed up. I was really mad at myself for failing. How could this be true? After getting the feedback, I told myself that next semester, I would try again, and so I did. Interview, then team assessment and then that email.

As of September 2022, I was officially an AIESEC member. Fifteen months and many, many experiences later, I don't consider myself a member of AIESEC but a true AIESECer! I became a Team Leader twice, I went on a Global Volunteer program in Serbia during the summer of 2023, and now, I am officially an elected Local Committee Vice President, almost ready to take over the department that I have wanted to lead since day 1.

Throughout my journey, I met wonderful people and lived the best experiences that I could have lived in my 20s! I worked with several different personalities, transformed myself and helped others become a better version of themselves. During my experience, I also failed multiple times. But AIESEC was there to support me in getting back up and trying again and again without judgment. Eventually, I also learned to stop being so harsh on myself. I know that my new role as a Local Committee Vice President has not started yet, but I do know for a fact that this role will not be my last one in the organization!

Labros Aggelopoulos - AIESEC in Greece - 2023

It all started when my Local Committee President stepped down from their position.

I took the brave step to represent my Expansion, and as a Vice President of Outgoing Exchanges, I applied for the President position. In just one week, I became President, Finance responsible, and Outgoing Exchanges responsible. I truly wanted to succeed, and in the beginning, my people believed in me. However, as challenges accompanied the significant responsibility, I began to doubt myself.

In October, just two days after induction, my Vice Presidents dropped out. The most challenging part was having to attend the national conference and Regional Presidents Meeting by myself. In my entire AIESEC experience, it was the first time I truly felt alone. That's when my Local Committee participated in an emotional activity and showed me that I could achieve everything if I just tried to push myself.

However, another challenge arose when none of my Vice Presidents applied for the President role. After careful consideration, I submitted my applications and became the Local Committee President for a second term. I started my new term with zero members. I recruited one of my best friends, who had just returned to Patras after two years abroad, and slowly started building the team. With my new team leaders, I started recruitment and brought in 5 new members. Following that, my best friend and Marketing Vice President applied to be president. Despite challenging environments, things improved for Patras.

What I realized was that my potential was even greater than what I had imagined. Leadership, I realized, is a fundamental solution that can be developed in anyone, anywhere. However, the most significant lesson from my experience is that we truly develop leadership through practical experiences in challenging environments, and that means that oftentimes, things do not work in our favour. I'm really proud of my leadership development.

AIESEC in Guatemala

Georgina Sofía Méndez Cerna - AIESEC in Guatemala - 2021

In 2019, my life took an unexpected turn when my beloved grandmother was diagnosed with cancer. My mother, grandmother and I lived together, forming a strong family bond. The news of the diagnosis plunged our home into palpable sadness. As the cancer progressed, my grandmother's health deteriorated rapidly, and it became increasingly necessary to provide exceptional care for her, especially during the evenings when my mother worked—caring for my grandmother in her most vulnerable moments.

Often, I was alone with her during the nights, being the only company she had. My mission was to provide her with comfort and loving care, a task that required not only practical skills but also an emotional fortitude I had never had to put to the test. My nights became a routine of love and attention but also involved physical and emotional wear and tear. When my grandmother finally took her last breath, I felt an overwhelming grief but also a sense of peace in knowing that I had been there for her in her final moments.

Soon after, I found myself in the hospital, facing problems with my back due to physical wear and tear during those difficult days. Although my health was at stake, what mattered most was having done my duty of care for my grandmother. Grief and loss left deep scars, and the following year, I found myself dealing with depression.

That's when, in 2021, I discovered AIESEC, an organization that would change my perspective. I found purpose in helping others reach their full potential, remembering the love and care I gave to my grandmother. Through this experience, I learned that even in the darkest moments, we can discover purpose and contribute to the well-being of others.

AIESEC IN INDIA

Magdalena Zawodny Barabanow - AIESEC in India - 2003

My story is a 20-year story of the friendship of 15+ trainees who met in India.

We crossed paths in Mumbai back in 2003, brought together by the AIESEC Apprecenship Programme. Hailing from diverse corners of the globe, our group was a vibrant tapestry of continents, countries, and backgrounds. We were all AIESEC trainees, driven not only by the desire to advance our careers but also to explore Indian culture. Those days were a whirlwind, both in our professional pursuits and personal lives. While our AIESEC internships lasted only a handful of months for most, the impact of that experience has endured over time, shaping our lives to this day.

Our group gatherings have evolved in size over the years, yet the thread of continuity has remained unbroken. From Hong Kong in 2008 to Vienna in 2010, Berlin in 2013, Cologne in 2018, Berlin again in 2019, and Amsterdam in 2022, our connections have thrived. The fruit of these connections is remarkable: six cross-cultural marriages have blossomed, giving rise to thirteen children who effortlessly converse in multiple languages. Their friendships perpetuate our legacy into the next generation.

Our group shows how important AIESEC's values and vision are because they've helped us stay connected and strong over all these years.

Christiane Stein - AIESEC in India - 2005

In August 2005, I was the team leader of transport & logistics in the Congress Committee of AIESEC International Congress (IC) in Agra, India. My team consisted of more than eight people. Half of them were Indian, and the other half from all over the world. It was the first time I had managed such a big and diverse team.

The experience was quite a challenge for me, especially since it was my first time outside of Europe and my body needed to adjust to the heat, humidity, and food. Besides the physical strain, there were also different mindsets, attitudes and cultural backgrounds that came together, which led me to adjust my leadership style depending on the person I led.

One event of the congress that remains particularly in my mind was short before the conference started. My team and I were in New Delhi welcoming new delegations every day at the airport, put them up in a hotel for the night, and the next morning sending them off by bus to Agra. We either had too many people in the hotel or not enough. It was a bit of madness.

Then one of the last days before IC, we got a call from the external relations team in Agra to also pick up a company partner at 12:35 pm – only there was no flight arriving at that time and rather the person would land in 30 min - just after midnight. We scrambled, picked her up and brought her to a hotel we booked. I managed to negotiate a rate for an auto rickshaw from International to Domestic of 40 rupees – better than even the Indians on the team, haha!

This experience taught me that one must be resilient and that we can overcome growing pains when we stay in the game. This also helps me in my work today as Director at S&P Global Mobility, where I lead a team of 5 on 5 different continents in 5 time zones.

Thank you, AIESEC!

Mario Montevirgen - AIESEC in India - 2013

Jumping on a bus and holding onto the side until you can enter, communicating with rickshaw drivers, talking with gestures to shop owners, and working on a project in four cities in India—these are the experiences I had in India that gave me so much culture shock but developed me into the person I am today.

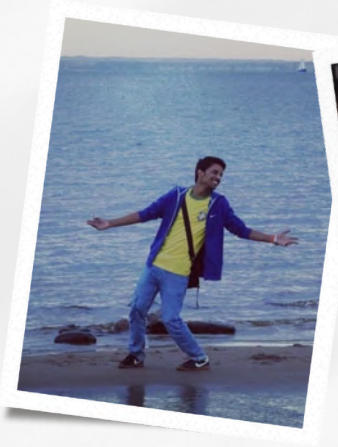
My exchange experience in India made me understand that the world is small, exciting, and even if people seem culturally different, we always have so much in common. Ultimately, this allowed me to see the German saying, "We all cook with water," come to life. Living in a flat with seven different nationalities and no internet can seem to be tough, but in reality made the evenings exciting while we exchanged knowledge about our cultures, lives, family and challenges we face. Instead of partying in a club on the weekend, we are attending weddings or discovering the next temple.

This experience made me who I am and a world citizen. Being in a place so different, you did not have the time to feel comfortable, you just did it. This experience also hit close to home, as it also made me grateful for my father as he left the global south to give me the opportunity to live the life I have today. The AIESEC experience is mindblowing and will forever hold a special place in your heart. It will put you in places you've never been, far outside of your comfort zone. I found a place in me that constantly pushed me to develop, thrive and change, which is needed in the global world we live in. Thanks for this unique opportunity to be an AIESECer.

Bhartendu Bhaskar - AIESEC in India - 2016

In 2016, I visited Russia as an exchange participant from AIESEC in India. The exchange was about us teaching English to kids in kindergarten. The experiences I had with these kids have always been something that makes me smile. Two major things happened over this exchange. First, met a few people from countries other than India & they showed me how differently similar we all are in the end. Secondly, I met a person who valued her experiences and the impact she could have working over the money she received.

Taking inspiration from these stories, when I returned to India, I began my journey of self-discovery with AIESEC as a member of AIESEC in VIT. The experience in AIESEC in VIT was wholesome beyond words. It truly aimed to build a family before anything else. We worked hard and played hard. The most important thing I have learned in my tenure here has to be sales. Sales is everywhere in the world today, and the only reason I am confident that I can sell is because of my years with AIESEC in VIT.



A few rejections and dissatisfaction with my college degree helped me into a phase of self-reflection, which ultimately ended with me chasing my dream of becoming a lawyer. I quit engineering and joined a law school in Kolkata. My journey with AIESEC wasn't over, so I continued in AIESEC in Kolkata. I was quickly made a team leader, and my journey began again - this time, it was a professional journey.

The first six months were rough. A new city and a lack of interest in International Relations pushed me to the edge. I was underperforming. I applied to be a VP and was rejected. I resigned from the entity, and then I was offered a shot to work on the People Management and Finance teams. I have always been interested in community building, and that's how we saw the role of People Management for that year.

I ran for President in 2019 on the same platform of people management and was elected. Our first month, February, was amazing—we exceeded our targets and were ranking globally—then COVID hit.

The first few weeks of COVID were exhausting, with the tension of COVID hitting every home. We soon replanned and had one of the best years the Back Office has seen in ages. Our People Management, Business Development, Finance & other back office departments worked amazingly all year round, and we were recognized for this and even at International Congress. The "never-give-up" attitude persisted, and here we are today. Everything I learned helped me start my company, Felicity Inc., in May 2020. Over the past three years, Felicity has done great in everything it does - there's always a bit of AIESEC in its ways.

Diya Narayanan - AIESEC in India - 2020

AIESEC taught me that leadership is not just about having a team that gets your work done; it is about empowering them, helping them achieve their goals and making them better future leaders.

During my first semester in AIESEC, I had the highest number of approvals (students confirmed to go on exchanges) by any new member of the Local Committee. I got recognition for this, but the hard work was done by my team leader, who supported me and pushed me daily to achieve my goals. She took regular updates; whenever she felt that I could do better, she would be tough and push me to do better. Even when I was very busy, instead of letting me fail, she would help me reach out to students who wanted to go on exchange to help me meet my goals. This taught me that no matter what, if you set your mind to do something, you achieve it. That is when I understood the true essence of leadership: helping others achieve their goals and reach their highest potential.

As I progressed in my AIESEC journey, I became a team leader for two semesters and was the Vice President for Outgoing Internship Exchanges (oGT) in 2021. Inspired by my experience being led by others in AIESEC, I ensured that the people I led were learning something and that we were constantly growing as leaders. As a team leader, I was always available to my members for help. From making posters to helping with exchange participants, I was always there.

As a Vice-President, I continued doing the same. I also learned to be tough on people when I felt that they needed a little push. Once, a member of mine was not active and avoided the team, but I knew he had a lot of potential and loved AIESEC. I had a long conversation with him, and I sent him a probation email. This tough love got him back on track, and he was thankful that he got to continue making an impact with AIESEC. His name is Aadhithyan T.S., and today, he has been selected for the AIESEC in New Zealand national team.

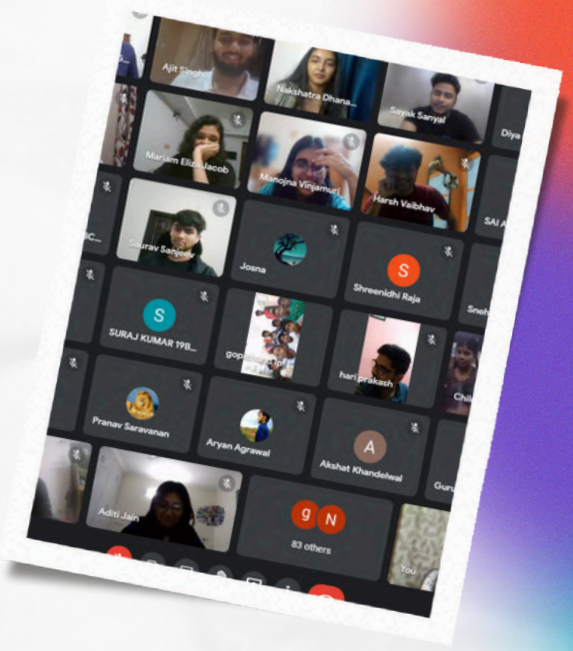
Success stories like Aadhithyan also carried impact at the local level! Shriya Deshmukh was also one of my members whom I was able to help grow in many ways during the term. Today, she is the Vice President of Outgoing Global Volunteer Exchanges (oGV). Under her Leadership, the oGV of AIESEC in Ahmedabad won the best oGV award during the Asia Pacific Regional Office Awards ceremony. Overall, I can proudly say that the six people I have led all advanced within AIESEC to do great things. I am very proud of the leaders they have become, and I am thankful for the experiences I have had in AIESEC that have led me to become the leader that could nurture them.

After my AIESEC journey, I continued to be a leader. I became the marketing head of a student club at my university and utilized the leadership I had learned from AIESEC in the club. As a human, I strive to always portray the qualities & values of a leader.

I learned that leadership is all about giving. To be a leader is to give back to the organization you work for, the people around you, society, the earth, and the environment. I am grateful to AIESEC for teaching me that. As I progress in my career, I will take these learnings with me, and hope to pass them on to future generations.

Aiswarya N S - AIESEC in India - 2021

On November 14th, 2021, a Children's Day celebration was organized in Vellore, India, in collaboration with an NGO. As part of this event, we had planned a storytelling session. However, a unique challenge emerged – the children in attendance could only understand Tamil, making it difficult for them to fully engage in the session.



Despite being an introvert at the time, I decided to step up and volunteer to translate the narrative from English and Hindi into Tamil. This decision was not an easy one for me, as it required a considerable amount of courage. The reason I took this step was simple: I had a good command of the Tamil language, and I believed I could tackle this big project. Venturing outside my comfort zone and overcoming my introverted nature had a more significant impact on me than I initially realized. It was a transformative experience that allowed me to grow and become more confident in my abilities, and it's a memory that I still hold dear. In many ways, this event taught me the power of stepping up and taking action, even when it may seem challenging or uncomfortable. It highlighted the influence we can have on others and the personal growth that comes from pushing our boundaries.

Hanaa Smahi - AIESEC in India - 2022

In the depths of my soul, I always knew there was a place out there where I truly belonged—a place that would ignite my spirit, inspire my creativity, and make me feel alive. Little did I know that this place would reveal itself in the vibrant, diverse, and enchanting land of India.

My journey of moving to India for my exchange was nothing short of extraordinary—a kaleidoscope of emotions, experiences, and self-discovery that has forever changed me.

From the moment I set foot on this sacred soil, a sense of belonging washed over me as if India had been patiently waiting for me all along. India, with its rich tapestry of culture, tradition, and spirituality, embraces you with open arms and whispers, "Welcome home." Every corner of this remarkable country resonates with a deep sense of warmth, acceptance, and love. From the bustling streets of Delhi to the serene streets of Hyderabad, India weaves its magic into the very fabric of your being. It is in the hustle and bustle of daily life, the symphony of sounds, and the kaleidoscope of colours that I find solace. The enchanting chaos of the markets, the mesmerizing melodies of traditional music, and the aroma of spices that dance in the air—they all become a part of your essence, intertwining with your own story.

But it is not just the external allure of India that makes it feel like home. It is the incredible people I have encountered on this journey —people whose hearts are as vast as the Indian Ocean, whose smiles are as bright as the sun. The genuine warmth and hospitality of the Indian people have left an indelible mark on my soul, making me feel like a part of their extended family. In India, I have found a sense of purpose; it fuels dreams, sparks innovation, and fosters a relentless pursuit of greatness. India is not just a place on the map — it is a feeling, a state of mind, a sanctuary that calls you to your true self. Welcome to a land where dreams come alive, where hearts find solace, and where you belong. Welcome home.

Thank you, AIESEC in India and Morocco, for enabling me to truly find peace and enter into a new chapter in life. Thank you, AIESEC, for empowering youth since 1948.

Sujit Vasanthan - AIESEC in India - 2022

As I know it, choice is our most powerful trait. I chose to join AIESEC in Chennai in 2019. And my story? It is the same timeless story as that of countless other AIESECers worldwide. A young boy who doesn't believe in his potential and his ability to turn his dreams into a reality, who, by chance, encounters AIESEC, only for his world and for him never to remain the same again.

My AIESEC journey has been profoundly beautiful. When I look back, so many vivid memories brush past my memory. I have reached here in the blink of an eye, yet there are countless moments where I have genuinely felt infinite. I joined the organization for the tangible benefits that being in AIESEC offered me professionally, but I stayed back for the intangible ones. For the things which can't be touched or seen, but for the things which are to be felt and experienced.

My most prominent learning is that leadership is indeed the fundamental solution and can definitely be developed in anyone. I know because I've lived the experience and experienced it for myself. Here's an excerpt from my debrief of the previous role that I held in AIESEC:

"When I got announced as the National Head of Business Development for AIESEC in India, it seemed like a far-fetched dream that came true. I knew it was going to be challenging. Still, I knew right from day one that I was entirely up for it because I knew I had only one year with me. It fuelled me and gave me an insatiable desire to make the most out of the term by fully accessing the scope of Business Development as a Portfolio.

Being obsessed with your work is easy when you're executing your dream job. Being 120% passionate and able to resonate with what I'm doing with my heart and mind has kept me going throughout the term. There have been ups & downs like any other full-fledged experience, but representing AIESEC in India at its top-most level and leading an organization of 3000 people has been sacred for me, and it's a responsibility that I took seriously throughout the term.

My only goal at the start of the term was to put my hand to my heart confidently and to say at the end that I did everything I could to the best of my ability, and when I knew better, I did better. Adding 60,00,000 INR to AIESEC in India's bank account, with 30 partnerships and 4 additions of representatives to the National Board of AIESEC in India later, I can confidently say that I achieved what I set out to, and as the famous saying goes:

I came, I saw, I conquered.

Once a bubbly member bursting with energy at AIESEC in Chennai, I have lived, experienced, achieved, and fulfilled my AIESEC dream. I embraced my infinite, and I am content and eternally grateful for my AIESEC journey because it made me realize that I am truly powerful beyond measure.

AIESEC doesn't change us. It only provides a platform for us to unleash the potential that we already have within ourselves. AIESEC provided me with the opportunity, the time, the place, the people, and all the other infinite elements that formulate an AIESEC experience. AIESEC calls it the inner & outer journey. I call it embracing the infinite.

This is why there is no other quote than the following, which best describes my story and journey of becoming one of the youngest to represent the AIESEC International Team at the age of 21:

"Numbers are funny. They can measure you, time you, and analyze you all they want, but they all know what matters is how you play the game. Have you ever heard the expression you can't measure heart? They can't measure any of it: heart, wants, needs. You can't measure a dream."

My story is still being written. I continue embracing the infinite, following my heart, and leading passionately. I am thrilled for the countless stories, the leaders, and the world we continue to create with AIESEC.

Aryan Parekh - AIESEC in India - 2023

My experiences in AIESEC have shown me that the true legacy of AIESEC in India can be found in the friendships and memories made at conferences. My favourite AIESEC memory comes from one of my first summer conferences in AIESEC. This experience was truly unforgettable. Everything we did during that time had a touch of magic to it. Some of my closest friends today are the ones I met during that extended summer experience, which lasted four days.

One of the most memorable sessions that stayed with me to this day was the candlelight room session, where we shared stories and created lasting bonds. Seeing everyone's smiling faces in the candlelight and sharing stories of inspiration is an image that will always stay with me. The prom night was also a spectacular event, filled with dancing, laughter, and unforgettable moments. Moreover, the informative sessions on startups and finance broadened my horizons and ignited my curiosity about these subjects.

The first day's ice-breaking sessions helped us connect on a deeper level, allowing us to open up to one another and create lasting bonds. Dancing to lively jives multiple times a day added an element of fun and energy to the experience. All of these activities and more are what make me cherish those moments again and again.

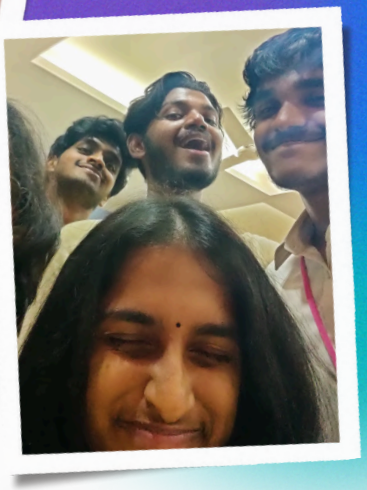
Ultimately, my summer-long experience wasn't just about what we did but about the people I met and the connections I formed. These friendships and memories are a testament to the magic of those four days, and they continue to enrich my life with their presence.

Manuka Koushik Yadav - AIESEC in India - 2023

My journey as a Team Leader (TL) began in February 2023 and has been an incredible experience. Being a Team Leader was my first role in AIESEC, and it started with a lot of uncertainty that often comes with taking on a leadership role. My co-VPs/TLs and team have been my pillars of strength throughout this journey. They've helped me overcome potential challenges and turned them into opportunities for growth and success. The solution to any challenges I encountered was always within our collaborative efforts. Working together, we navigated the responsibilities of our roles with enthusiasm, resulting in memorable moments during the national conferences. Not only did we conquer the term together, but we are now lifelong friends.

The standout moments in my experience so far have been the two national conferences I attended with my Executive Board. These conferences, along with the support of my amazing team, have been the driving force behind my extraordinary AIESEC journey. What made this experience even more remarkable was the people I had the privilege of meeting during conferences. Their diverse perspectives and shared passion for AIESEC added depth and meaning to my journey.

In hindsight, I've learned that the key to a successful AIESEC journey lies in strong teamwork, the enriching experiences of national conferences, and connections with like-minded individuals. Thanks to my team, my AIESEC journey has been nothing short of extraordinary, and for that, I'm immensely grateful.



AIESEC IN INDONESIA

Luthfi Ghazian Akbar - AIESEC in Indonesia - 2019

In 2019, I was the Local Committee President for AIESEC in Undip, Indonesia, which was one of the oldest and top-performing committees in Indonesia. During my presidency, our university did not recognize AIESEC as an official organization on campus due to many ongoing issues that had been piling up for years. It was a very hard time for me and my executive team because we did not know what to do or how to navigate this issue. There were periods when our weekly team meetings were spent fighting about these problems with our university, and even after this, other issues arose, such as exchange performance.

I nearly quit my role as president because these conflicts and arguments were difficult to navigate. However, I decided to power through these problems and sought advice from our national committee and alumni. We subsequently decided to change our Local Committee to a city-based entity instead of a university-based one. Now, we call our Local Committee AIESEC in Semarang. This situation taught me many skills that I will continue to use throughout my life, such as crisis management and effective communication. Again and again, these kinds of stories remind me that we have been persevering as an organization for the past 75 years and will continue to do so well into the future.

Festus Septian Yosafat - AIESEC in Indonesia - 2023

My AIESEC journey is one that I will never forget. I made the choice to join back in 2016 because my initial impression of AIESEC was all about dancing roll calls, hanging out with cool people, and spending time with foreign exchange participants. I was intrigued and wanted to become a part of it. At the time, I was a normal, extroverted, and ambitious university student who sought achievements by attending many scientific competitions during my university years. I studied Biotechnology in 2016 and eventually graduated in 2020.

I joined AIESEC because of my classmate and my best friend, his name is Tyo. As I had expected at the beginning, I danced roll-calls at our meetings and conferences, met cool people, and eventually became buddies with some of the Incoming Volunteer Exchange Participants that completely changed who I was — who else got to hang out with foreigners at my age apart from me and the three other AIESECers that were in my class?

I became a Team Leader in 2019 for the Incoming Global Volunteer International Relations Marketing portfolio in my committee. We brought over 250 exchange participants to our city that year. This role gave me so much learning and alignment on how AIESEC as a platform genuinely helped me to develop who I am today. Through AIESEC Essence itself, I found my peace and my fulfilment through this role. This year was the turning point of my life when I realized my potential as a marketer rather than a lab guy who does microbiology, which was genuinely different from what I wanted to be in the future.

The next couple of years were a whirlwind of travel and international AIESEC positions. 2020 was the year when I took the next step in my leadership journey to work with AIESEC in Macedonia, an entity that nobody knows the whereabouts of, a country in the middle of the Balkan region in Europe. After my National Vice Presidency in Macedonia, I applied to become an intern for AIESEC International. At that time, there were two online International Conferences where AI needed someone to be their Marketing Manager. I passed the selection process and became their Marketing Manager for both The Leadership Congress 2021 and International Congress LIVE 2021. These experiences indeed developed my marketing skills; the people that I led at that time (the Global Support Teams) helped me craft my leadership skills.

In 2022, my AIESEC journey brought me to AIESEC in Germany as their national intern for Marketing. On New Year's Eve 2021-2022, my best friends were playing Russian roulette to choose a country where each of us should stay. I got Denmark, and shortly after, I applied for the national team in Denmark and got selected as their National Committee Vice President. At the same time, AIESEC International chose me as their social media manager. With both my National Committee role and AI internship role, my people and I were making magic in the marketing for both Denmark and AIESEC Global. I truly enjoyed my journey abroad. In 2023, I became the National President of AIESEC in Denmark.

This is my AIESEC journey. My journey was genuinely challenging, but again, with humility comes the sincerity of why I am doing this for AIESEC and society: to achieve peace and the fulfilment of humankind's potential. I would never know what would have happened if I had chosen another route, but I will always be grateful for whatever life choices I have taken so far because that's how AIESEC helped me to develop my own leadership, to help me define what leadership is all about to myself and the people around me.

AIESEC IN ITALY

Marco Villa - AIESEC in Italy - 1990

Marco was an active AIESEC member from 1990 to 1995. Throughout the years, his responsibility grew from being a member to being part of the International Support Team to becoming an AIESEC International Advisory Board Member.

In the early 1990s, AIESEC was focused on two main areas - exchange and the Global Theme Program. In 1995, Marco coordinated AIESEC's involvement in the PRODERE project, a project managed by the United Nations Development Program and financed by the Italian government. The objective was to contribute to the process of peace in Central America, helping the populations affected by the conflicts to successfully reintegrate within their original environment or into the communities where they originated from. After the success of the cooperation between PRODERE and AIESEC in Italy, they bridged Italy with Central America through the creation of traineeship opportunities. In the same year, this project won the AIESEC award for best project worldwide.

AIESEC shaped Marco's mindset more than he thought possible. In high school, his personal goal was to find a good job and become wealthy as this was what was generally considered as being successful, but everything changed after he became an AIESEC member. He understood that through cross-cultural collaboration, he could create a bigger impact than as an individual.

Since his days in AIESEC, Marco has been the Managing Director of a small venture capital firm where he supported entrepreneurs focused on sustainable business ideas to set up their own businesses. Today, Marco is the CEO of a consulting firm and is a Senior Trainer & Instructional Designer at Ferrari.

Daniela Rodriguez Castillo - AIESEC in Italy - 2021

My international volunteering experience with AIESEC in Italy completely changed my life. As a leader, it helped me develop great resilience. Additionally, I faced the challenge of not having internet access in my host home, which made overcoming the different obstacles of my experience more difficult.

Living in Italy during my international volunteering experience and simultaneously working as the National Media Manager for AIESEC in Colombia allowed me to grow in every aspect. I learned to adapt to a new culture and communicate in a foreign language. Each day was a challenge that pushed me to surpass my limits and discover new skills and strengths. I dealt with a 7-hour time difference; while it was nighttime in Colombia, it was early morning in Italy. Yet, I still had meetings at 3-4 in the morning to continue fulfilling my role and living my volunteering experience in Italy simultaneously.

The lack of internet connection in my host home in Italy was an additional challenge. I had to find alternative solutions to fulfill my responsibilities as the National Media Manager in Colombia and actively participate in the volunteering role in Italy. This limitation taught me to be more creative, organized, and emotionally strong in seeking solutions and not giving up. I remained strong to stay present and continue doing my work despite being on the other side of the world.

I managed to continue with AIESEC in Colombia as part of the support team for Media Public Relations. We innovated in AIESEC's networks in Colombia and collaborated with influencers, collectives, new leaders, and young voices in the country. I also became the Youth Speak Forum Colombia ambassador for the second year, and I am currently the event's Manager.

I started working with my best friend from Colombia, whom I met during my volunteering experience in Italy, with her brand Satanascouture. Now, we work as entrepreneurs, bringing the brand to Europe. I am the Director of Sales and Brand Expansion for Satanascouture in Madrid, Spain, and Europe.

Currently, I am also part of the Digital Media Committee of Amnesty International Spain in Madrid. This opportunity has allowed me to actively collaborate to defend human rights and continue contributing to social change.

In summary, my volunteering experience in Italy was just the beginning of a transformative journey. Through entrepreneurship with Satanas Couture, my participation as a Youth Speak Forum Ambassador, my role as the Manager Delegate Experience, and my involvement with Amnesty International, I have continued to grow as a leader and contribute to causes I am passionate about. These opportunities have shaped my impact on the world, not only in Colombia but also in Italy, Spain, and many other places.

AIESEC IN KENYA

Vanessa Diane Mbugua - AIESEC in Kenya - 2019

Who I am today is a result of the development I was able to achieve through AIESEC and the support of those around me in the organization.

When I was on the national team for AIESEC in Kenya, we were facing a major leadership crisis where people were not applying for national positions. Being one of the oldest entities (53 years), this was alarming and worrying. I found inspiration in an unconventional space where I was part of the entity support team under the Organizational Development team. We were four people wondering how to keep an entity alive at a time when everything felt hopeless. In that space, I learned that our role as leaders is to always keep the organization inspired so that we can be sustainable. This was the birth of Telling Stories of AIESEC in Kenya.

In that Google Meet call at some random hour, a random conversation took place in May 2020, which would lead to something great. We created space for people (alumni & members) to tell their Stories. This initiative showcased the impact of leadership positions to 400+ people, and my people made it happen. I truly believe that this project led my entity to move from 3 national team applicants to 12+ applicants.

Moving from AIESEC in Kenya not being seen and heard to going towards a reach of 50,000+ across the Country among the youth. All in all, believing in a dream made me believe in myself and being worthy of leading. I encourage every young leader to speak up about their ideas and dreams. The right people are there to support you and help you sharpen your mind. Thank you, AIESEC for making me believe.

Michelle Mutevu- AIESEC in Kenya - 2019

It's the year 2021, right after the peak of the pandemic, and AIESEC in Kenya is on the verge of being closed down. We needed more representation on the national team, and we were in debt. Some of our alumni suggested we close down and start fresh. We had members that were so excited about being part of the organization. That dream was about to end. I was a Vice President at the local level for about five months, and I took the step to leave my post and join the national team. Only two people were active in the national team. I had to manage all exchange portfolios, handle some HR work, marketing, and all national events, and majorly work with local teams for all the above-mentioned portfolios. This was an exciting yet frightening time, but there was never time for panic; the rule was 'just do it scared.'

All we had was a few alumni and members who still believed in the vision of the organization and doing the impossible. We saw applications for an Organizing Committee for an AIESEC conference in Dubai rolled out and asked people to apply for it and get an international conference experience since we had just gotten out of a country lockdown.

We ended up not only being the entity with the largest representation in the Organizing Committee for our regional (MEA) Youth Speak Forum conference but also having the largest delegation. Our members represented our region well by taking up higher roles. All people needed was hope. We proved that it will take just one or two people to believe in the vision for the masses to believe, too. Young members of AIESEC in Kenya took responsibility for a conference, and the narrative changed. Upon returning to Kenya, our members involved in this conference were applying for higher leadership positions.

My experience in AIESEC has taught me that with leadership comes responsibility. Young people should take responsibility if change is what we seek. Thank you, AIESEC!

AIESEC IN LEBANON

Ali Badreddine - AIESEC in Lebanon - 2019

I joined AIESEC as a bookish physics major who planned to commit his life to science and breakthroughs in research, yet needed a routine break from studying and wanted to challenge himself. Something inside me really wanted to get accepted to AIESEC when I applied and did the interview without knowing why. I cannot deny that the experience started very awkwardly with me, as I was invited to dance a roll call in a room full of strangers, and my mind was with the equations I left in the book at home. My thought was that I would only get a bit further in my experience and quit to go back to my planned life.

That 'bit further' turned to an experience of looking after exchange participants who came to Lebanon, then led me to apply for a team leader position. During my early days as a team leader, the world stopped its normal behaviour due to COVID-19. Yet, this challenge made me realize the beauty of AIESEC; my team never gave up on our legacy. From this moment onwards, I only looked forward to applying to the next position. My journey continued as the Local Committee Vice President of Incoming Global Volunteer at AIESEC in Beirut, followed by the Member Committee Vice President for the same program at AIESEC in Lebanon. Midway through my experience in the MC, I made a very brave decision to end my own function due to the challenges that our entity was facing. I realized that my next position would be to lead the whole National Office, and applied for the National President position.

My journey as the National President was one that was full of ups and downs. It was inspiring to lead a team and guide them as they were anxious and anticipated quick results. Their anticipation ended up blinding them from the sustainable progress they were actually making for the entity. Given the slow pace at which we developed, I was determined to continue the legacy and momentum and took another brave decision to re-term as a National President, and this is where I currently stand.

I would say that my AIESEC experience changed suddenly from confinement behind a laptop to bonding within my entity to connecting with AIESECers internationally through regional and global conferences. It is not a linear experience, and I only realized my development because I was patient enough to let time do its trick. One thing I got to know for sure, perhaps more than any other generation that preceded me, AIESEC is not meant to stop. If AIESEC were meant to end, it had many chances to do so, yet we realize that on and on it goes, providing continuous generations experiences to activate their leadership.

AIESEC IN LITHUANIA

Diana Žukauskaitė - AIESEC in Lithuania - 2018

In 2018, many of my friends and teammates in AIESEC encouraged me to run for the national president role at AIESEC in Lithuania. After feeling their support and confidence in me, I decided to apply for the position.

While I did get elected into this role, my fear of making mistakes or ruining the hard work of everyone who worked alongside me took over me immediately. As a result of this lack of trust in myself, I acted in ways that were very out of character for me —my gut would tell me one thing, and I would make the opposite decision. These insecurities and fears led me into conflicts, failures, and disappointments, and it wasn't until much later in my term that I realized I functioned far better when I trusted myself, embraced the person I was and played to my strengths. Thanks to my support system and the learnings AIESEC provided me throughout the year; I learned that I was exactly where I needed and deserved to be.

My advice to anyone taking leadership roles in AIESEC is to stay true to yourself and trust that the organization is built to teach you and guide you along the way during your team leader journey.

AIESEC IN MALAYSIA

Debby Shing - AIESEC in Malaysia - 2007

Joining AIESEC in 2006 has had a lifelong impact on my life. It planted seeds of social impact in my heart & empowered me to unleash my potential and chase my dreams. It also brought me lifetime friendships from around the world.

I went to my Global Volunteer experience in 2007 at home for disabilities in Malaysia with nine other AIESEC interns worldwide. Sixteen years since then, I'm still in touch with many friends I made at that time, especially two disabled kids back then who are now grownups. Staying in touch was not easy, especially since that was before smartphones and social media apps, but we managed to witness and support each other's growth, and I'm proud to see their achievement in life now.

Being an enthusiast and a firm believer that cultural exchanges can help one understand the world better and hence reduce conflicts and make the world a better place led me to found my social impact travelling company - LIVIN Xperience, working with local social enterprises at destinations, offering local authentic cultural experiences for travellers to learn about one's culture, not just consuming the food and scenery.

I had an opportunity to work in a global public relations firm after my AIESEC career. However, I needed to achieve more impact because I served commercial brands and corporate clients, marketing their products and services by influencing the consumer market with communications tactics.

I then co-founded a public relations agency that serves social enterprises and nonprofits, using our communications expertise to serve more meaningful purposes. One thing that AIESEC taught me is that the world needs more voice on positive impacts, not consumerism.

Jun Kit Wai - AIESEC in Malaysia - 2022

I started my AIESEC journey as a Member in the Incoming Global Volunteer portfolio. In this journey, I was able to see the impact youth could have on the communities around us. It was a really touching and eye-opening experience for me as I got a very rare opportunity to sit and listen to the life stories of people from diverse backgrounds, their passions, and their motivations as to why they wanted to contribute to the world. One of the most interesting stories I've heard was that one of the volunteers was from an outskirt area of my country. She wanted to join our project as she believed that she could make a change for other young people in rural areas to have better education opportunities than she had, as she shared that it was a tough journey for her to get to where she is now.

Now, seven months into my Local Committee President journey, I would say the key defining thing I've learnt is that we, as AIESECers, are capable of doing so much more than we ever imagined to help change lives!I am so glad that AIESEC is present in my country and is working to make an impact on youth and the world every day.

Thenuri Gajaweera - AIESEC in Malaysia - 2023

I joined AIESEC as a member in the Incoming Global Talent portfolio. During a short span of 9 months, I had friends from more than 50 countries and was learning about cultures that I thought I'd never get to experience in this lifetime!

When I got elected as the VP of Incoming Global Talent in Colombo North Sri Lanka amidst the COVID pandemic, I realized and learnt how agile this organization is and how we can continue instilling AIESEC values as learnings.

I took part in 3 Entity Support Team roles in the Netherlands, Sweden, and Malaysia to step up and work alongside the National teams of these entities to contribute towards their growth. This was such a great experience; it allowed me to step out of my comfort zone and explore running operations and who I am as a person! The guidance, support and leadership showcased by these individuals kept me going and applying for higher roles to be a leader like them one day.

I'm currently the National Head of Incoming Global Talent in Malaysia, and working alongside the national team has been nothing but exceptional! The warmth and acceptance we have in the team while working with AIESECers from four different countries strengthens the AIESEC cross-cultural understanding even more. We, as a team, work together #ForAUnitedMalaysia.

AIESEC would not be here if it wasn't for the daring individuals who take challenges to become better versions of themselves every single day. Thank you for believing in me, AIESEC. I will forever be grateful to be an AIESECer.

AIESEC in Mexico

Alberto Ziehl Beltran - AIESEC in Mexico - 1986

AIESEC has been a milestone and key impact in my life. Participating in a mission of international understanding, the promotion of peace, and the fulfilment of humankind really changed my perspective in the late 1980s, so I have continued to be close to the organization until today.

Not only did AIESEC help me gain experience and develop my skills, but it also introduced me to my wife, Idalia Pierdant, and we have been together for 35 years. Thanks to the vision, commitment, and leadership skills acquired in AIESEC, we were able to become founders of an NGO specializing in hippotherapy for the handicapped (www.cerla.org.mx). This project has lasted for 25 uninterrupted years. Our project also received an award from AIESEC International in 2015.

Idalia herself has been part of the Board of Advisors of her Local Committee for over 25 continuous years, being an international example. For her social impact, she was awarded the "International Peace Builder Award" at the International Congress in Egypt in 2018.

As an Alumni, I have participated in several roles, including President of the AIESES Alumni International (AAI) Board, Executive Board Member of AAI and AAI President (PAAI); it was also life-changing to be PAAI during the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine since our AIESEC values, leadership and organizational resilience were put to the test.

Eric Osmar Zayas Valdez - AIESEC in Mexico - 2014

For the past decade, my life has been a journey of non-stop impact through my involvement in AIESEC. From my early days as a member in Mexico, I learned the invaluable skill of seizing opportunities. It was there that the foundation of my AIESEC journey was laid, and I discovered the transformative power of grabbing hold of chances that came my way. Little did I know that this experience would set the tone for the years to come.

As my involvement with AIESEC expanded, so did my horizons. Venturing into different roles across countries, I found myself in France, where I was immersed in the richness of multicultural environments. It was in France that my spark truly ignited during my first conference, revealing the profound impact AIESEC could have on personal growth and global understanding. The thrill of working in diverse settings fueled my passion for making a difference on a global scale.

One of the most poignant chapters of my AIESEC journey unfolded during my volunteering experience in the Czech Republic. This experience taught me a powerful lesson – impact knows no boundaries and can manifest in any size or form. As I transitioned into leadership roles, such as being the Vice President in Mexico, I realized the responsibility that comes with shaping the future of others. Later, leading as part of the national team in Ecuador, I embraced the challenge and recognized that resilience is not just a trait; it is a state of mind essential for personal and professional growth.

My journey continued to unfold as I took on roles in AIESEC's regional offices in both the Americas and Europe. These experiences reinforced the idea that it is never too late to learn again. AIESEC, with its diverse projects, conferences, and opportunities, has become synonymous with my life story. From Mexico to Ecuador, from volunteering in the Czech Republic to leading in regional offices, each step has added a new layer to my understanding of impact, resilience, and the continuous pursuit of personal and collective growth.

Being able to travel to more than 30 countries thanks to AIESEC has been an amazing experience. Every chapter with AIESEC has been a testament to the transformative power of pursuing passion and, even in the face of fear, doing it anyway.

Tereza Mayer - AIESEC in Mexico - 2014

I will always be thankful for the impact that AIESEC has had on my life. AIESEC has always been present in different stages in my life, and it has helped me grow as a person and within my career. I have had countless amazing moments with the organization, and it has helped me open doors for myself professionally and allowed me to find the love of my life. At the end of the day, the impact is not just about me; it is also about the impact I was able to have on others. Here are some stories to reflect this:

When I was part of the national team in Mexico, I was the Account Manager of PwC, our main national partner. Between the Account Delivery team in the Local Committee and myself, we took care of more than 80 interns during my term. There was a project in the company where they requested more than 20 interns from countries like Australia, Spain, China, Peru, Colombia, Hungary, the Philippines, the US, & Germany. Years after, I met one of the interns in Mexico. She stayed here with a new job opportunity, and she built her life in the country. She was so grateful because we changed her life and job perspectives. I'm so happy because I have met with so many interns globally, and being able to see the big moments that AIESEC can create for them makes me feel very grateful.

After my Member Committee (MC) term finished, I took an internship in Santiago, where I worked in an organization of vulnerable kids. It was a challenging experience as I thought it was going to be easier, but dealing with really difficult situations for kids was heartbreaking. Despite this, I could share about my country & my personal experiences to help open their perspectives and make them dream of bigger goals, travel and aspire for more.

In my regional experience in Latin America, I was in charge of boosting the new Global Entrepreneur program in Latam, working closer with countries like Brazil and Colombia to improve and adapt the program. I also aimed to impact start-ups and entrepreneurs to help escalate their businesses by having the right talent. On the other hand, I worked in this role to create more opportunities in Latin America for youth to learn from business professionals and help shape their careers.

Moving on to my career after AIESEC, during my first interview with Robert Walters, the CEO, I discovered he was a past AIESECer and had previously had an internship with PwC. This made for a great icebreaker and helped me have a good first impression and secure a new role as Head of Marketing in Mexico and Chile.

To this day, I continue to support AIESECers by guiding them on their next steps and helping them find job opportunities after their experiences with AIESEC. I truly believe that being able to work at something you love and feel passionate about can change your life and contribute to a bigger purpose. Thank you to AIESEC for showing this to me.

César Armando Ramírez Nuño - AIESEC in Mexico - 2015

I always dreamed of being part of the Member Committee (MC) of AIESEC in Mexico. I felt very proud of my entity and wanted to contribute to a better Mexico.

One thing you should know about me is that I am a very stubborn and determined person. Therefore, I applied nine times across different years, and every time, I was rejected, so it was tough to see my dreams falling apart. Nevertheless, those rejections took me to other places worldwide, and I became part of the national teams in France, Sweden, and Chile.

Despite achieving growth in every MC term, I still felt inadequate for not making it to the MC of my home entity. However, after my term as President of AIESEC in Chile, I connected the dots. Nothing happens by chance.

I was elected Member Committee President in a critical time; our entity was dropping in results quickly, and Chile was in the middle of a social revolution that made the center of Santiago look like a war zone. We also faced many struggles as our local chapters did not trust the national team. Surprisingly, the pandemic hit, and I had to assume the role months in advance. With little trust from our plenary, no national team applicants, and a chaotic national and international context, it became a make-it-or-break-it situation. I feared for the closure of AIESEC in Chile and being unable to leave a legacy for the next generations of youth in the country.

I contacted more than 100 people to apply for my team despite the difficulties. Fortunately, the efforts were successful, and I was blessed with a dream team that believed in me and, most importantly, believed in AIESEC in Chile. Our team name was MC Flare because we aimed to ignite the fire that could transform our entity.

That year, we managed to gain the trust of our LCs and achieve each of our goals. It wasn't easy, but we ensured that our members understood how our purpose connected to making a contribution to a better Chile in the context we had. However, the most important thing is how they developed themselves as leaders and created long-lasting memories of their AIESEC experience. I am sure this was a year no one involved will forget.

At the end of my President term, I understood that I might not have been prepared to be MC in Mexico. However, my mission in AIESEC was to spread the passion and love I developed for the organization in my home entity. Thanks to this journey, I have met wonderful people from all across the world and eventually became part of the Europe Regional Office and, later, part of AIESEC International.

I wouldn't change anything in my AIESEC experience. Sometimes, you don't get exactly what you wish for, but if you turn that pain into grit, you can achieve your and other people's dreams.

Soraya Morales - AIESEC in Mexico - 2020

When I was the MCVP (Member Committee Vice President) of Incoming Global Volunteer at AIESEC in Mexico during the term 19.20, I led 33 young individuals (Local Committee Vice Presidents) from around the country who voluntarily worked daily to contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Each of them had teams, and altogether, there were around 400+ young people working in Mexico towards the same goal.

Their term started in February 2020 with an unexpected challenge related to immigration issues, making it difficult for over 80 young people (Exchange Participants) to enter the country for their volunteer exchange. Young people were being rejected from entering the country for no reason. Moreover, after the problem was solved, as if it hadn't been enough already, COVID-19 made it impossible for them to continue their work.

Many of these young individuals were driven by achieving specific goals, such as the number of children they provide workshops to, the number of foreign youth volunteering in their city, and the number of organizations we support. These were things that, unfortunately, were not going to be achieved as we expected.

My biggest challenge as their leader was finding ways to keep them motivated even after they faced two major crises, during which hundreds of people were affected.

All I can say is that I never thought, at the age of 24, I would be proud to lead 33 young individuals through a crisis. This was only made possible by their resilience and their determination to keep working towards our mission. Their decision wasn't to give up but to adapt. This management period will likely be remembered differently, probably as the generation affected by forces beyond our control yet continued to move forward.

Janette Gonzalez - AIESEC in Mexico - 2022

I want to share with you how I discovered my resilience through my experience in AIESEC.

My connection with AIESEC began after I completed my degree in 2020, when I was at a crossroads, unsure of my future. While I wasn't certain about my path, I knew I wanted to be part of something significant that would create a positive impact on the world. From day one at AIESEC, I was captivated by its values, structure, membership, and ideology. Everything clicked, leading me to commit to being the best team member, actively participating in all events, and performing my role with dedication.

One month after joining the organization, I received an email from the Local Committee President (LCP) of the 20/21 term stating that the committee was at risk of closure due to a lack of applicants for leadership in the first two rounds. Faced with this situation and after some hesitation, I decided to step forward and asked myself, "What if I apply?" So, after an intensive AIESEC course with the LCP for a week, I submitted my application and successfully advanced to the interview round. Although I wasn't selected as the LCP at that time, it didn't deter me. I applied for the position of Local Committee Vice President of Finance and Legalities (LCVP F&L) primarily because I wanted to learn about finances, an area that was unfamiliar to me. Later, I decided to take on a new challenge and reapplied for LCP, committing to making that year the best of my life.

However, due to personal circumstances, my term as LCP was thwarted, making 2022 a very challenging year for me. Nevertheless, I am not one to give up in the face of adversity. We made significant progress in the Aguascalientes Committee, establishing new partnerships and alliances for all programs. The most noteworthy achievement was in the area of EwA (Engagement with AIESEC), where we successfully organized the only local Youth Speak Forum in Mexico in 2022.

Before concluding my term, I came across an Instagram announcement about an incredible opportunity to attend the 67th Commission on the Status of Women at the UN Headquarters, a dream for many, including myself. I decided to apply, thinking the worst that could happen was rejection. In January 2023, I received the surprising news that my application had been accepted, and I would have the opportunity to attend the United Nations Headquarters in New York. I couldn't believe it.
My AIESEC experience provided me with valuable lessons, and closing this chapter with the highlight of representing the organization at the UN was a dream come true. With the certainty that I wanted to continue contributing to the world, I am currently pursuing my master's in international law at the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom.

Hugo Rodríguez - AIESEC in Mexico - 2023

The story I want to share with you is not about my triumphs and failures. Rather, it is about how Hugo, who joined an organization he did not know in February 2017, is completely different from the Hugo who writes this text today. This is a story about how leadership made me a better version of myself and how I realized the importance of being human and working for and by people.

Leadership was a topic I saw in school as theoretical but never practical. Living AIESEC was a trigger point in my life since I was not only aware of my privilege as a young person but also found how to give this privilege a purpose. During these six years, I experienced a complete metamorphosis due to the welcoming and safe atmosphere AIESEC provided me. I accepted myself as part of the LGBTQIA+ community, I managed to work on my depression and anxiety problems, I met hundreds of friends and like-minded individuals, and I was able to collaborate for impact in three different countries (Mexico, Ecuador, and Guatemala). Through my work in AIESEC, I understood that I could do and achieve whatever I set out to do.

Today, after six years, I can only say thank you. Thank you to all the people who trusted me (and those who didn't), my leaders, and the people I led. Thank you for the advice, the tests, the roles, the triumphs, the challenges, but above all, thank you for being there. Yes, AIESEC is always about the people; it is the beginning and the end, but it is not just about any people; it is about young leaders. That's why I would like to end this story with a question: What are you waiting for to start becoming a better version of yourself?

AIESEC IN MOROCCO

Nihal Naji - AIESEC in Morocco - 2023

My story started in February 2021 when my classmates introduced me to AIESEC. Since that day, I've been hooked to this organization and stayed for 2.5 years to develop myself and develop leadership in the youth of my country. I recently started working on the national team as the Member Committee Vice President of Business Development and Engage with AIESEC which has been one of the most challenging experiences I had so far.

The earthquake that happened on September 8th, 2023, in Morocco, was devastating to the country and our people. This crisis shook the whole country but called us AIESECers to action. Within a couple of days, we were able to put out campaigns to help support relief campaigns and aid that would help Moroccans recover nationwide. Resilience and adaptability were some of the main things that I learned from this situation. The huge support that we got from the global & national network was truly amazing because it showed me what AIESEC was all about. At the end of the day, the beauty of AIESEC comes from the passion our young people have for making a difference in the world and showing solidarity for world peace and compassion.

AIESEC has been my home for the past 2.5 years, and without the organization, the opportunities it gave me, and the friendships it allowed me to foster, I would not be who I am today. #ProudToBeAnAIESECer.

AIESEC IN MYANMAR

Aung Paing Phyo & Htet Aung Hlawn - AIESEC in Myanmar - 2014

AIESEC in Myanmar was founded in 2014 to become one of the youngest entities in the plenary. Back then, AIESEC was not known in the student community in Myanmar; the entire membership was not more than 15 members with no Local Committees. AIESEC in Myanmar was small but active on IGCDP (Incoming Global Volunteer) and IGIP (Incoming Global Talent) until the financial troubles occurred at the beginning of 2016, causing 90% of the national team to resign.

The President at the time decided to create Local Committees (LCs) and have the presidents of these LCs serve as part of the national team. The first three LCs of AIESEC in Myanmar were expanded in January 2017. Shortly after, the Member Committee President resigned, and the LCs had to survive without a national team for six months.

Both Aung and Htet (Local Committee Presidents of AIESEC in YTU and Yangon) were committed to striving for entity survival, as the youth of Myanmar desperately needed quality leadership experiences due to its tragic leadership failures in the past. AIESEC Yangon and YTU made huge efforts on Outgoing Global Volunteer and Incoming Global Volunteer, ensuring significant performance and impact every month so that regional and global plenary could see AIESEC in Myanmar thriving.

Despite a tough journey with challenging membership experiences,, AIESEC in Myanmar survived and was succeeded by the full national 17.18 team, paving the way for the current state of AIESEC in Myanmar.

Andrea Joana Samaniego - AIESEC in Myanmar - 2017

For the 2016-2017 term, I ran for the President's role of AIESEC in the Philippines, uncontested. Unfortunately, I lost this election, and it left me without direction; I was unsure of what path to take.

I still wanted an experience that could be driven by my desire for self-development and impact.
I mulled about going on a volunteer exchange but wanted a more long-term experience. Then, I came across the application for the position of President (MCP) of AIESEC in Myanmar. Was I ready for the challenge? Being an international AIESECer on a national team for an entity that is structured as a start-up is not the most glamorous job and comes with a lot of hurdles and challenges. Despite my apprehensions, I decided to give it a go. I was already familiar with the entity and the position because the previous MCP was also from the Philippines and would document her experience on social media. I thought to myself, if she can do it, then I can too.

Fast forward to leading the entity, I remember arriving at the team flat and being greeted by all the current national team (MC) members and Exchange Participants (EPs). (Yes, we all lived in the same house, which was cramped but fun!). During this experience, I met some of my best friends and created so many memories!

One of the first memorable moments for me was the first conference of the year. How fun and awe-filled it was just listening to all their dreams for themselves and their country. The youth of Myanmar have so much heart and potential; I thought, "wow, it's great that AIESEC is here now to show them endless possibilities."

Unfortunately, as the months passed, I lost many of my national team members due to the entity's lack of funds. Even though there were not enough funds to get paid, I persevered and worked three side jobs to make do. This is when I decided it was time to empower the local talent in Myanmar! I recruited local talent as my new MC team almost halfway through the term and never looked back.

Once our new national team was established, things started working very smoothly. Our Local Committee recruitment was on fire, 100s of signups mostly because of their hard work of going to universities to pitch about AIESEC. We were able to build a community of quality local leaders equally determined to see peace and fulfillment of humankind's potential in their communities and in Myanmar.

This strong recruitment led to a very eventful Local Committee Elections, and ultimately, when applications for National President were released, a local candidate applied for the very first time in many years.

Unfortunately, the local candidate did not win, but this was just the start of the leadership journey of AIESEC in Myanmar. By the 2018 term, we had our first National President native to Myanmar, and to date, all national team members have come from Local Committees in Myanmar! Sometimes, it takes that one pivotal moment to create a lasting impact, and my experience in this entity showed me this.

By the end of my term, from just 1 Local Committee, we grew to 3 Local Committees. We held huge events for youth, which were received really well. And I am proud to say that the local members were so empowered that we had a very strong leadership pipeline for the years following. It was heartwarming to see, and following their story now, where they are mostly local-led, is amazing! I wouldn't trade the experience for anything else. I am in awe of AIESEC Myanmar still going strong despite the ongoing civil war, and I believe that this entity's resilience is an inspiration for AIESECers worldwide.

AIESEC IN NEPAL

Channery Fan - AIESEC in Nepal - 2017

I still remember the thrill and exhilaration I felt when I arrived in Nepal, a country bursting at the seams with natural beauty and cultural richness. It was there, in the heart of this Himalayan nation, that I was able to participate in a volunteer program that would change my life forever.

As a volunteer, I worked to increase the sales of local handicrafts, which were made by the left-behind elderly. I was able to use my knowledge and skills to help these hardworking individuals gain a foothold in the global market. One of the greatest challenges we faced was the language barrier. However, my team and I quickly banded together to overcome this obstacle. We leveraged technology and translation apps to ensure we were always on the same page. It was a testament to our teamwork, unity, and collective resolve that we were able to navigate this obstacle with ease.

This experience was so memorable for me because I still remember all the elders' smiles and the songs they used to sing for us. I also remember fun moments when we would joke around and get to do their makeup, which made them very happy. My Global Volunteer opportunity was one of the most beautiful moments in my life. It was a transformative experience for me. It not only allowed me to make a difference in the lives of others but also instilled in me a sense of deep satisfaction and personal fulfillment. I realized that my knowledge could help the NGO and contribute towards more benefits for the community. That's something I want to continue doing in my career and something I'm extremely proud of to this day.

Snehi Bajracharya - AIESEC in Nepal - 2020

Change is the most stubborn yet inevitable experience anyone can face. My National Committee President term was during the transition from virtual operations to in-person operations after the pandemic. All the members of our entity and even some national team members were recruited during the lockdown period. While transitioning to pre-COVID operations, we struggled because of how much knowledge we had lost during the pandemic. As President, I lost a lot of confidence in myself and began to break down. However, together as an entity, we powered through these struggles — we hosted our first in-person events, meetings, and conferences, and our membership was able to get a far better understanding of the impact that AIESEC creates because of this.

Since my presidency, I have seen three of my national team members take on further positions in AIESEC; one of them is the chair of the ethics subcommittee of AIESEC Nepal, and two of the local presidents from my term have moved onto the national team as well. One of my team members has even become a Vice President for AIESEC International. Despite the hardships that we faced because of the pandemic, we are growing as an entity, and we are proud to contribute to the legacy of AIESEC Nepal by continually creating impactful leaders.

Aaryasha Budhathoki - AIESEC in Nepal - 2021

At the start of the pandemic, I was looking for direction, and that is when I decided to apply for AIESEC. For me, having conversations with AIESEC members, even before joining AIESEC, was the moment I fell in love with the organization because of the community and the ideas. A place where you can freely express yourself, your thoughts, and your innovations, and there will be people who will not only acknowledge them but help improve them. "A Whole New World" would be a song that best describes my journey. AIESEC lets me explore the world, the possibilities, the opportunities, and the network and live the value of a world citizen at its best.

I don't know if every AIESECer has this moment, but I had my "this is AIESEC, and this is what we as an organization can do" moment. When I joined a collaborative event called Global Youth Dialogue. At this event, we had meaningful conversations with youth from different countries, and I was grouped with two people from Japan. We had similar ages, all three of us, and the way we clicked, the conversations we had, and the bond I share with them even now is so strong even though one of us is on a Europe tour and the other is finishing college in Japan.

I am writing this story in Nepal after one year of meeting virtually. It made me realize that it is possible. It is possible for me, a girl who cannot travel abroad a lot, to have friendships with people from different countries this strong just from a few conversations through AIESEC. From then on, I have been an AIESECer and am proud to be one.

It is because of the people I met during my experience that I am who I am today. The impact of the people who led me, whom I have taught, who were there for me when I was having a hard time, and who organized a celebration party for every achievement I made has entirely shaped my journey and moulded me into the leader I am today.

AIESEC helped me find myself, my identity, strengths, and weaknesses. After I joined AIESEC, I did a SWOT analysis of myself. My confidence in myself and my capabilities came after I got the opportunity to learn and implement my ideas firsthand. When you work and live amongst people who constantly strive to be the best versions of themselves daily, it's hard not to improve myself and see progress in my abilities.

Yuga Thapa - AIESEC in Nepal - 2022

In the term of 22.23, I had the privilege of serving as the Local Committee Vice President of Talent Management for AIESEC in Kathmandu. As we started to recruit new members and organize a local conference, we encountered a moment that would test our resilience and determination. Our Local Committee President was absent, leaving us Vice Presidents to open the conference on our own.

Just as we were grappling with the challenges of hosting this conference without the direction of our President, news reached us that she intended to resign from her position. This revelation hit us hard, leaving us in a state of hopelessness. However, amidst the confusion, we, the Local Committee Vice Presidents, made a collective decision to stay united and rise above the circumstances. As an Executive Board, we were determined to pursue excellence and propel our Local Committee to new heights. Despite the absence of our Local Committee President, we worked tirelessly to turn things around. In less than four months, we successfully eliminated the committee's debts, orchestrated more than ten exchanges, and organized numerous impactful events.

Our efforts paid off when we were honoured with the Best Portfolios award for all departments at the national gala night. The journey on the Executive Board without the guidance of a President was undoubtedly challenging. However, it was precisely this adversity that fueled our motivation.

This experience inspired me to apply for the position of Local Committee President, with a vision to create a new legacy of leadership and a robust pipeline for future Vice Presidents. Our collective experience taught us the true meaning of resilience, teamwork, and the ability to turn setbacks into stepping stones toward success.

Reflecting on our remarkable journey, we take immense pride in the remarkable accomplishments we achieved as the Executive Board. Today, as I reflect on that transformative period, I am reminded that leadership is not confined to a single individual but rather emerges from the collective strength of a dedicated team. It is through the challenges we face and the obstacles we overcome that we discover our true potential. Thus, I want to let this story serve as a testament to the power of unity, perseverance, and the unwavering spirit of AIESEC in Kathmandu.

Satkar Raj Shrestha - AIESEC in Nepal - 2023

I have been a part of AIESEC for three and half years now. In the second half of my AIESEC journey, the Member Committee (MC) team was not doing very well because the MCP (Member Committee President) was not available. It was difficult to communicate with the MCP, and gradually, it started affecting the work that we did at AIESEC in Nepal.

As an entity, we had to figure out a solution after the MCP resigned, and we had a meeting between the local presidents and the MC team to make a plan. Unfortunately, no one had stepped up for the MCP role since it was taken as a burden, and the last MCP had not set a good example for the role. As an LCP, seeing the state of my entity and no one wanting to step up, I was discouraged and disappointed. Seeing this, I decided to step up. Shortly after, I got the votes to become the proxy MCP and began my MCP experience.

There were definitely difficult times. I was responsible for rebuilding the team and the organization. The journey was filled with challenges, and some still remain. Even after my term, I continued to stay committed to seeing my entity grow and applied to be the MCP for yet another year. At this time, I was very unsure about the pipeline for MCVPs. However, one thing AIESEC has shown me time and time again is that if you believe in what you do and work for it consistently, things will work in your favour. That year, I ended up getting the most applications for MCVPs in the history of AIESEC in Nepal, and I now have a team of 7 amazing individuals. I was also able to kickstart new departments in my team for Public Relations and External Representation. I am very excited for the future of AIESEC in Nepal, and we are excited to host the 2023 Asia Pacific Summit.

My whole AIESEC journey has been filled with ups and downs. From being very demotivated to elated, this has been a journey of a lifetime. This experience has shown that leadership is the fundamental solution and I am proud to be an AIESECer.

AIESEC IN NEW ZEALAND

Lee Vallance - AIESEC in New Zealand - 1998

Born and bred in Aotearoa (New Zealand), I became a member of AIESEC over 25 years ago at Victoria University of Wellington, where I graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce and Administration. While studying there, I represented New Zealand and AIESEC at a Global Youth Village in Hiroshima. Ever since then, my passion has been fostering peace. In this regard, my picture represents this as I was honoured to help pave the way for the Green Legacy Hiroshima Initiative to extend to my home country of New Zealand recently.

Currently, my role in the AAI (AIESEC Alumni International) Content Crew is more managerial than that of the gifted group of content creators we have on board. I help wordsmith, manage, and publish content on behalf of the talented team of correspondents to keep the project in motion.

Those experiences and 25 years of acting as a bridge between cultures in Japan have made such an impression on me that I am determined to reconnect with fellow alumni to reignite the flame we all share for the greater good. Thus, the Sustainable Development Goals cannot wait. AIESEC Alumni are the perfect group of empowered people to make an impact. Let's go for it!

Nandesh Goudar - AIESEC in New Zealand - 2023

I've always been in awe of our way of leading this organization. How do we maintain continuity in an organization that always changes leaders? I'm sure everyone who has ever experienced AIESEC membership has thought of this at least once!

I figured out the answer after several AIESEC experiences. I was the Local Committee (LC) VP of Business Development in my home LC, AIESEC in Bengaluru, India. During VP transitions, I met my successor, Nikhil Raj, who is currently the LC President of AIESEC in Bengaluru. The time we spent together exploring AIESEC, exploring the depths of our leadership, and pushing each other beyond limits has become a story to be told in our LC. Because of the relationship we've built, we're now building a company together with an office located in the heart of our city. Since then, Nikhil has taken my failures into his learning and implemented initiatives in his LC that have taken the LC to great heights!

After Nikhil, Sehar Kaur & Gurusha Raghav took up the LC President mantle and have since taken Nikhil's failures into account, taking the LC to even greater heights! We now have the fourth-generation president, Mourya Kumar, and I am excited for him to continue the journey or learning and growth.

I saw this same progression of learning and building up from previous terms in AIESEC in Albania, where my experience as the National President of Albania led to the unfreezing of operations in the entity, which now my successor and his Member Committee have taken to new heights through challenges to start Incoming Global Volunteer after five years!

Now, as President of AIESEC in New Zealand, I've introduced an AIESEC VISA in association with the New Zealand Ministry of Youth and Business, which is sure to cause waves in the entity's exchanges. Again, this was possible with the support of my alumni, like Amy Lily Su, President of AIESEC in New Zealand from 2006-07.

Rotational leadership is one of our biggest strengths as an organization if done right! We can amplify this strength by maintaining relations with our alumni and successors. AIESEC belongs to the future and the past, while the present makes the most of the challenging environments we promise in our experiences. Thank you, AIESEC, for the growth I've been able to see in myself and others so far!

AIESEC IN NIGERIA

Femi Longe - AIESEC in Nigeria - 1996

In the early 2000s, AIESEC in Nigeria grew to be one of the countries in Africa with the most exchanges. This is in stark contrast to the periods between 1993 and 1999, when youth exchanges within Nigeria were logistically difficult due to travel and mobility restrictions. Femi spent nine years in AIESEC from 1996, and he has witnessed the highs and lows of his country and AIESEC in Nigeria.

Although AIESEC in Nigeria faced many challenges, its members never gave up. Armed with a strong focus, creativity and a commitment to building value-driven leaders, the situation of AIESEC in Nigeria turned around to become one of the best-growing member countries in AIESEC. Femi played a part in this revolution leading his local chapter and for his work within the National Team.

Femi recalls that one of the strongest lessons he learnt in AIESEC is to believe in “the Power of One” the belief that one person can make a difference – “if I have a dream, I’ll make a difference in the world.” - Femi Longe

In AIESEC, Femi also learned that he has the responsibility and ability to contribute to the world. AIESEC trainee sections, seminars, and conferences allowed him to discover his interests in leadership development. Since then, Femi has worked for and founded numerous non-profit organizations. Femi currently sits on AIESEC International’s Supervisory Group.

Oluwayemisi Anu Ogunsanya - AIESEC in Nigeria - 2002

This was my first conference ever at AIESEC.

At the Nigerian National Congress in AIESEC in Ibadan, 2002, there was a game where everyone had to intricately connect hands in a row under the legs of the person behind them. The point of the game was to ensure that the chain link never broke, but the obstacle for me was that this activity was being down outside in the rain. I was wearing brand new soft felt jeans, and the ground was dirty and wet with rain - I didn't want to go on my knees. The fellow behind me had very short limbs, and the lady in front of me could not easily move her legs. Yet the chain must not be broken. I was not eager to get dirty by crawling on the ground while still linking hands - my friend who was behind kept encouraging me not to break the link no matter what. This motivated me to go forward until the task was achieved. In the end, the instructor explained that the moral of the activity was that set goals must be achieved, and teamwork and encouragement are the keys to achieving goals.

This lesson I learned in AIESEC helped me to be exceptionally recognized by management throughout my Banking Career and, currently, in my entrepreneurial journey—it made my companies, Yemmelowo Ra'anan Ltd and Yemmylowo Enterprises, successful.

Maisie Salem - AIESEC in Nigeria - 2023

My AIESEC journey has been about becoming a leader, challenging my comfort zone and then helping others to do the same. When I joined AIESEC in JKUAT, I was super curious and ready to try anything or talk to anyone. The fact that I had direct leaders who were willing to guide and widen my mindset allowed me to have my first sales meeting even before I was fully onboarded and also join the Entity Support Team for Talent Management & Organizational Development within my first three weeks in AIESEC.

In this position as a Leadership Developer, I had to come up with programs that would work for the whole entity, connecting them with alumni and inspiring members to take on higher roles. The idea sounded crazy to me at first, but again, I was here for the challenge, right? Now, the concept is used even in local entities for the same purpose long after my term there ended in October 2021. That was an awesome experience that drove me to apply for Local Committee Vice President, Incoming Global Talent, and my current role, Local Committee President in AIESEC in JKUAT.

Through local and international conferences, capacity-building-based events, and leadership experiences, AIESEC has also introduced me to people who have become lifelong friends. Working with AIESEC has allowed me to discover the beauty of interacting with people from different cultures and learning their dances, foods, and music. Every day, I'm challenged to examine and stand by my values and push beyond my comfort zone, and I couldn't ask for anything else.

AIESEC IN PAKISTAN

Jehanzeb Iftikhar - AIESEC in Pakistan - 2021

When I was first recruited to AIESEC, I was a very shy and introverted person. I couldn't talk to anyone properly, let alone greet someone. A few months later, I registered for my induction conference and saw different videos of the AIESEC conference. At that moment, I thought AIESEC wasn't a place for me and that I wouldn't be able to survive here. I talked to my Vice President and told them I wanted to quit. During the discussion, they said, "Just give AIESEC some time; it's going to do wonders for you." With that, I gave AIESEC a chance.

Not only did I go to the induction conference, I took up the role of Head Delegate for my Local Committee (LC), where I would be responsible for my LC's whole delegation. That experience was a life-changer for me. It gave me the opportunity to challenge myself and come out of my introverted bubble so I could be more outgoing and involved. A few months later, I was selected as part of the Regional Support Team for the Asia Pacific Regional Office, where I was the only member from AIESEC in Pakistan representing my entity. I was then elected as the Organising Committee President for an initiative my LC was running, and then Entity Support Team and Team Leader after that. I could finally see myself growing. I could see myself stepping out of my shell and comfort zone. More importantly, I saw that I could be a role model for people like me.

Finally, in my current role as Entity Control Board chair, where I am responsible not only for my team members but also for ensuring quality exchange experiences for our exchange participants, I made it my purpose to make an impact on young people. When I selected my team, there were people who were shy like I was before. Now, I know how to motivate them and coach them. Whenever I have the chance, I deliver sessions at conferences to talk about how to coach introverted leadership and empower those who need a little push to discover their leadership potential. At conferences, whenever I used to see people sitting alone or were too scared to talk or engage, I always went to them and tried my best to make them feel at home.

At the end of my team leader experience, 11 out of 16 people in my team were elected for other leadership roles in AIESEC in Pakistan. For the exchange participants who faced issues in Pakistan, I contacted them, and I made sure there was no compromise on their experiences. They have placed their trust in me, and I made sure to never break that.

I now tell people about AIESEC the same thing that was told to me, "just give it time." Trusting the experiences it gives you will orchestrate miracles for you as it surely did for me. What I have become now is the end result of people who believed in me and made me believe in myself. Our job as leaders is to make this place a safe space for everyone to feel at home and renew their belief in good things. I thank AIESEC for believing in me, helping me create impact and making me believe that good exists everywhere.

Sukaina Ali - AIESEC in Pakistan - 2022

When I became the Local Committee Vice President of Incoming Exchanges for AIESEC in NUST back in 2022, I had never worked in an exchange portfolio. As much as exchange fascinated me, I originally didn't want to lead one of these portfolios at the executive level because I was inexperienced with exchange operations. On top of that, my Local Committee's (LC) strong suit was not exchange. Initially, I was skeptical about my leadership abilities and, at times, wanted to quit.

However, I was made responsible for a team of 13, which was 81% of our new recruits, new members whose first experience in AIESEC relied on me and my performance as a VP.

My journey was not easy, and I was faced with many challenges right from the start of my VP term — our committee had not retained any of its opportunity providers from the previous term, our existing international partnerships with other committees around the world were weak, and we had no pipelined approvals for our exchange opportunities. On top of that, our local chapter was based out of a university, which made us look far less attractive than those based out of entire cities.

owever, we worked hard and found ways to innovate. When we could only have a limited number of physical exchanges due to the socioeconomic condition in Pakistan, we turned to iVPP (Incoming Virtual Professional Program), something that no LC in Pakistan was doing, and got a good number of approvals from there. Moreover, we had high standards for customer experience that involved partnering with theme parks for bulk discounts, which made socials with our exchange participants and members far more pocket-friendly, hence making AIESEC financially inclusive. Winning consecutive awards for Incoming Exchanges was new for NUST, and being the only exchange portfolio in our chapter that drove numbers (given that we couldn't do much in Outgoing Exchanges) ensured that we met the bare minimum criteria for exchange nationally. Hence, this is how my portfolio #iGotTalent created a legacy that will go on for years.

AIESEC IN PANAMA

Jonathan Pimentel - AIESEC in Panama - 2020

My path as a leader has been an experience with many directions, where my quest to leave a marked impact on my country was reflected. Before entering AIESEC, I did not have direction in what legacy I wanted to leave behind. I was a guy with self-esteem problems, lack of motivation and too shy to voice my opinions. I was introduced to AIESEC thanks to a Youth Speak Forum in Panama. It was at this forum that I realized my love for social activism and decided to join the organization as part of AIESEC in Balboa (a resilient Local Committee and, as we say in Panama, echao pa lante).

Little did I know back then that this event would lead me to a path of growth in my personal and professional life. In my local experience, I had the opportunity to be Vice President in the area of Events Coordination (EwA), where I could continue innovating through various social initiatives within the country.

My inspiration and passion within AIESEC led me to lead international events at my university, like "The Voice of Leadership" event, where I sought to continue inspiring other young people to develop their leadership skills. For all my efforts in AIESEC and my community, I was recognized in my country by the President of the Republic as one of the 100 most outstanding volunteers for the level of activism and also recognized by the media as a brilliant mind in the country.

During this whole experience, my support was my family, and one of my main supporters was my grandmother. I always told her about the things I was doing as an activist and how AIESEC was an amazing platform for me to make a difference. She was always so proud and happy when she saw me on TV in an interview or demonstration or leading an event. One day, I told her that I wanted to continue impacting more youth in Latin America and made a promise that I would be part of the national team for AIESEC in Ecuador.

A week before being elected as part of the national team of AIESEC in Ecuador, my grandmother died, and my world fell apart. I thought about giving up the process, but I remembered the promise I made to her, and decided to continue on my journey to continue impacting young people. In this role, I realized that my purpose was to continue impacting people not only in my country but also in Ecuador. Above all, I am proud that my journey in AIESEC allowed me to continue fulfilling the promise I made to my grandmother.

AIESEC IN PERU

Patricia Ralston Azcáratel - AIESEC in Peru - 1979

I joined AIESEC in late 1978. I was a student representative at my university, and a member of AIESEC International showed up looking for an opportunity to reopen the Local Committee (LC) and Member Committee (MC). It sounded interesting and a good service we could provide to our students. At that time, I was studying, acting with the theatre group and also working at the university.

In a couple of days, Luis Guillermo Pelaez, the AI representative, got me involved in AIESEC. A few days later, I was meeting with students from other universities and preparing for a trip to Ecuador to attend a Leadership Development Seminar (LDS). We all returned from this seminar with a big challenge: reopening the MC of AIESEC in Peru and working hard to gain full membership status in 2 years. I quit all my other activities. Can you imagine; a group of newbies deciding to change their lives to be able to change other students' lives?

Of course, we managed to reach our goals and since then, my AIESEC experience turned out to be one of the most important decisions in my life. I played all AIESEC roles: Local Committee President, Member Committee President, Regional Coordinator, AIESEC International Advisory Councilor, and International Senior member. I learned about leadership, values, marketing, training, and projects working with multicultural teams. But, one phrase that summarizes all: “Once an AIESECer, always an AIESECer” is my leitmotif… I am still involved in AIESEC!

Over the past 13 years, I’ve been an active alumni, taking leadership positions at all levels, having the opportunity to develop new programs, travel with friends and do business around the world with AIESECers. I will always be thankful to Luis Guillermo and many other fantastic leaders who inspired me through AIESEC and still do by being friends for life.

Maria Antonieta Alfaro - AIESEC in Peru - 1984

IThanks, AIESEC, for bringing the world to us and much more! Before we heard about globalization, we were experiencing it live in the 80’s!

It was back in 1984 (imagine no cellular, no internet) when the Presidents’ Meeting (PM’84) took place in Lima. As a newbie at this event, I was, of course, impacted and wowed. I had travelled throughout Peru and some other countries in North, Central and South America, but having representatives of many different countries at the same time all together and at home sharing their experiences, customs and cultures…it was possible only thanks to AIESEC! An unexpected but important plus/fact: in that event, I met who would become my life partner and husband for the last 29 years so far, a special love story which initiated at that special AIESEC event. AIESEC has always been present in our lives!

Decades later, thanks to the regional alumni events, we have been able to enjoy special reunions with some of the participants and organizers of PM'84. Next year (2024) will be 40 years since that PM'84, another good reason to celebrate! Hope to see you again in Peru!

Looking back, I reflect and see that AIESEC has greatly impacted my professional and personal life. For example, AIESEC had influenced my choice to: get a Master degree in International Management (at Thunderbird School of Global Management in USA and France, where I also shared and lived with students from all over the world); perform as Business Liaison for foreign and local executives (helping them in their adaptation process, and finding the right international partners, as in the exchanges); work as Contractor for the Commercial Service of US Embassy (identifying investing/business opportunities and communicating them abroad); organize regional and international corporate events in the USA and Peru (further developing these leadership and organizational skills initially developed in AIESEC); participate and facilitate programs in Taiwan, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Portugal, South Korea and others (promoting understanding); later become a university Professor; and to currently be a Trainer of workshops with positive and social impact (sharing while making a difference); enjoy different experiences and interests; love and support, among others.

Thanks, AIESEC, for bringing the world to us and much more! All the best always, especially in the next 75 years!

Evelyn Romina Ospina Sandon - AIESEC in Peru - 2017

I was the Local Committee Vice President of Outgoing Global Volunteer in a Local Committee (LC) where the Global Volunteer program had not been performing well for many years; I was scared because I knew there were many expectations for me to make the program work. After a few months in the position, I realized the main problem: we couldn't sell Global Volunteer because almost no one on my Local Committee had experienced it for themselves.

There were 100 members in my committee, and only 2 of those people had participated in a Global Volunteer exchange. I was determined to change it. We started a very strong and vocal internal member exchange campaign where we dared people to challenge their limitations and volunteer abroad so we could showcase to the world not only that our Local Committee had what it takes to make the Global Volunteer program thrive but, most importantly that we lead by example and take actions to create a more positive world.

I was one of the first people in my LC to get approved for a Global Volunteer opportunity, and I went to Santa Marta, Colombia, after I finished my VP term. The trip changed me — it showed me a way of living that I had never known before and that I aspire to continue after I finish my AIESEC experience.

AIESEC in Poland

Szymon Komorowski - AIESEC in Poland - 1998

In the late 1990s, AIESEC needed to refocus its direction; it was at this time that AIESEC members realized that the gradual decrease in exchange numbers was due to the loss of organizational focus and alignment. At that time, AIESEC was divided into two major groups – members and trainees. AIESEC members rarely participated in the exchange program, and on the flip side, exchange participants did not attend any AIESEC events. After AIESEC International realized this was an issue that needed attention, a group of members came up with the idea of combining the two groups. AIESEC members should enjoy both leadership and organizational experience, so they encouraged members to have some sort of involvement in AIESEC before going on exchange.

Szymon was the Director of Strategy of AIESEC International in the second year of the existence of this role, and together with his team members, he packaged the new idea as the AIESEC Experience, which specified AIESEC's main methods of developing leadership (something that is used till this day). Since this was a new concept for AIESEC members, the team put a lot of effort into downscaling the new concept to each AIESEC member country. Szymon allowed them to understand the approach and also took extra time to listen and understand their concerns, thus making sure every member country understood and aligned with the new direction.

After his work in AIESEC, Szymon went on to create his own consulting company, worked for Deloitte and is currently a Strategy Director at Delta Pharma in Albania. Szymon is also the founder of the AIESEC Alumni Association in Poland.

AIESEC in Portugal

Ana Leonor de Carvalho Fernandes - AIESEC in Portugal - 2017

In 2017, as Team Leader in my home LC, I was in charge of the experience of our exchange participants coming to Porto, Portugal. In that role, I had the chance to connect with and support 19 young people from all over the world, delivering volunteering and internship programs in our city.

One of those volunteers was Aleyna, a 19-year-old student from Türkiye looking to challenge herself and develop her Portuguese skills - to whom I was assigned as a buddy to help her integrate with our country and be with her throughout the experience. We bonded and became close, keeping contact after she went back to her country. Her experience was so impactful that she decided to join AIESEC to provide similar experiences to youth, becoming a member of AIESEC in Istanbul in September 2017.

For every new role we applied to, we would keep in touch and update each other until we were both selected for the National Teams in Portugal and Türkiye, respectively, in 2020. Once the applications for the next term came, I applied and was elected President of AIESEC in Portugal. With a twist of fate and a drive to give back to the country of her first AIESEC experience, Aleyna joined my team as the National Vice President of Incoming Exchange. Four years after we first met, we met again and lived and worked together for a year for a common purpose. This experience has shown me that even the smallest impact can go a long way, and each person we develop in AIESEC will go on in their own journey to impact those around them.

AIESEC IN ROMANIA

Ionut Rotaru - AIESEC in Romania - 2016

During the winter of 2016 and 2017, I had just joined AIESEC in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, as a new Outgoing Global Volunteer member. One of our potential exchange members was an engineering student who, right from his first meeting with us, questioned why he should be interested in volunteering abroad without getting paid. My team leader and I struggled to help him see the value of volunteering internationally. After four more meetings with him, we convinced him to apply for a volunteering opportunity in Poland. He ended up getting accepted to the project and went to Poland — this was my first-ever approved exchange as an AIESEC member.

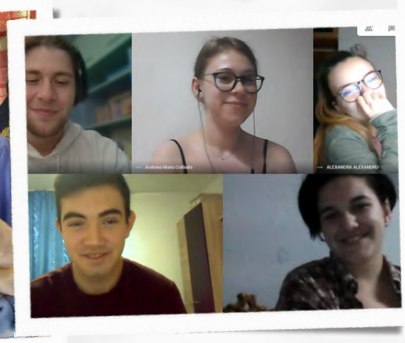
Two months later, after coming back from his volunteering project in Poland, the first thing the exchange participant said to me was, “Thank you for not giving up on me and convincing me to go — this experience changed my life.”

Sergiu-Antonio Ursa - AIESEC in Romania - 2021

Our story started in September 2021 with an amazing Local Committee President and Executive Board, a lot of uncertainty, and a reborn Local Committee (LC). Myself - I got elected as the Local VP of Outgoing Exchange (oGX), but back then, I was also a medical student in my 3rd year, a project coordinator for helping deaf people in my community, AIESEC in Romania's Data Protection Officer, and a part-time volunteer for a suicide helpline - crazy!

The story comes from my experience with the Outgoing Exchange department. The struggle was real - the pandemic, our lives, different leadership styles, and a lot of feedback. But, in the end, nothing stopped us from striving for excellence & proving ourselves in the Europe region. That year, my team received the best Outgoing Teacher Exchange award in AIESEC in Romania, with the program being available in 3 more cities during our year. Our membership in the portfolio was also able to grow this year to more than 20 people (so proud!!), and we were even able to pilot an Erasmus partnership. Our exchange participants were extremely happy with their exchanges, and this was so inspiring to see as a team leader

One story in particular shocked me, that of Alina's. She had already completed three previous exchange experiences and just finished an exchange to Kenya in 2021 - so I was shocked when she told me she'd never go on an exchange again. But when I asked her why, she simply said, "There's no more need. This exchange has changed my life. I'll drop whatever I'm doing, and I'll work as much as it takes to become a professional pediatrician. This exchange made me understand my purpose in life.



Catalina Rusu - AIESEC in Romania - 2021

I met AIESEC a couple of times in my life before I became a part of the organization in 2021. I heard of AIESEC first from a family friend, who was part of AIESEC in Iasi back in the early 2010s. During my childhood, she was one of my role models: bold, smart and, most importantly, what I would describe as a leader; I always wanted to be like her.

Joining AIESEC has allowed me to go from being someone that was unsure of herself to someone who now sees the person she once looked up to within herself due to the opportunities for growth AIESEC has provided me with. From a member hesitant to speak up in English to an elected VP for the AIESEC in Cluj-Napoca, my AIESEC experience has been a transformative journey. I have developed my leadership skills, confidence and trust in my team, and ability to motivate and inspire others.

I'm so grateful for the opportunities and experiences AIESEC has given me. I've learned so much about myself, the world and how important is to find your purpose. I'm excited to continue my journey with AIESEC and inspire the next generation of AIESEC leaders to always lead with purpose, fuel their passion and keep moving forward.

George Tiberius Pascu - AIESEC in Romania - 2022

During my experience in my home Local Committee, I got to understand that we were always in hard times when it came to HR, finances, and performance overall. I got elected as the Local President, and I was motivated to do something new, to change the environment and how the plenary was seeing my Local Committee, but I couldn't do it alone. I recruited my team and started to actually develop putting passion into action in the activities that we had as a Local Committee.

After almost a year since my Local Committee had a big chance of closing, I managed to get my VPs to work for this cause of not letting it close because we had been developing youth leadership in our city for over 11 years, and we should strive to continue providing opportunities for future youth generations. I was able to inspire my team, and that year, we managed to fulfill the criteria to be a Local Committee and to keep the fire alive.

The experience was frightening, especially because there were so many things unknown to me. Thanks to my team, my fellow Local Committee Presidents in AIESEC in Romania, and our members & alumni, we developed clear strategies and helped this LC from closing. I was proud, and this situation made me understand that even when things are foggy and unclear, there is always a way to cut the fog and see the clear road that you have ahead. I'm thankful to everybody who was engaged in proving that we are ONE AIESEC in the University of Bucharest!

Kira Moglan - AIESEC in Romania - 2023

AIESEC in Cluj-Napoca has a culture of its own which started many years ago, called “Foaie Verde” (in translation, Green Leaf). Foaie Verde is about being resilient in the face of hardship, and it reminds us that we, as a Local Committee, will prevail if we work hard enough and give our best.

When I started my term as the Local Committee Vice President of Marketing in February 2023, I was very unsure of what the future would look like. There were many times when my plans did not work out as I had intended them to, and there were many times when I felt overwhelmed, scared, and unmotivated. However, I kept moving on and kept reminding myself that the legacy that was created so many years before our generation cannot and will not be lost. With this in mind, I always stood back up, straighter and taller than before, with the “Foaie Verde” mindset, hoping we would demonstrate that we are worthy of being a part of Foaie Verde.

I know for the rest of my life, I will keep the Foaie Verde mindset alive. Thank you, AIESEC in Cluj-Napoca, for teaching me unshakable resilience.

AIESEC IN RUSSIA

Matvey L. Fedorov - AIESEC in Russia - 1989

We started creating AIESEC in the USSR when changes initiated by Gorbachev allowed international contacts and exposure to soviet citizens. It was a challenge to create a new type of organization in our country and to build relations with AIESEC Local Committees around the world with limited ability to communicate (no direct phone calling abroad was allowed, only messages received through the university telex machine were acknowledged by state authorities, we needed state authorization to travel outside the country, no computers, faxes and even copiers were forbidden then). There was no developed business community, and the search for sponsors/partners was very limited. The hard task was to win our space in the community that for decades considered youth as "nothing serious."

As a result, AIESEC united the most intelligent and active students who were ready to take responsibility for their careers and life success. It's not surprising that 30+ years after our AIESEC journey, the majority of my friends consist of those AIESEC connections I made back then! We are now spread around the globe in many countries on different continents, but the core of our mentality remains the same: the aspiration for growth, mutual support and trust. AIESEC was a quintessence of students with ambitions. Since then, we have created joint businesses, we helped each other with connections and advice in projects and life, and we created value for our achievements just by staying an AIESEC Alumni family. Once an aiesecer - forever an aiesecer!

Dozens of my business projects were initiated with or supported by alumni. Most of my lifetime friends and some private relations come from AIESEC times or from AIESEC alumni. When I realized the scope of alumni capabilities and the value of these abilities, the necessity to build our local AIESEC Alumni community became so obvious. Despite all the troubles we are going through right now, I believe we will keep this AIESEC spirit for years ahead and - like in 1948 - we will be in the front rows to rebuild trust, links and cooperation between countries!

Nadezhda Repp (Anikeva) - AIESEC in Russia - 2007

Back in 2005, one AIESEC team leader, driven by courage and vision, decided to organize one of the first exchange-based projects in Russia. This wasn't just a plan; it was a pioneering step, a leap into uncharted waters. He reached out and connected with a school, proposing this new project. The school agreed, marking the beginning of something extraordinary.

To St. Petersburg came four interns, each from a different corner of the world - Nigeria, Ukraine, Norway, and Georgia. They led sessions on tolerance, uniting students from diverse backgrounds and classes, encouraging them to communicate in English, voice their thoughts and share ideas in a language foreign to most of them. This initiative was more than an educational venture; it started a chain of impactful changes.

Among these students, there was a girl from an average family. The financial constraints of her family meant that exchange programs and hosting foreign students were beyond their reach. However, this project planted a seed in her heart, a dream to travel around the world to explore new cultures and different mentalities. She realized that to make a difference, she didn't need abundant resources; she needed determination and the will to improve her skills. So, as she stepped into university life, she found her way to AIESEC, determined to contribute and create opportunities not just for herself but for others like her.

With time, this girl grew within the organization. By her last year at university, she became the Vice President of the exchange program in her Local Committee. Her goal was ambitious – to increase the average annual exchange from 26 to over 200. And she achieved it against all odds. Her efforts didn't just double the impact; they multiplied it exponentially. She managed not one or two, but 15 different projects in a single year, each in various spheres, touching countless lives.

Her journey took her even further. She applied for a role within AIESEC's Member Committee (MC) abroad, allowing her to work independently without financial dependence on her parents. Working in the Czech Republic she increased the exchange programs quite a lot. At just 22 years old, she became an MCP (Member Committee President) in Slovakia, leading 300 people, changing lives across the country, and impacting globally.

Now, almost 20 years later, the girl, the once-inspired student, is a coach. She works with individuals and groups embarking on world-changing projects, helping them grow their ideas, and enhancing their impact. She stands as a beacon of what a single step can lead to, of how one small action can initiate a chain reaction of positive change.

The identity of the team leader who started it all remains unknown to her. Yet, his one step, the decision to create and reach out, set off a series of events that led her to where she is today – an influencer, a leader, a changemaker. That girl is me. I am living proof that every individual has the power to change the world, starting with one small step.

As I am writing it today, I can't help but wonder if that team leader knows how much of an impact he made. Perhaps not. But what's important is the message this story carries: each of us has the potential to make a difference. You, too, can be the start of something great. Let your step be the one that leads to a better world.

Andrei Perevalov - AIESEC in Russia - 2012

Joining AIESEC as a Team Member in 2012, I embarked on what would become a transformative journey. With little anticipation of the profound impact it would have, I found myself deeply aligned with the organization's vision and mission. This alignment set the stage for an extraordinary period of personal and professional development, culminating in my role on the Membership Committee of AIESEC in Russia.

Each role within AIESEC presented its own set of challenges, each one an opportunity for growth and learning. The journey taught me that true leadership transcends titles, manifesting in actions – in the ability to listen, empathize, and inspire. My ascent through the ranks became a path of self-discovery, revealing my potential and the power of collaborative effort.

Throughout my time in AIESEC, I embraced the practice of setting ambitious goals, often perceived as daunting, yet always within reach through persistence and creative problem-solving. This approach was instrumental in my later career, particularly in the startup world. Skills developed in AIESEC, such as a solution-oriented mindset, empathy, fostering psychological safety, effective coaching, and prioritizing overcommunication, became integral tools in my professional life. They enabled me not only to lead teams with success but also to excel in the fast-paced, ambition-driven startup environment.

Even after my active involvement in AIESEC, the community continued to be a significant force in my life. The AIESEC network transformed from a professional asset into a rich tapestry of relationships, founded on shared experiences and mutual support. This network has consistently opened doors and provided a sense of connection and belonging in my professional endeavours, playing a pivotal role in every job opportunity that came my way – be it through AIESEC referrals, connections with AIESEC alumni, or networks tracing back to my time in the organization.

Looking back, the influence of AIESEC in my life is unmistakable. It served as a catalyst not only for my career but also for my personal growth in leadership and networking abilities. The enduring presence of the AIESEC network, with its unexpected opportunities and connections, is a testament to the organization's enduring impact. My journey with AIESEC exemplifies the organization's role in shaping adaptable, forward-thinking leaders, equipped to navigate the complexities of a constantly evolving world.

AIESEC IN SERBIA

Ana Paripović - AIESEC in Serbia - 2023

Since the moment I joined AIESEC, I wanted to participate in an exchange program. I spent my days browsing through the AIESEC website, dreaming of the impact I could make in communities around the world. And then the most wonderful thing happened this summer - foreign Exchange Participants arrived in Serbia for their exchanges, and I took the chance to meet them and help them settle in. I never would've expected to become this close with the people who are now my dearest friends. They came from all over the world — Portugal, Brazil, Italy, Türkiye, Tunisia, Morocco, and many many more countries. Some of them weren't even a part of AIESEC; we met them at the dorm where everyone was staying, and it showed me that the friendships built as a result of AIESEC truly know no boundaries. We made so many memories together — we had true Serbian house parties, game nights, dance nights, and we competed in 8-ball and cooked fancy dinners in the middle of the night.

My favourite memory was when we brought a guitar to the park and sang all evening long, watching the sunset over the river. Through this experience, I learned that no matter how different our lives may be, we all experience the same emotions, fears, and challenges. We strive to explore and meet new people, to leave our comfort zone and be welcomed to new places that will help us build these unbreakable connections, which we will forever cherish. I felt as if I was a part of an exchange myself, not thinking about the day this experience would end.

Of course, eventually, it was time for them to return to their home countries. I remember our little tradition: before someone left, we would gather around a bench in front of the dorms and listen to this person give a speech about how much they would miss everything and how we would meet again for sure. I remember them packing at the last minute because they wanted to make the most of their last days. I'm not a very emotional person, and sometimes it's hard for me to express myself, so I never thought I would be writing this kind of story. Hugging these people for the last time made me promise myself to do my best to make these experiences repeat themselves year after year. For me, this is a story about friendship. About learning more about myself through other people. About feeling the essence of AIESEC on my skin and creating a new kind of impact, I will remember for a lifetime.

Čeda Veličković - AIESEC in Serbia - 2023

In the heart of India, amidst the vibrant bustle of the International Congress, my AIESEC journey took flight. Working at the conference, I felt a storm of emotions—excitement, curiosity, and a tinge of nervousness as I realized I was miles away from my home in Serbia. The air buzzed with diversity and liveliness. It was an immersion into a kaleidoscope of traditions, languages, and knowledge.

As part of the showcasing team, I stepped into a melting pot of experiences. Engaging with representatives from over a hundred cultures, I embraced the uniqueness each one brought, learning not just about their customs but about their aspirations and challenges. Every interaction was a book of stories, each page contributing to a broader understanding of the world. The friendship among us went over geographical boundaries, forming bonds that celebrated our differences. I felt a profound sense of belonging amidst this global community, realizing that despite our diversity, we shared a common desire for positive change.

This transformative experience ignited a spark within me—a realization that the essence of AIESEC, the celebration of diversity and the pursuit of impactful change, needed to flourish back in my Local Committee. Fueled by this passion, I applied for and was elected as the Local Committee President. It's an honour I embrace, driven by the goal to infuse the spirit of the International Congress into the very fabric of my committee. I'm determined to foster an environment that mirrors the inclusivity, understanding, and drive for change I encountered in India, ensuring that every member feels empowered to contribute their unique perspectives to our shared vision.

The Congress wasn't just about networking; it was about weaving a global network of relationships. It honed my adaptability and resilience, navigating a sea of cultures and languages. It taught me the value of empowering others, recognizing the strength in diverse perspectives and the power of collaboration. As I steer my committee forward, I am driven by a vision to empower every member, ensuring they feel valued and inspired to contribute with their unique insights.

Ultimately, I aim to make the Belgrade FON Local Committee and AIESEC as a whole proud and vibrant, a place where diversity thrives, understanding flourishes, and positive change is sparked from within. The journey begins here, a journey fueled by the spirit of AIESEC and a vision for a more inclusive, empowered, and impactful AIESEC community.

Nikoleta Molnar - AIESEC in Serbia - 2023

I come from Subotica in AIESEC in Serbia. My story began during COVID-19 in 2020 when I joined AIESEC. From 2019 until now, we have been fighting for Local Committee (LC) status. In short, everyone lived and worked under tremendous stress and responsibility that befell this office. Many conflicts, constant changes in criteria, and a lack of understanding from the Member Committee body were experienced over the years.

Despite facing challenges, we, the members, embraced our differences and strived to uphold AIESEC's mission. We learned valuable leadership lessons at a young age, facing situations that were not easy. Besides, it was fulfilling to have a purpose and fight for our people, office, previous generations, and our city. Alumni supported us from the beginning, providing strength to push forward. Since then, we have called ourselves Spartans, fighting against all odds. We've faced losses but never fallen or given up. In the sea of challenges, AIESEC's vision and mission are something our world needs. I applied for LC President, formed an amazing team, and we are currently closest to achieving our goal – obtaining LC status. We started from scratch, but what defined my term was learning from mistakes and turning them into strengths.

We have a unique story, marked by the years 1962 and 2017 – the years of our opening, five generations of SUP, five generations leaving a legacy. This is not just my story; it's about all of us. About LC Subotica, awaiting its victory in 2024 to restore the glory it once had. Forever grateful for this experience, I will soon sign off as the Spartan who led this LC in 2023.

AIESEC IN SINGAPORE

Baisakhi Saha - AIESEC in Singapore - 2006

I like to introduce myself as a lifelong AIESECer.

Originally from AIESEC in Singapore, I did my first two internships with AIESEC in Nigeria, spanning 1.5 years; I did my next two internships with AIESEC in Venezuela, spanning 2 years; I did my final two internships with AIESEC in Costa Rica (Heredia, San Jose, Alajuela) spanning 3 years.

After publishing my first book during my AIESEC exchange, I became a motivational speaker, often lecturing at universities, institutions, schools, hotels, AIESEC events, and other distinguished platforms as a guest speaker and performer, where I combined book events with dance shows.

With my AIESEC globetrotting experience, I was invited to speak at prestigious international platforms such as the Women Economic Forum - WEF in South America, Central America and Asia, where I was conferred the 'Exceptional Women of Excellence' award twice and the 'Iconic Women Creating a Better World for All' award, TEDx events across Asia, Central America, and North America which were also featured by TED, United Nations groups, and many more such distinguished venues across the world in multiple languages.

Not only has AIESEC changed my life, shaping the person I am today—an author, speaker, performer, teacher, and a globetrotter, from a confused IT student in Singapore trying to make sense of reality, but it has also helped me discover my true passion and purpose in life. From Asia to Europe to Africa to South America to North & Central America, I have lived with local families, eating their food, adopting their lifestyles, contributing to their economy, inhabiting their culture, navigating extreme realities and belief systems, observing varied traditions and religions for several years to answer life's most pertinent questions. Coming from a conservative, traditional, orthodox family in India, being a young unmarried girl, overcoming limiting beliefs and cultural prejudices, the great feats I achieved are indeed incredible... and AIESEC made it all happen!

My new book 'Life Is Abracadabra' is a collection of magical stories and marvellous encounters from my adventures across the globe, recounting true anecdotes of hope and faith, of meaningful coincidences and miracles, with an entire story in the book dedicated to AIESEC.

I would like to thank everyone who has been a part of my AIESEC journey thus far!

AIESEC IN SLOVAKIA

Edita Bednarova - AIESEC in Slovakia - 2000

During my studies at university, I was each year at one of the following positions: newbie, team leader, member co-organizing various events (in Slovakia or abroad), EB (Executive Board) member in charge of finance and legal issues at my Local Committee (LC), internal auditor of all LCs & a Member Committee (MC) VP in Slovakia.

While in AIESEC, I got the chance to meet trainees at our LC from all around the world, and I got the chance to travel within Europe to participate in different conferences or to co-organize them (e.g. the International Congress in Germany or the Incoming Presidents Meeting in Romania). This indeed broadened my horizons and exposed me to various cultures, which was a priceless experience.

Once realizing after three years that the corporate world was not for me, I joined a Slovak non-profit organization that is implementing development and humanitarian projects, and I went to Kenya, where I worked for four years and later one year in Afghanistan.

Local AIESEC offices in both countries were the first places I visited to find some friends, and I'm still in touch with them these days. At the LC Nairobi, I met my best travel friend and a soul mate who is from Hungary, and we have been meeting since 2012 at least once a year (she visited me even in Afghanistan and for an AIESEC wedding in Costa Rica).

To sum it up, the AIESEC experience had a huge impact on me and thanks to it, I became who I am today: I'm running my own consultancy company doing evaluations of development or humanitarian projects/programs around the world either for non-profits directly or their donors (including EU or UN agencies) and at the same time I'm having my non-profit organization with friends through which we are trying to improve the living conditions in my region where I was born and where I belong.

Lucia Kubíčková - AIESEC in Slovakia - 2019

Back in 2018, in my interview for Vice President in my Local Committee, I was asked what would make me quit my position. Without thinking, I gave the most typical answer: “Something serious would need to happen to me or my close ones.” Fast forward to September 2019, when running in the Local Committee President elections, I was asked the same question, to which I gave the same answer. That night, I celebrated after being elected, and the next day, I travelled from my hometown to my University to start my semester with my Local Committee.

A few days before my regular visit back home, I received a call from my loved one. I immediately found the first bus to come home to find out that they had been hospitalized with leukemia. That day, I cried like never before. I felt so lost, so scared and alone. Should I finish my studies if it's two borders away? Who is going to pay the bills now? How can I take care of my loved one? I was sharing all of these things with my predecessor when she mentioned, "Look, if you want to withdraw from your position, I will completely understand it." At that moment, I realized that this was never an option. I realized that it was AIESEC and all the people I have met in the organization who were giving me hope, allowing me to feel safe and a little bit sane, considering my circumstances.

I was scared I wouldn't be able to do the term right because I wouldn't be able to be there at all times for my team, but I wanted to do this for myself. When I shared this news with both of my teams, I realized one thing. Though I might not always be there for them, they will always be there for me, and we will continue making an impact because we are motivated by our passion and by each other.

This is how the hardest and yet the most beautiful years of my life began.

Jayant Bhatia- AIESEC in Slovakia - 2020

Amidst COVID-19 in 2020, my life took an unexpected turn when I discovered AIESEC—a global organization committed to fostering positive change and international understanding. Intrigued by its mission, I embarked on a transformative journey of personal and professional development, which would eventually lead me to an extraordinary experience in Slovakia.

As the world slowly emerged from the pandemic's grip, the allure of experiencing different cultures beckoned. Through AIESEC's vast network, I connected with incredible opportunities abroad, and Slovakia became the destination that captured my heart.

With excitement and anticipation, I embarked on a life-changing journey to Slovakia. From the charming streets of Bratislava, with its medieval architecture and vibrant cafes, to the quaint villages in the countryside, Slovakia has welcomed me with open arms. Each day is an adventure as I immerse myself in the local traditions, savour delicious Slovak cuisine and engage in the lively festivities celebrating their heritage. Immersed in a new culture, I savoured every moment, embracing the unfamiliar as I navigated the beauty of Slovakia. My time in Slovakia was enriched by creating new friends among fellow AIESECers. Together, we formed a tightly-knit community that went beyond borders and language barriers. Through shared experiences, we celebrated our diversity and deepened our understanding of each other's backgrounds.

My time in Slovakia has been a journey of discovery. The language, though challenging, has become a bridge that connects me with the locals. Through patient exchanges, I've learned to communicate and understand their unique expressions of kindness and warmth.

What makes this experience even more special is the people I've met along the way. Through AIESEC, I've formed bonds with fellow global citizens passionate about making a positive impact. Together, we embark on global volunteer projects that contribute to the betterment of the local community, leaving a lasting mark on the lives of those we encounter.

AIESEC IN SLOVENIA

Miha Kožuh - AIESEC in Slovenia - 1998

The story of the Kranj Local Committee in AIESEC– The story of a cultural breakthrough

All volunteer NGO organizations come to a point where there is a need to renew the story. AIESEC Local Committee Kranj was full of success for many years, and there came years of decline in exchanges and, therefore a decline of the LC. We forgot what AIESEC stands for; we forgot its purpose, why we joined and what we work to achieve. This came at the time of the first social networks, but despite this innovation, not much was done. Even though we had a full team, everyone seemed distracted and not aligned.

The President of the Local Committee gave us direction, and as an Executive Board, we established new values, norms and behaviours related to the AIESEC way that will enable LC to survive and thrive for a long period. This allowed our membership to reconnect to the missions and vision of AIESEC and inspire them to innovate to make an impact and reach youth. This also inspired the Local Committee to work together to clean the office and look through historical documents to learn from what had been done in the past at the Local Committee. Ultimately, this is what enabled LC to start a non-profit cultural exchange program, bringing 20+ foreigners to interact with children in many Kranj primary schools. The exchange program allowed children to be exposed to different cultures when Slovenia was still quite a closed country to foreigners (cultural exchange in its best form).

As a Local Committee, we are still friends to this day. The decision that led to a change in culture to become a more driven, performance-focused and loving atmosphere allowed us to foster connectivity. I am thankful to all the teams following the original team, which enabled this project to continue and grow.

AIESEC IN SRI LANKA

Shashini Hewadewa - AIESEC in Sri Lanka - 2019

I still remember that the first thing I did after joining my university, even before finding my own timetable, was to run and ask when I would be able to join the student organization I had been eagerly waiting to be a part of since high school. I started off as a member, and pretty soon, another amazing opportunity popped up: becoming part of the organizing committee for our university's Global Village. Little did I know that this seemingly ordinary decision would mark a significant turning point in my life. As I made up my mind and embarked on this new journey, I found myself confronting the very fears and insecurities that had held me back for so long.

I applied for VP the same year under marketing, only to find out, to my surprise, that I was selected for my least voted position, People Management (MXP). This journey went hand in hand with my degree, moulded my career, and simply developed me into who I am today! But more than anything, I was amazed to see how quickly I found a second family within the organization. Within just a few months, I formed deep connections and bonds with my team that went beyond just being colleagues. To this date, this bunch still holds a very special place in my heart.

My journey with AIESEC has been a thrilling ride, and it still continues to be so. Today, I stand as someone who can confidently lead and help others because of those who stood by me to guide me, lead me, and support me during my times of need. This incredible story remains ongoing, with no true conclusion in sight. It is my forever hope that it never does end, as we are all raised by leadership continuing to inspire more leaders, and the leaders we nurture will ensure the prosperity of our future.

Sisitha Hewage - AIESEC in Sri Lanka - 2020

This is a story during the pandemic, when AIESEC in Sri Lanka faced a tough situation with our main operation involving exchange programs, having 1385 members while facing a financial crisis with only 0.38 months of cash reserves. A time that challenged us in every possible way. Grateful for our part-time Member Committee's efforts, we made significant budget cuts, surviving with the bare minimum and avoiding financial strain.

To address operational challenges, we sought solutions to provide members with practical experiences in virtual settings. At that time, the entity started generating revenue through BD partnerships with virtual events but later noticed a decline in virtual engagements. This pushed us to explore new markets through expansions. Focusing on expansions during the pandemic was considered not a good decision by many alumni and the supervisory group, but we believed in it and came up with a different approach.

We appointed a National Expansion Board for administrative work, empowering Local Committees to establish processes and build capacity for new members. This not only addressed BD partnership issues but also maintained member excitement and grew our membership base, leading to 11 new expansions facilitated by five strong Local Committees.

In the end, this turned out to be a wise decision on how to use our resources efficiently during a challenging time, addressing key entity issues. Last but not least, I would be eagerly waiting to see how AIESEC in Sri Lanka grows to be an even stronger entity with 19 Local Committees by 2030.

Pavani Premarathne - AIESEC in Sri Lanka - 2020

I joined AIESEC in 2020 so that I could find some meaning within the stagnant pandemic reality. From day one, AIESEC offered me novel experiences. I loved the culture, especially the roll calls, even though I was dancing to them alone at home. But it has not been a smooth ride all the time. Even though I was happy to be a part of the organization, I was initially hesitant to apply for more opportunities as I doubted myself about stepping out of my comfort zone. For the first few months of my AIESEC journey, I rarely applied for anything.

However, the first physical event I attended from my entity had a lasting impact on me. It was the first ever physical event I joined for my university life as well. The leadership development seminar in 2021 gave me a real taste of the AIESEC culture. Unlike in online platforms, I saw fellow AIESECers dancing side by side. I was vibing along and after a long time, I was feeling happy to be in a crowd, which was a rare privilege then due to the pandemic.

It's when I actually thought of changing the direction of my journey. I applied for higher positions in my entity as a team leader, a coordinator, and a manager, which allowed me to view leadership from a different, less intimidating perspective. The bond you make working in teams is so strong that you feel cared for and loved. This vastly differs from the culture in other clubs and jobs, where the atmosphere is often competitive and opportunistic.

Currently, I work as a team leader and the magazine editor for my Local Committee while being a content writer for the national showcasing team. I enjoy every task offered to me, though they can be challenging. Ultimately, I am thankful that AIESEC has helped me believe in myself and know that despite any challenges, I can continue to make a positive impact in the world around me.

Savith Rajakaruna - AIESEC in Sri Lanka - 2022

AIESEC is where I experienced firsthand what it is like to be pushed to your absolute boundaries. It was the end of September, and the Local Committee Vice President applications for the term 22.23 had just been announced. I was very confident about applying and keen to be a part of the next Executive Board. I applied for the Outgoing Internship portfolio (oGT) as I had plenty of experience in this function and was the current International Relations manager for this portfolio at the time. I went through the application stages with the other candidates and was genuinely invested in the process.

However, throughout the process, the only candidate who had applied to Brand Marketing withdrew his application. I was asked to step up for this role for the entity, and so I did. I was quite skeptical at first but then I realized that this was just another challenge that I needed to take on. I accepted this grand challenge knowing absolutely nothing about how this would turn out, and well... today, I am the National Head for Digital Experience and Marketing for AIESEC in Sri Lanka.

Akasha Wijesiriwardana - AIESEC in Sri Lanka - 2023

When I was young, I used to be a bubbly, extrovert and confident person, with lots of dreams and lots of passion. But somewhere along the way, I lost sight of who I was and what I wanted. I felt like I was not enough. When I joined AIESEC, I saw people delivering sessions and facilitating workshops, and I thought to myself: "I can never do that". I remember my first conference when there was a sharing space for everyone to speak their minds. I wanted to grab the mic and share my thoughts, but I was too scared to stand up. I envied everyone who spoke that day. But that very conference also sparked something in me. It made me want to be a part of AIESEC, to experience the unique culture of the organization and to make an impact on the world.

So I started applying for opportunities that came my way, where I met a lot of amazing people who became an integral part of my life. I also learned a lot of new skills and gained valuable experiences along the way. And then I got to participate in my first national conference: NATCON 2022 Sri Lanka. During that sharing space, my VP encouraged me to stand up and speak. And I did. I was so nervous that I couldn't even see the faces of the audience. I was shivering, my voice was cracking as I spoke. But I saw my team and my friends from my Local Committee cheering me on, giving me the courage to speak up. That was the moment when everything changed for me.

Ever since that day, in every sharing space, you'll always see me speaking up, improving day by day. I used to think that I couldn't deliver sessions or facilitate workshops as my previous leaders did, but I ended up being a VP in my Local Committee, doing exactly that. AIESEC taught me that I am capable of doing anything I set my mind to. It brought me out of my comfort zone and unleashed my true potential. It made me realize that I never lost my past self, that the 'dreamer' girl was always there inside me.

Now, as an AIESECer, I want to inspire others to follow their dreams and passions, just like AIESEC inspired me. Most importantly, I want to express my gratitude to AIESEC for giving me this opportunity to grow and learn, to make friends and memories, and to make a difference in the world.

AIESEC is not just an organization for me. It is a family, a home, a journey.

Sachinthi Wirasinha - AIESEC in Sri Lanka - 2023

I consider my AIESEC journey to be a beautiful tale of connections with the people I meet. It's the lasting impact we've had on each other, the exchange of inspiration and growth that keeps me connected to this amazing community.

I joined AIESEC almost three and half years ago, and I have learnt, grown and achieved so much because of this experience. I started my AIESEC journey too shy to speak up, take up new opportunities or do anything out of my comfort zone. AIESEC has brought me from that girl up to this point, where I am currently working as the Member Committee Vice President for Brand and Marketing at AIESEC in Sri Lanka.

I discovered the type of leader I am and also my passion for marketing and content creation right here. It's all thanks to the AIESECers I met here, who believed in me, pushed me toward new opportunities and supported me. Throughout my AIESEC journey, I've always had AIESECers around me to assure me of my capabilities when I was doubting myself. My now predecessor who I consider to be one of the best leaders, was always there to push me to apply for new and higher roles and always made sure I knew the importance of 'trying'.

To this date, whenever I am applying for a new role, be it in AIESEC or outside AIESEC, I make sure to take his advice because the friends you make here are for life! The support network I found at AIESEC is one of the main things that brought me this far. I have learnt so much from AIESECers, celebrated achievements and cried about problems with them, made tough decisions and solved issues with them, and each of those moments taught me something.

Through the support of my community, one of the most important things I learned through AIESEC is that each and every one of us has so much power to make an impact. We should always remember this in whatever we do, wherever we are so that we make this world a little bit better than it is now.

Lishani Suriyampola - AIESEC in Sri Lanka - 2023

My AIESEC story has taught me to expect the unexpected.

I joined AIESEC in 2019, and it has been an endless journey of new experiences that I did not expect. As a member, I was in the Incoming Global Volunteer function, working with the foreign volunteers who came to Sri Lanka. I enjoyed the work, the experience and the exposure it gave me. With that, I applied for Local Committee Vice President in the same portfolio to do more and learn more about something I loved.

However, I was selected for the Local Committee Vice President for the Outgoing Global Talent / Teacher role. Even though it was a completely different role that I had no experience in and little knowledge of, those around me assured me that I had the potential to do a good job, understand the function, and learn the processes. At the end of my term, I was so proud of myself for taking up this challenge and rising above it. After that I did another term with my Local Committee as the Local Committee President, and I loved every unexpected twist and turn because it always taught me something new.

Then I applied for the Member Committee Vice President for Organizational Development position and was offered a completely different position, the Member Committee Vice President for Operations. This is my current role, and I keep learning and understanding AIESEC's purpose and its impact more and more every day.

These unexpected turns in my AIESEC journey have taught me to expect the unexpected in life. And that not getting exactly what you want is not a bad thing but could be a blessing. It gave me new experiences, new perspectives and new exposure to things I did not even know existed. I am ever so grateful for those around me who keep on trusting me with completely new opportunities.

My final advice to anyone reading my story is to always take unexpected opportunities with both hands and embrace them, for life would be so boring if we had to do the same thing over and over again!

AIESEC IN TAIWAN

Tsungju Lu - AIESEC in Taiwan - 2014

My AIESEC journey is the sum of so many magical stories of impact. When I look toward some of the Global Volunteer memories that stand out to me, I remember one story during my time as an oGV (outgoing global volunteer) member in AIESEC at NTPU, Taiwan. One of the exchange participants I sent to Indonesia for her exchange had a life-altering experience. She discovered her potential and shared with me, "This is a life-changing experience, thanks to AIESEC." It was at that moment that I realized the power of AIESEC in enabling individuals to change the world by providing life-changing experiences.

After this, I decided to go on a volunteering exchange as well. In 2018, I embarked on my exchange journey to Tanzania, marking my first visit to an African country. It dawned on me that without AIESEC, I might never have found the courage to step out of my comfort zone and explore Africa, breaking down my boundaries in the process.

These experiences facilitating and participating in Global Volunteer Exchanges pushed me to apply for the Member Committee President of AIESEC in Taiwan. AIESEC has been instrumental in my life, allowing me to travel to 20 countries and territories. The role of President of AIESEC in Taiwan wasn't just about leisurely travelling; it was about representing the voices of 5 million young people in Taiwan on the global stage during various plenary sessions. After my experience with AIESEC in Taiwan, I decided to advance in the organization and apply for a role with AIESEC International.

In 2022, while working with AIESEC International, I had the privilege of collaborating with 19 talented youths from 15 different nationalities. This experience underscored the vital importance of cross-cultural understanding and reinforced the significance of the eight visionary youth who founded AIESEC in 1948.

AIESEC IN THAILAND

Saranya Sirirat - AIESEC in Thailand - 2022

Through AIESEC's mission: peace, and fulfillment of humankind's potential, we always aim for solutions or activities that can develop youth leadership and increase cross-cultural understanding. That is why it is so important especially when tensions among nations rise, to reflect on what we can do as youth to contribute to a reality of world peace. This inspired AIESEC in Thailand to initiate a project, the International Friends for Peace Event, to raise awareness about peace & non-violence among youth. This event would also provide space for Thai youth to engage and discuss more about the solutions that can reduce violence in their communities, especially in the school environment. In April 2022, I was asked to be the Organizing Committee President for this impactful event.

International Friends for Peace is a 4-month project divided into four rounds: assessment round, online workshop, physical boost camp, and final pitching. We tried to engage international youth throughout our AIESEC network to share practices from their entities with Thai students to learn more about what is peace and how can we work on it as citizens.

The impact of this project truly went beyond what we expected. Many students shared their own experiences with bullying and violence, and it was amazing to see them all come together, connect and discuss solutions for a more peaceful future. Not only students but many parents and teachers were also influenced and inspired by this event. They listened and tried to understand all the problems and solutions that the kids tried to point out. I am proud that through International Friends for Peace, we were able to create a space where every attendee had a passion to drive a better and more peaceful community together with us.

AIESEC IN THE NETHERLANDS

Don Sylvester- AIESEC in The Netherlands - 1972

My exchange at Phillips in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, started just after I had graduated from the MBA program at Tulane University in New Orleans, USA in 1972. During my extended Dutch exchange, I applied for positions in international companies in Europe, securing an initial position in Rotterdam. Over the next 12 years, I worked in various positions in three different international companies in the Netherlands and Belgium before moving back to the USA in 1984.

This period offered me amazing business and even more importantly, life experiences. It changed my perspectives and reference points, challenged my previously learned biases, and made me more flexible, more tolerant, more empathetic, and, in general, a better person with better life skills. I lived, for the first time, as a foreigner, in the minority, as an "other." This turns out to be a humbling but valuable experience.

Through it, I have developed a fascination with other cultures, developed a permanent love of international travel and gained many international friends, as well as my wife of over 45 years.

Mark Dzenick - AIESEC in The Netherlands - 1982

During the beautiful and very hot summer of 1983, I had the opportunity to work with Amro Bank in Amsterdam on an AIESEC internship (or traineeship, as it was called back then). I was elected chairman of the AIESEC International Exchange Committee (XCC) at the 1983 AIESEC International Congress in St. Englmar, Germany, a volunteer position that required me to be near the AI headquarters in Brussels.

The people at Amro Bank were very good to us, inviting us out on occasion, even on a full-day trip to Rotterdam and the Dutch Formula 1 Grand Prix. The trainees would often meet after work at the Leidseplein, a bustling square where Heineken from the nearby brewery was the main staple.

The highlight of the host program was the Dutch sailing weekend on Ijsselmeer, a large but very shallow freshwater lake. Trainees from all the Dutch Local Committees and some others embarked on an old vessel, sailing from Amsterdam to the other end of the lake on Saturday and back on Sunday. I also had the privilege of participating in the 1984 trip with some of my colleagues from AIESEC International.

It was a great group of people, and I have fond memories of our time spent together, of the Dutch and of my days in AIESEC. A year as a Vice-President with AIESEC Canada celebrating the 25th Anniversary of AIESEC in Canada, a year as XCC with AIESEC International in Brussels and nearby countries. Great work experiences in the Netherlands and Switzerland. Great people. Great lifelong friends, will forever be grateful to this organization.

AIESEC in Tunisia

Azza Belkacem - AIESEC in Tunisia - 2018

AIESEC serves as a unique training ground where making mistakes is not just allowed but encouraged, offering a real-world simulation of the complexities of professional life. During my tenure as the Local Committee Vice President (LCVP) in my home LC Bardo, I found myself grappling with defining my leadership style. In this journey, I made errors while leading my team. Nevertheless, AIESEC's most remarkable aspect is the empathy and support that members offer. They understand that the early months as an LCVP are about self-discovery and personal growth.

This experience imparted two vital lessons. Firstly, it taught me the importance of self-compassion. I realized that missteps are a natural part of any leadership voyage, serving as opportunities for self-improvement. Secondly, it instilled adaptability and flexibility within me. In the ever-evolving professional world, these traits are indispensable. AIESEC not only nurtured my leadership skills but also moulded me into a more adaptable and forgiving individual, traits that have proven invaluable in my professional journey.

AIESEC IN TÜRKIYE

Eren Yörük - AIESEC in Türkiye - 2019

AIESEC entered my life when I was just 14, and little did I know that this encounter would ignite a journey of self-discovery and empowerment. As a local volunteer, I dipped my toes into a world of possibilities, and after four years, I officially joined AIESEC as a team member in 2019. It was during these transformative years that I unearthed my true potential and realized the immense impact I could create.

AIESEC became a powerful catalyst for my personal growth, allowing me to explore my passions and push the boundaries of my capabilities. Pursuing our shared vision and goals for a better world, I dedicated myself wholeheartedly, giving my all to every endeavour. Through 18 different positions across various departments and collaborations with over 20 exceptional teams, I discovered my strengths, honed my skills, and unleashed my potential.

Along this incredible journey, I had the privilege of connecting with more than 500 remarkable individuals from over 25 countries. Their diverse backgrounds, stories, and perspectives enriched my narrative, expanding my understanding of the world and challenging me to think beyond conventional boundaries. In the process, I realized that my dreams reached far beyond my immediate surroundings.

One pivotal moment came when I embarked on a life-changing Global Volunteer project in Romania. After volunteering locally for four years, I had the opportunity to immerse myself in a new culture and connect with people from Hungary. The Romanian National Congress further amplified my sense of possibility as I experienced the excitement of being in a new entity. These experiences unveiled the true extent of my potential, igniting a burning desire to rise to the highest positions within my local committee and immerse myself in foreign AIESEC entities.

As I stepped out of my comfort zone and embraced the power of diverse perspectives, I recognized that being a leader goes beyond titles and positions. It is about empowering others, fostering friendship, coaching, and striking a delicate balance between these roles. Constructive feedback, regardless of hierarchical position, became a tool for my personal growth and development.

AIESEC's aspiration to cultivate world citizens resonated deeply with me. It was not just about meeting people from different countries; it was about actively listening to their worldviews, understanding diverse perspectives, and shaping my perspective accordingly.

Through AIESEC, I embarked on a journey of self-discovery, uncovering the immense potential within myself and realizing that my impact on the world could extend far beyond what I had ever imagined.

In the most remarkable youth-run organization, I discovered myself and realized my true potential. As I continue to chart my path forward, I aspire to live a life where I can communicate with and influence people, leaving a positive mark on the world. AIESEC has become the foundation from which I can continue to expand my impact ambitiously, sustainably, and with unwavering direction. With gratitude in my heart and a fire in my soul, I eagerly anticipate the next chapter of my journey, knowing that the possibilities are endless.

Meita Izzati Prameswari - AIESEC in Türkiye - 2019

I was introduced to AIESEC in 2019 as an exchange participant in Izmir, Türkiye. Before this experience, I was lost and confused about who I was as a person and what I could contribute to the world. Ultimately, it was the welcoming feeling from the school I volunteered with, the kids and their parents who thanked me for teaching their kids, that gave me my life purpose and made me realize that my existence in the world was meaningful.

I will never forget the moment a couple of parents approached me to thank me for teaching their kid who had autism. They mentioned that he had a great experience in the class, and they were happy since in the past, classrooms haven't been a safe place for him. Through this volunteer exchange experience, I fell in love with being able to impact people globally and within my community.

From my journey, I decided to become part of the AIESEC membership and started as a Team Leader. I am now the Local Committee President and I have been able to learn so much about myself and my leadership style. Through these experiences, I decided to go on a volunteer exchange once again to South Korea and now I am applying to become the National Vice President of Operations in South Korea!

Without the help of AIESEC, I would not have been able to meet people from so many different countries, I would not have been able to find my life purpose, and I would not have been able to enhance my skills.

I'm proud to be an AIESECer.

AIESEC IN UKRAINE

Dmytro Puhach - AIESEC in Ukraine - 2021

I joined the organization four days before the start of a full-scale invasion in Ukraine. I was a team member in Event Management, and I spent the beginning of my AIESEC journey in occupation - my city was occupied in the first days. Still, I wanted to do everything to support the people within my Local Committee.

Later, when I left the city due to the occupation with my family, we lived in Dnipro, and there I continued to be fully engaged with my team in an event for our international partners and their schools. At this time, I was a team leader in an Educational Project that was created due to the war and the closure of the Incoming Exchanges department in Ukraine. I communicated with schools and negotiated with them to conduct lessons for children to receive new and relevant knowledge during this period.

This experience allowed me to believe in the impact of AIESEC and drove me to apply to more positions to continue helping youth in my community. I applied for a Congress Committee position at the New Horizons Autumn 2022 national conference. I was selected, and I was in charge of logistics. During this role, I met people from other Local Committees and the Member Committee Valor (National Team for AIESEC in Ukraine) for the first time, and I felt the energy of the AIESECer community.

I then wrote my application for the Executive Board of our Local Committee during the conference with some of my friends. I was selected for the Marketing and Public Relations Vice President position for AIESEC in Kharkiv. In the first semester of my experience, I collected 1455 LEADs with my Middle Management for all our possibilities and held 11 Promo Events. This experience is my favourite, as my team inspires me to become the best version of myself and not to give up in the face of difficulties. Now I understand that I need to look further and consider what impact I want to make for Ukraine and what position in AIESEC can enable me to create this impact.

Angelina Gryshyk- AIESEC in Ukraine - 2022

In October 2021, I got my dream position of leading incoming volunteer experiences in my Local Committee for the 2022 year. At that moment, I believed that it would be the best experience of my life. I had the best team, and I saw how motivated and passionate my Local Committee was, as well as my Local Committee partners from all over the world. That year, I was also supposed to fly to Türkiye for a conference. There were so many exciting plans and so much hope, but at the start of 2022, a full-scale war came to Ukraine, which devasted the country and closed incoming exchange operations.

During the first month, I didn't know what to do, so we met as an Executive Board, and we took care of our membership, but it wasn't the same. When April came, momentum started around a project called Lead for Peace.EduUp - an educational project for the development of children and youth in Ukraine led by the AIESEC in Ukraine membership. I finally got to see the passion come back in the eyes of all the members of my team and the Local Committee. AIESEC gave us an opportunity to create an impact again for those who really need it, namely our little leaders; our children. As a Local Committee Vice President, I realized that the organization provides a huge space for your ideas, enables you to implement them and supports your development along the way. I am grateful to all my global exchange partners who helped create this foreign project to inspire youth leaders worldwide to make a difference in our community. I will forever remain the Local Committee's Incoming Global Volunteer Exchange Vice President for 2022 because incoming exchange is what my soul is invested in. I believe and hope that one day, physical exchange participants can come to Ukraine, and I am ready to welcome the first Exchange Participant at the airport.

Inspired by my previous experiences, I've now been elected to be on the Member Committee for AIESEC in Ukraine as the Marketing and Public Relations head. Through this role, I will be able to impact even more people and allow them to engage with AIESEC and our leadership development programs. All in all, being an AIESECer means not having limitations for your dreams, thoughts and ideas and continuously striving to improve yourself and impact the world.

AIESEC IN UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Ahmed Nadzry Bin Azli - AIESEC in United Arab Emirates - 2019

My AIESEC journey has been nothing short of transformative. It all began with a burning desire to make an impact, to contribute something meaningful to the world, and to discover the extent of my own capabilities. Initially, I believed that my value within AIESEC was solely dependent on what I could bring to the organization. This belief instilled in me a constant need to prove myself, to prepare rigorously for every task, and to showcase my worth to others.

However, as I delved deeper into my role within AIESEC, I began to realize that the true value within the organization was found in the connections forged within the team and the unique qualities that each individual brought to the table. For me, this was a profound shift in perspective. I learned that, yes, performance matters, but what matters even more, especially in a leadership role, is the opportunity to shape someone's life and to truly understand the person behind the role they play in their team, their relationships with friends and family, and their connection to the organization.

This realization was not without its challenges. It required me to move beyond the surface level, delve into meaningful conversations, and foster genuine connections with my teammates and members. It was in those moments of quality time spent within the team that the true magic happened, resulting in the exceptional experiences we could deliver to our stakeholders.

My AIESEC journey has taught me that it's not just about what you do, but how you do it and who you do it with that truly defines the impact you can make. It's about understanding the dreams, aspirations, and struggles of the people you work alongside, and leveraging those insights to create a more profound and lasting change. AIESEC has not only given me the platform to grow professionally but has also provided me with the opportunity to grow as a person, appreciate the beauty of diversity, and understand that true value lies in the connections we build and the lives we touch along the way.

Hana Engida - AIESEC in United Arab Emirates - 2022

As I stepped off the plane into a new country, I felt so much excitement along with nerves. Moving to the United Arab Emirates was a significant change in my life, and little did I know that it would be the backdrop for a remarkable transformation. I was about to embark on a journey that would take me from crippling stage fright to being selected as a Facilitator (FACI) for the biggest conference in the UAE.

In the UAE, I quickly realized that I was surrounded by people from all corners of the globe. It was both exhilarating and daunting, especially as my first experience was representing something bigger than myself – AIESEC, the world's largest youth-run organization. I was tasked with attending the Youth Speak Forum (YSF), an event that aimed to amplify the voices of young change-makers.

My early encounters at YSF were a crash course in networking and public speaking. I battled with my nerves, but something within me pushed me forward. The support and mentorship from fellow AIESEC members were invaluable. They helped me navigate the unfamiliar terrain, offering guidance and encouragement every step of the way.

As I gained confidence and honed my communication skills through my involvement in AIESEC, I started to stand out. Little did I know that this newfound proficiency would leave a lasting impression on my academic journey. In a recent interaction, my head of school commended my communication abilities. He was taken aback. He hadn't expected one of his students to excel in this manner. Looking back, I realized that what set me apart from my peers was my involvement in AIESEC.

AIESEC taught me the power of activating leadership, guiding people to find their voices and passions, and unlocking their inner abilities. It wasn't just about public speaking; it was about helping others discover their potential and empowering them to positively impact the world. Through AIESEC, I developed as a communicator and a leader who could inspire and motivate.

Now, as I prepare to take on the role of a Facilitator at the biggest conference in the UAE, I am filled with gratitude for the journey that brought me here. From my initial stage fright to this significant opportunity, I have grown in ways I never imagined. I hope to share the valuable lessons I've learned through AIESEC with the conference attendees, helping them find their own voices and passions.

Ultimately, my journey reminds me that activating leadership is about more than just guiding others; it's about finding your voice, passion, and ability to make a difference in the world.

AIESEC IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Victoria Li - AIESEC in United Kingdom - 2021

In my first year of AIESEC, I used to record much of my life and emotions on the Executive Board in my Local Committee (LC). As time progressed, I was mostly living in the moment, lacking the time to document my journey. This storybook gave me the chance to, once again, put pen to paper (or more like laying my hands on the laptop keyboard).

It feels like a lifetime ago when I used to travel from York, where I lived, to Leeds (where my Local Committee was based) every week on a 30-minute train ride to host functional team meetings and eventually, "Leeds" kind of became my surname (my actual surname, "Li," does sound quite similar haha). We were a team of 5 from 4 different nationalities. I introduced the concept of Cultural Dinner, where our team would dine at a restaurant serving a different cultural cuisine after each team meeting. We tried Vietnamese and Thai food, but never got the chance to go to a Polish and Hong Kong restaurant, as the pandemic soon arrived in the UK. I remember vividly that I was at a conference when I was told the news.

I am a COVID-19-generation AIESECer, meaning I have attended 3 International Congress conferences, but all online. I often felt confused and misunderstood by previous AIESEC generations and their advice/critique, and sometimes it made me emotional since their idea of AIESEC comes from a “normal” reality I will never understand. In retrospect, an important quality that I believe our generation has acquired is empathy & I have faith that we, the next generation of AIESEC alumni, will be able to teach innovation and resilience in the face of crisis and massive change.

Somehow, my LC still managed to come out of the pandemic in one piece. While I was Local Committee President, I was also part of the National Support Team of AIESEC in Germany. There was never a physical mascot culture in AIESEC UK, which is something very present in Germany. So, during planning, I invited my team to decide on an LC mascot together (i.e. Baby Yoda). Since then, LC after LC started picking their own mascot and made sure it was on their packing list for every conference. That is the story of how mascots arose once again in AIESEC UK.

After my LCP term, I moved to Belgium for my Member Committee (MC) experience. AIESECers are often asked to complete personality tests for any application. What I have realized is that the longer I stayed in AIESEC, the more my strengths and weaknesses evolved. AIESEC taught me the value of being self-aware. In Belgium, I discovered my talent for facilitation. I loved designing LEAD sessions (sessions connected to the AIESEC values) and delivering moving session experiences for delegates.

During my young adulthood, I was raised by AIESECers. Because of all the teams I have been in, I am the person I am today. One thing that remained constant and true throughout these 3.5 years is my love and passion for AIESEC. I hope I have shared my contagious love for this beautiful organization with some of my teammates, so they can create their own life-changing stories.

I now work for DHL, AIESEC's global partner. Since I finished my AIESEC journey, I have attended two anniversary events this year, one in London and one in Bonn. At these galas, when I would see everyone dancing to roll calls, my heart ached because I was reminded how much I miss AIESEC and my teammates.

So to all the current members reading this, please cherish your time in AIESEC because the clock is ticking. And AIESEC is the best thing that could happen to a young person in their 20s. Make it count.

Michelle Wan Yi Chong - AIESEC in the United Kingdom - 2023

It all started in AIESEC in Aberdeen. During the pandemic, I learned about AIESEC through a lecture shoutout, and I thought I was going to go on an exchange. A few months later, I realized that I wanted to contribute to something bigger despite being home in front of the screen, so I stumbled upon the Join AIESEC application and went through the process. I applied to become VP of Talent Management (TM) 21.22 one month after my Incoming Global Talent member term because TM was something I was deeply interested in.

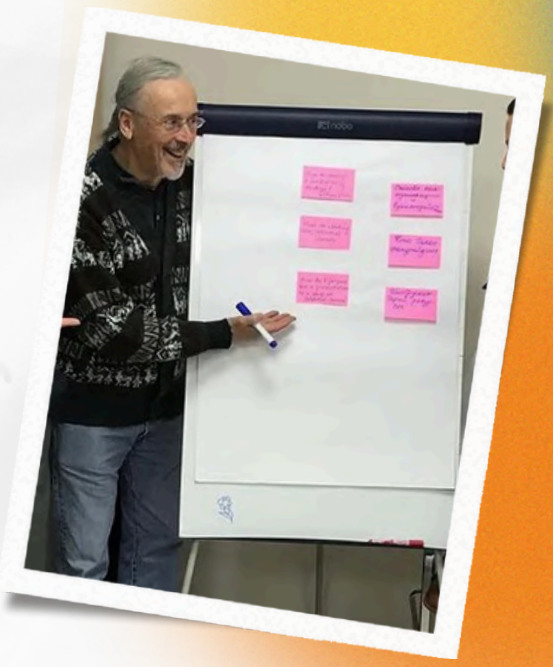
This role really pushed me to step out of my comfort zone. I used to utterly dislike public speaking and trying to put myself 'in the arena', but the VP TM experience pushed me to take responsibility and ownership in my role. The most fulfilling thing about the TM experience is seeing the growth of your members and being there to shape their leadership journey.

After my VP term, I became the Local Committee President for the 22.23 term, which was one of the best experiences I've ever had. This role changed me as a person to be more self-aware and solution-oriented. Also understanding so much more about the people around you and how to work with them. I had the best VPs I could ever ask for, everyone was giving their best efforts, there to support each other and innovate for our term ahead. I had a very supportive and close commission who were ready to jump in to help each other at any instance. In this term, many deep bonds and friendships were made that we still deeply cherish up to this day. As I had such a great experience, I wanted to provide that for others and understand how other LCs operate, I became LC Coach for AIESEC in LSE and Warwick and helped them through their journeys with strategic planning, coaching and trying my best to provide the support that they need.

Every AIESEC journey has offered me an experience that is so different and has given me skills that I wouldn't have gained elsewhere. It is all also because of the people that I have met and that have impacted me in AIESEC, I am who I am today.

AIESEC IN THE UNITED STATES

Ken Phillips - AIESEC in the United States - 1961



My AIESEC career began with a traineeship in Switzerland in 1961, followed by serving as the Local Committee President (LCP) at Princeton, founding and being LCP at Michigan, and then United States National Committee President, 1964-66, where we doubled the number of LCs and laid the groundwork for future growth.

AIESEC gave me my life direction and prepared me for the leadership roles I played as a fundraiser at Save the Children US, Executive Director at Plan International USA, and Head of Organizational Development at the International Red Cross. Since then, I have spent 30 years consulting NGOs around the world.

Now, I'm writing six books about everything I learned, starting with AIESEC. The books are "Leadership When You're Not the Boss", "Strategic Planning and Engaging Culture", "Strategies for Fundraising", "Ethics and Impact", and now "Governance, Management, and Teams for Nonprofits." The final book will be 25 essays by young people on the issues they think are most important for a good future. Each essay will include 5 to 8 things that everyone can do in their daily lives. I'm proud that 50% of the proceeds from my books will go to AIESEC in the United States.

For free guidance on developing your leadership, planning, fundraising, and more, visit www.ngofutures.com.

Dennis Sandler - AIESEC in the United States - 1974

I was President of the Local Committee at New York University in the 1970s. During this time, I had the privilege to attend International Congress in Madrid and Belgium as the captain of the Pink Team (remember those pink and green forms for exchange opportunities and participants?). I was also fortunate to have traineeships in Stockholm, Sweden and Ljubljana, Slovenia (when it was part of Yugoslavia).

I remember my first AIESEC Regional conference at Harvard University. What kind of group was I getting involved with? Serious meetings, sightseeing, then singing and dancing. Little did I know it would be a lifelong ride. Being at a New York local committee, I could see firsthand the workings of the National Committee. Before the days of the Internet, we did exchanges using computer punchcards.

The leadership and cultural experiences from my Local Committee and foreign traineeships were wonderful learning opportunities. Whether touring around New York with foreign trainees, visiting the Land of the Midnight Sun, on study tours to Leningrad (as it was then called) and central Türkiye, or mingling with friends at the Scandinavian party during an International Congress, I gained a new appreciation of the differences and similarities among the citizens of our world.

After AIESEC, I continued my studies to obtain a Ph.D. and a faculty position in marketing. Friendships I made through AIESEC have enriched me, and some are still ongoing. I had dinner this year during a trip to Stockholm with a friend who was my Swedish reception officer (after almost 50 years since my traineeship!). I have also been able to take my own students on foreign field trips to Europe, bolstered by the AIESEC contacts I have maintained.

AIESEC will be with you for life. Skål to the past and to the future!

Stephanie Ryan - AIESEC in the United States - 1986

I joined AIESEC in the 80s through AIESEC at Trinity College in the United States. When I graduated from University and AIESEC, I got the chance to meet with AIESEC Co-Founder, Jean Choplin during global events. We discussed the lack of presence of an alumni network in AIESEC and ended up meeting with other alumni to discuss this further. We later met in 1987 with other European alumni at the first-ever Alumni Congress and formed a board along with a more formal alumni organization.

After a few years of serving on the founding board, hosting meetings and facilitating calls, my career and personal life took a turn, and I lost touch with the organization. Looking at the presence of alumni now and the alumni associations that span the globe, I'm delighted the Alumni network is strong and viable today. Sometimes, people show up for the moment they are needed, and leadership rotates.

Christopher Naidoo - AIESEC in the United States - 1991

Growing up in South Africa, we had very limited international exposure. During sanctions, we were limited in many things, especially products and goods from overseas. AIESEC, however, provided a glimpse of what life was like on the other side of the world. I always dreamed of working and living in the USA, but this dream seemed almost impossible. Using a borrowed typewriter, I applied for an interview internship and through the University of Michigan, I was picked to work at Chrysler in Detroit. Scraping up close to $200, I took my first plane ride and moved to America. Fast forward 27 years, with an entrepreneurial spirit, I left Ford to begin my own company, Sigma International. We grew the company to a Tier 1/Tier 2 interior and exterior decorative trim supplier to companies like Subaru, GM, Ford, FCA, Autoliv, NSI, Toyoda Gosei, Adient and Navistar.

During the economic downturn, I established Sigma Luminous, an LED lighting company, to diversify our organization and position the company to take advantage of the growing push for green, sustainable energy solutions. At one stage, I was also one of the largest sponsors of AIESEC interns. A huge thank you to AIESEC for giving me the opportunities that have led me to where I am today.

Abby Lemma - AIESEC in the United States - 2019

In the Fall of 2019, I was asked to join the executive board halfway through the term, only four months after I had been a general member. I was nervous to join a team where I wasn't initially starting with them, and I felt nervous. When I first started my work on this Executive Board (EB), I immediately felt included, seen, and respected. This drastically changed the outcome of my AIESEC experience. My Local Comittee President (LCP), Grace St. Urbain, was a woman who commanded respect in such a graceful way. At a predominantly white university, joining an organization where the President of AIESEC UGA was a woman who looked like me felt comforting. Grace and her team had a way of leading that was powerful but also kind. This made me excited to join their team.

Starting was difficult, I had to try and manage a team by myself. Although I had previous leadership experience, this felt different. I knew that leading this team would be a challenge and there would be roadblocks, but the EB constantly was motivating me to do better and come up with different solutions. Because of Grace, Nandan, and Meghan, I flourished as a leader, challenged, and learned more about myself.

This team experience is the reason why I applied for LCP and lost, then applied for LCP again and won. They showed me that I had more to offer, that my ideas were valid, and that I was a competent leader. If it were not for my LCP term, I would not have applied for the Member Committee (MC). At every step of my MC process, they were cheering me on. This team is the reason why I am now the Member Committee President (MCP). They believed in me and showed me how to lead others and how to be led.

To me, AIESEC is about the influence you have to empower others to be the best versions of themselves, and at AIESEC at UGA, I truly felt like I could. This has translated into who I am now as MCP of AIESEC US. I have learned that being an inclusive and compassionate leader takes responsibility and accountability. I learned that you have to work hard to achieve your goals even when faced with consistent adversity. I learned that your team can become your family when you invest time and energy into them. AIESEC is about the leaders we create who go on to do impactful things for our communities, and I can truly say that Grace, Meghan, Nandan, and I embody every single one of the AIESEC values and still live through them to this day. In the end, it was their belief in me that lit the path to my current role as MCP of AIESEC US, and I carry their legacy with me in every decision I make.

Marina Manova - AIESEC in United States - 2021

AIESEC is an exhilarating experience. You don't realize you need it until you're a part of it, and once you've tasted it, you crave more. Finally, when you no longer feel challenged, you understand it's time to move on and continue growing, applying everything you've learned to continue impacting the world. Every generation adds their piece to the AIESEC puzzle, and I was happy to witness many doing just that.

During the five years I spent as an active member of AIESEC in the United States, I met some of my closest friends, faced consistent challenges, and gained valuable experiences in managing an organization while making critical long and short-term decisions every day. Moreover, I learned to be open, bold, and to believe in myself.

While I was still at the local level and on the brink of transitioning to the national team, AIESEC in the United States faced one of its most challenging financial crises since its establishment in 1956. Thankfully, swift actions by the Board of Directors and national team members ensured the organization's survival throughout the pandemic. The national team size was halved, staff members were furloughed, offices were downsized, and salaries were cut in half - every possible way to save funds was utilized. Finances were reviewed weekly to determine if the organization had sufficient reserves to weather COVID-19 - and thankfully, due to our quick actions, we did!

As we navigated the worst of the pandemic, we began devising plans to rebuild what we had lost. Our key realization was that this was a new AIESEC - much of what had worked in the past might not be effective now, especially concerning membership. We recognized the need to reignite enthusiasm within our membership and decided to invest heavily in conferences and Local Committee visits, teaching students about AIESEC from the ground up.

Alumni played and continue to play a pivotal role in delivering sales education, sponsoring students to attend conferences and exchanges, and sharing their stories of 'Why' they joined AIESEC, 'Why' they stayed, and where they are now thanks to what they learned with AIESEC. The journey to reconstruct AIESEC US was far from easy and continues, but the future shines brightly - our leadership is more resilient than ever.

Thank you to our incredible Board of Directors and AIESEC Life for their unwavering support and belief in youth leadership. And a special thank you to MC Venture, MC Atlas, MC Limitless, and MC Activate for the sacrifices you've made and the dedication you've shown to bring AIESEC in the US to this point. To MC Quest and our future generations - you've got this!

AIESEC IN VENEZUELA

Antonio Colmenares Vázquez - AIESEC in Venezuela - 2012

In 2012, I was responsible for opening AIESEC in my city during a national economic and political crisis in Venezuela. I managed a team of 20 who were all dedicated to bringing the impact of this organization to our friends, families and our city. Despite the financial and social struggles we faced in establishing AIESEC in San Cristobal, we believed we could prevail because we truly believed in AIESEC's vision of achieving peace and fulfilment of humankind's potential. After a year and a half of hard work, we were finally able to open our Local Committee in San Cristobal and have since been able to deliver hundreds of life-changing experiences for young people in Venezuela and around the world.

AIESEC IN VIETNAM

Mary Nguyen - AIESEC in Vietnam - 2017

I come from the Local Committee FHCMC - one of the leading Local Committees of AIESEC in Vietnam. For years, we had prided ourselves on consecutively winning the Local Committee Excellence Award until we lost the award in 2017. It was a wake-up call for us. We were stagnant in performance because our membership was disconnected from the organization's vision & purpose.

Realizing this, the Executive Board of the term 17.18 drove a massive restructuring and restrategizing in the second semester to allow innovation and breakthroughs in how we operated the LC. We remarkably doubled the results, which was continued by the Executive Board 18.19, who led the Local Committee to rank top 2 in Asia Pacific. However, it came with a cost. Our membership became burnt out. Thus, when I became part of the Local Committee in 19.20, we focused on maintaining performance while ensuring a good experience for our members. It was embedded in everything we did as a team, how we talked, organized meetings, and demonstrated ourselves. Eventually, we had 33 people applying for 10 Executive Board positions. For the first time after three years, my committee won the 'LC Excellence Award' again, and we know very clearly that this is a result of the cumulative effort and resilience of all generations.

Minh Trang Nguyen Ngoc - AIESEC in Vietnam - 2020

As a new member of AIESEC in FTU HCMC back in 2017, I never believed that I had the capacity to become a team leader until my VP told me, "You are not just good for this position, you're excellent." Knowing that she believed in me pushed me to power through all the failures and crises thrown my way, and I grew to believe that no problem in the world could take me down.

This belief in myself, however, was shattered a couple of years later during my term as the National Committee Vice President of Outgoing Global Volunteer in Vietnam. During this year, the COVID-19 pandemic began, and all of our operations came to a screeching halt. For six months, I had no clear direction on how I could promote global volunteering opportunities when almost every other country had travel restrictions, and keeping my department alive seemed like an impossible task. I was lost, and I was scared of destroying this program and killing the department that I had so much love for.

After many discussions with my team and countless hours of replanning, we ultimately decided to change the Outgoing Volunteer portfolio to Alumni Engagement, with our goal being to establish and maintain relationships with our past members and previous exchange participants. I was so proud to be a part of this team that spearheaded this massive change. While it may not have been the same portfolio, it was resilient and was “reborn” in a way and came back stronger than ever, much like the Phoenix our team strove to be like.

Since that experience, in the last two years, I have also worked for two Regional Offices worldwide — Asia Pacific and Europe. Due to COVID restrictions and visa issues, I have had to work remotely. While all of these challenges were difficult to manage, the experiences I have had during this time have been absolutely worth it. My first term, when I was working for the Regional Office in Asia Pacific, taught me so many lessons that I could apply to my term with the European Regional Office.

Working with Europe allows me to work with so many people with such diverse backgrounds, especially considering that the region has 40 entities. Not only have I learned about the AIESEC entities in this region, but I have also learned about the cultures and stories that come from these countries and these people. Before beginning this position, I was worried about being judged due to my different background, having come from Asia. Still, the region truly embraced me, and I have created so many connections here that I will maintain for the rest of my life. I am so grateful to have been able to be a part of AIESEC in Europe to close off my seven-year AIESEC journey and to have been able to call AIESEC in Europe my “second home”.

Vu Dinh Ha - AIESEC in Vietnam - 2022

During our first month as the Member Committee (MC) Team for AIESEC in Vietnam, my team and I organized a 4-day National Conference for the whole AIESEC in Vietnam membership with a scale of about 180 delegates in 2022. There was a lot of pressure for us since it was our first touchpoint with the National Plenary and the first physical touchpoint with the membership in over 3 years. Hence, our MC Team considered it a massive milestone for the entity, marking the beginning of a new era with many high hopes. The conference was going on quite smoothly. Everyone was trying their best to deliver our delegates the best experience possible, and we took every precaution possible to ensure that this conference was a safe experience for all delegates involved.

However, on the 3rd night, as we were preparing everything for the last day to be as memorable as possible, we received a report about COVID cases from the delegates. After that, more and more cases were reported to us, and in just a blink, the number of recorded cases rose to more than 50% of the delegates. The core team, consisting of the Conference Manager, Agenda Managers, Member Committee President, and Organizing Committee President, quickly discussed how to deal with the crisis. At that time, Vietnam was beginning the new normal, so the government was still very concerned about COVID-19.

Additionally, the situation among the people in our country was still very serious during this pandemic, so we, as the conference team, were apprehensive and panicked. I, as the Agenda Manager, considering the serious situation, proposed to cancel the last day and prepare for taking everyone home right the next morning as soon as possible, even though that meant we had to give up all the content and sessions that we had been putting so much effort into, to ensure the safety of our delegates and the brand of AIESEC in Vietnam.

Agreeing with the decision, the whole conference team stayed up all night to prepare everything: contacting the hotel to re-arrange the rooms for the positive and negative people, calling the buses to take everyone home the following day, finding the vendors to buy an additional 300 COVID test-kit and medicines; allocating the delegates into different groups and ensuring everyone was tested. Everyone was trying their best to deal with the crisis, even though two-thirds of our conference team were also positive, including our Conference Manager and Organizing Committee President, and they were highly sick at that moment. I was the one who cried the most, but other than that, no one gave up, no one complained, and we all stood up and worked together.

In the end, all of the delegates were taken home safely and with their health ensured. No serious cases were made, and everything was solved smoothly. Thinking back on that experience, I'm thankful for it because it helps me realize what leadership means when we are put in such a "challenging environment." Crisis is inevitable, but there's always a way to solve it. At the end of the day, despite this crisis, this conference was one of the most memorable conferences for our members, and we achieved what we had initially set out to achieve.

A LETTER FROM

ANA LEONOR FERNANDES – PAI 2024

Dear AIESEC,

In the last 75 years, the world has changed at a rapid pace. Similarly, AIESEC has evolved, and what started as a group of young students aiming to increase cross-cultural understanding through practical exchange experiences has become a youth leadership movement of over 1 million people over the years. But while the environment around us kept changing, one thing remained the same - the world still needs leaders.

As we head dive into our 76th year, we carry with us the legacy of the impact we create in the format of the stories we helped to write. While decades separate some of these stories, they are all connected by the most important string - the deep belief that youth leadership can contribute to Peace and Fulfilment of Humankind's Potential.

Can you imagine what would happen if we could engage and develop every young person? The 75th Anniversary Storybook shows us a piece of what that world could look like and why it's worth it to keep asking this question for, at the very least, 75 years more.

AIESECly yours,

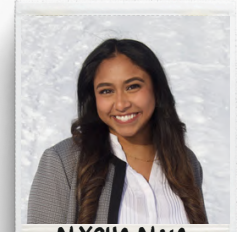
Ana Fernandes

Ana Leonor Fernandes
President of AIESEC International 2023

ANA LEONOR FERNANDES
AIESEC INTERNATIONAL 2024

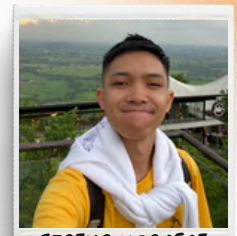
Vivid LEADERSHIP

OUR SINCERE THANKS
GOES TO



ALYSHA ALVA
AIESEC International 2023

LUTHFI AKBAR
AIESEC International 2023

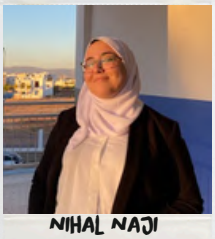


FESTUS YOSAFAT
AIESEC in Indonesia

JÉSSICA ANTUNES
AIESEC in Portugal

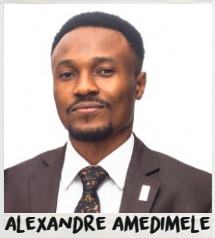
MEJI EDU
AIESEC in Ghana

SHRADHA BALACHANDRAN
AIESEC in Sweden



NIHAL NAJI
AIESEC in Morocco

SHASHINI HEWADEWA
AIESEC in Sri Lanka



ALEXANDRE AMEDIMELE
AIESEC in Rwanda

DAVID KWIZERA
AIESEC in Rwanda

AYESH RAJAPAKSHA
AIESEC in India

None of this campaign would have been possible with the many helping hands we had throughout the year. A huge thank you to this team that helped make the idea of this campaign into a reality. Each of them were able to make this initiative a little bit more vivid. ❤️

SPECIAL THANKS
GOES TO

FLAVIO NAVARRO
AIESEC International 2023

CHESTER SHUM
AIESEC International 2023

DAVIDE PALMISANO
AIESEC International 2024

Thanks for reading