



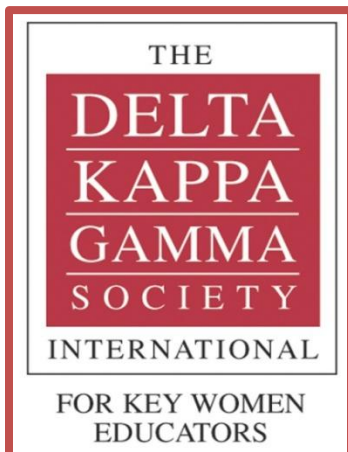
MA STATE ORGANIZATION of
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Baystater

Leading Women Educators Impacting Education Worldwide

VOLUME 66 ISSUE 2 SPECIAL

WINTER 2024



PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: FALL CONFERENCE OCTOBER, 21, 2023

Educators are resilient. They are creative and flexible. We are tough, supportive, and dedicated.

And we are here, together today, to learn how we might revitalize our organization, refresh our spirits, laugh, and connect. It is already looking a bit different for us. We are not in a hotel. There was not the traditional socializing last evening. The full breakfast isn't laid out for us. We will put together our own lunches. But we are here.

We care deeply about Delta Kappa Gamma. We continue to stay current with our wider organization's initiatives and gatherings. And we want to grow again.

We are here to find out about the state of our state, and take the next steps. I realize I will be leading a membership that will probably drop below 400. That's not unexpected. But is unacceptable. My priority for the next two years is to turn that trend around. My target is 500 members by May, 2025, when Diana Grady takes over. By the numbers, if each chapter adds 4-5 members over the next two years, and we retain the members we have...we are there.

We are all in this together! I encourage you to keep our crisp descriptors at the ready when you talk about DKG and what's in it for new members:

- An immediate network of accomplished women educators to support you.
- Scholarships and grants for your professional and personal growth.
- Leadership opportunities that compliment your interests.
- And hopefully, some joy, and some fun.

We are also an organization that supports our greater community, beyond our schools. To this end, a marvelous suggestion has been made for each chapter to support their local food banks. It has troubled me that from Thanksgiving through December, amazing amounts of collections are made and distributed, but there are 10 other months. We know children cannot learn unless their stomachs are full. Please make a plan to gather the foods needed by your chapter's communities, and make monthly donations. You might organize a food drive, or just have members bring food items to each meeting. Every donation is valued. We can do this together.

I'm thrilled to be working with you, and I'm looking forward to our times together!

Please see p. 3 for Jill's President Message regarding our Spring Convention

ALPHA UPSILON STATE 2023-2025

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CHAPTER PRESIDENTS 2022-2024

AREA I

Kappa	Donna Brown (Contact)
Theta	Peggy Trudell
Alpha Beta	Louise O'Brien
Alpha Theta	Kaaren Harrington

AREA II

Alpha Gamma	Tammy Edmonds and Beth Clark
Alpha Mu	Susan Apteker and Kristine Beaudet

AREA III

Eta	Jo-Anne Butler and Tove Bendiksen
Zeta	Audrey Smith (Contact)
Alpha Lambda	Ellen Driscoll

AREA IV

Alpha	Elaine Karalekas
Alpha Epsilon	Lindsay Skelton

AREA V

Alpha Iota	Nanci Flaherty
Alpha Zeta	Gail Saccone

AREA VI

Epsilon	Irene Frangos Falite
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The Baystater email address is:

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I'd like to thank the following contributors to this issue: Diana Grady (Alpha Theta), Carol LaPolice (Alpha), and Gail Pease (Alpha Mu)

THANK YOU! Gail Saccone



~~PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE~~

Happy New Year, DKG Sisters,

It has been a lovely week of family, friends, and feasting, and I certainly hope you all had warm family time and far too much to eat and drink. My heart is most definitely full.

I have heard from our Executive Board and many members of Alpha Theta, and will run through how my decision to hold our Spring Conference at The 1620 in Plymouth MA on May 3rd and 4th, 2024 was reached. Transparency and clarity are key.

Linda Stewart has negotiated a new tentative contract with 1620 that is very good, and less than last year. She has based it on 40 attendees, a reduced rate room block for 15 rooms for May 3, and \$1500 for breakfast and luncheon on May 4th. We hope to supply our own technology (to be determined). Martha Cotton has reviewed our budget and estimated expenses with me. Last year we brought in \$4069, and our expenses were \$10,812. But we are currently carrying \$26,087.00 in our savings account, so we can cover these losses. Unfortunately, another chapter is considering disbanding, and our membership numbers are not flourishing.

I am able to offer a site to meet with a hotel nearby that would help us to come very close to breaking even for this event. But it is my responsibility to listen and respond to member concerns, and here are some of the considerations shared:

- we bond with members from other chapters
- we can offer new members something "extra" to look forward to
- this is too drastic a change
- we need to be together for more than one day
- driving one hour to sit in a room and have workshops for the day smacks of teacher meetings I have always hated
- a short day, a do-it-yourself cold lunch is just another meeting

I would also share that the 1620 is not convenient for Western Mass members, and the cost of the day may be too dear for some members. But we drew only 32 attendees to our Fall Conference at only \$25.

So, the challenge is this, and it is for ALL of us:

- Develop an exciting and interesting agenda for Saturday, May 4th, that will entice new and veteran members.

I'm certain Diana Grady will welcome ideas!

- Make some offerings fun
- Consider utilizing our treasury to support even lower rates than our usual free registration for first time attendees. We will discuss this at our Winter Board Meeting.
- Look for partner organizations to invite at a reduced rate to expand our attendance.

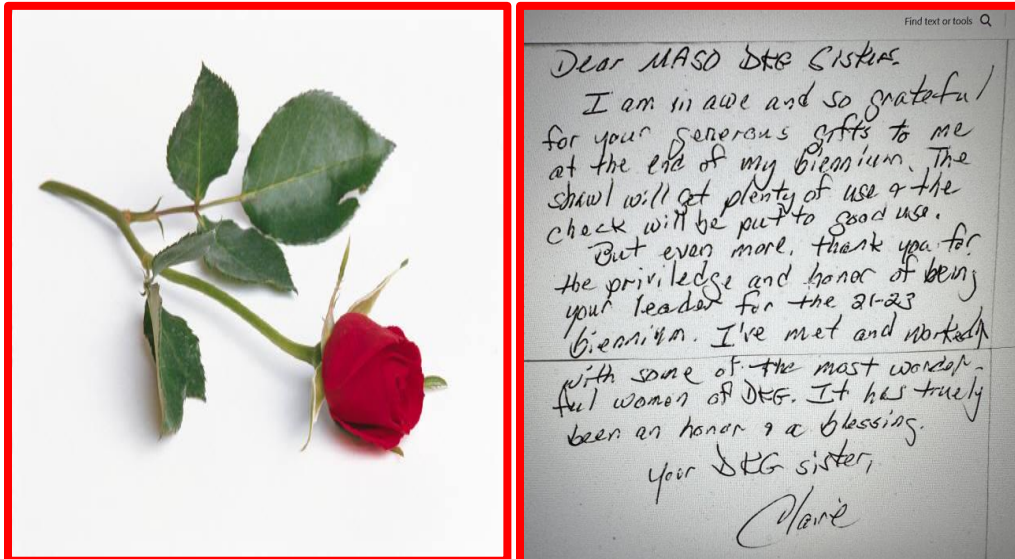
I thank those of you who took the time to contact me via email. I also realize that communication constituted only 5% of our current membership.

The decision for 2024 is made, and it is now every member's challenge and responsibility to participate, invite prospective members, and spread the word!

Your DKG Sister,

Jill Flanders (jillayneflanders@gmail.com)

THANK YOU FROM OUTGOING PRESIDENT CLAIRE LABONTE



LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TEXAS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2023

Submitted by Diana Grady

In June 2023 Martha Cotton, Treasurer, Diana Grady First Vice-President, and Linda Stewart, Executive Secretary, attended the Leadership Conference in Dallas, Texas. As a culminating activity, each state's attendees worked on creating a Logic Model Plan to address a critical problem for their state organization. For MASO, one area of concern is communication with the State Leadership and participation of members in State activities, including participation in State sponsored conferences and volunteering for leadership positions at the State and Chapter levels. The goals for this plan are to increase membership and engender a more robust, active organization.

To initiate a **Plan of Action**, we decided to focus on the problem that members feel that they do not receive detailed communication from State which results in less than adequate input into and participation in meaningful state programs and also a lack of member interest in State leadership.

The next step involved examining the **Root Causes** for this problem. First of all, poor communication limited input and participation in State activities and also created a lack of awareness of available resources and financial assistance among chapter members. Second, members' involvement in meaningful State-sponsored programs is waning. Third, recruiting and training for new leaders needs to be strengthened.

Our **Theory of Action** is based on the perception that if we increase two-way communication with chapter members, then members would feel empowered to be involved at the state level.

The team then developed specific **Actions** that could start to address the problem. Our first action was to deliver this plan for collaboration at the Fall Conference in Franklin. After the presentation, we distributed surveys to each chapter president; in turn, they were to have their members complete the survey and then return them to Diana Grady. The leadership team would then tabulate and analyze the data from the surveys. The survey sought to discover member interest in leadership opportunities, develop a compendium of workshop and presenter possibilities, and explore feelings about communication.

In addition, we offered suggestions for actions that could help engender camaraderie among members at chapter meetings and at State conferences and help participants to become acquainted with new people. Suggestions included designing ice breakers for meetings and developing 'creative' methods of assigning attendees to tables.

Now the job of the leadership team is to tabulate the survey results, write a report, and develop a file of workshop and presenter possibilities.

Alpha Upsilon Organizational Health Survey

What's Data Got To Do With It?

Submitted by Carol LaPolice, 2nd VP

Chapters tackled the essential question at our October 21st workshop: What can we do to keep chapters and membership thriving? Using the data received from 108 responses from all 15 chapters, we heard most from the over 50 age group and learned that the most valued benefits of DKG were social interaction, education advocacy and the honor of membership. Using these survey measures: Purpose, Management, Ethics, Accountability, Relationships, Publicity, Communications, and Financial we found some areas that needed to be addressed statewide while each chapter received their data to determine their areas of need. Each group present began work on their strategy by mining the data and the writing of a smart goal. As you've probably heard at state meetings, international conferences and many available zoom webinars "the heart of DKG is in its chapters!" Chapters will need more time to complete work. Please contact me if you have questions or would like assistance. Ideally, follow-up time with each chapter via zoom would be beneficial if we can attain access. Statewide results showed a surprise with 35% uncertain or disagreed with statements that are central to DKG's purpose including:

I understand the purpose of this organization.

Each active member belongs to one or more committees.

The focus of this chapter is supporting educational excellence.

I feel DKG and chapter membership are a benefit to me.

Leadership development is of interest to me.

One other area that was surprising was 35% were uncertain or disagree with the statements concerning communications including:

Communications are available in a variety of modes.

Active members attend two or more meetings per year.

The chapter has a calling committee or phone tree.

The chapter has a newsletter accessible to all members.

Members are aware of professional and personal development opportunities.

Members benefit from DKG webinars and presentations.

Members are encouraged to attend state meetings.

I use the DKG website and access to the state site occasionally.

One good thing we learned from the data was that 72% of the respondents agreed our relationships are strong; 70% agreed with our application of ethics in our organization. We have the basis to grow our organization in a positive fashion, let's rebuild ourselves working at the chapter level. Supporting Early Career Educators- a DKG special project- could be the unifying project you are looking for!

**DKG US FORUM invites you to the
NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SEMINAR
MARCH 10-13, 2024
Washington, D.C.
Learn to make a difference!
SPEAK UP, STAND UP, SOAR!**

U.S. FORUM NEWS

Submitted by Carol LaPolice, MA State, DKG Representative

Registration for US Forum Closing Soon!

Dates: Sunday, March 10th (2:00 pm) -Wednesday, March 13th (12:00 pm)

Location: Holiday Inn National Airport Hotel, Crystal City, VA (1 mile from Washington, DC and Reagan National Airport)

Registration Deadline: February 23, 2024

Hotel Reservation Deadline for DKG Special Rate: February 3rd

Registration: \$340.00 (All meals included)

If you have not yet made plans to attend the US Forum 2024 National Legislative Seminar, (NLS) in Washington, DC, now is the time to do so! This incredible event is designed not only for DKG women who are experienced advocates, but also for members who want to know more about becoming an effective communicator and supporter of causes that are important to women, children, and education. The National Legislative Seminar includes outstanding speakers on the issues most important to DKG members, a wreath laying ceremony at Arlington Cemetery, meetings with your elected senators and representatives, opportunities to discuss critical issues with fellow DKG members, and visits to the museums and monuments in Washington, DC

DKG International Plans for the Future

The Avenue M Report

2023 DKG Research Report - Final Executive Summary

Overview: The Executive Summary provides a brief summation of the Survey Key Findings and Avenue M's interpretation of the research.

- 1.** Educator burnout/resignations (62%) and a shortage of educators entering the profession (60%) are the top challenges or trends that women educators believe will negatively impact the profession in the future. Educator burnout/resignations is of particular concern to women educators who are 54 or younger.
- 2.** Increasing expectations of teachers (50%) and having to deal with issues affecting students outside the classroom (42%) are the top challenges and issues that are currently impacting women educators. Younger women educators (54 or younger) are more likely to report they are struggling with burnout/lack of work-life balance.
- 3.** Nearly four in five (79%) DKG members and former members say they accepted DKG membership because they knew a friend or colleague who was a DKG member. Community/connections with other women educators (65%) is the other top reason that these individuals chose to accept membership.
- 4.** Over four in five DKG members are likely (21%) or extremely likely (66%) to renew their DKG membership. The proportion of members who are extremely likely to renew membership (66%) is higher than the industry benchmark of 55% tracked in Avenue M's database of professional membership organizations.
- 5.** Affiliation with DKG is stronger at the chapter level than at the international level, as members are more satisfied with their chapter membership than with their DKG international membership and are more likely to recommend chapter membership. They also tend to view Chapter membership as more valuable.
- 6.** Providing updates on state/federal policies affecting education (35%) and improving communications about member benefits, activities, and events (34%) are ways that DKG could improve the value of membership for members. Younger DKG members (54 or younger) are more likely to feel the society could increase the value of membership through attracting more members that reflect their demographics and providing more opportunities for leadership development training.

7. Nonmembers are most likely to not be a member of DKG because they are retired/retiring (28%) or because they don't have enough time to use DKG benefits/attend events (24%).
 8. State organization conventions (84%) and scholarships (75%) are the DKG offerings respondents are most likely to be aware of. The state organization conventions (42%), and Collegial Exchange (33%) are the most highly utilized benefits.
 9. While respondents 65 and older are most likely to believe there are no barriers to engaging with DKG, those 64 or younger are more likely to feel a lack of time is a barrier to engagement.
 10. When respondents engage with DKG, their number one goal is to connect with other women educators (59%). Those who are 64 or younger are more likely to engage with DKG to get information or DKG | Avenue M Group | September 2023 4 resources to help them do their job better, find opportunities for training/education, and find opportunities for financial assistance.
 11. In the future, Women educators feel DKG should be focusing on attracting/recruiting educators to become DKG members (54%) and attracting/recruiting educators to the profession (46%)
-

~~BAYSTATEMENTS~~

ALPHA MU *Submitted by Gail Pease*

Alpha Mu held their "Welcome Back" (from summer hiatus!!) meeting on September 14, 2023 at the Hunt family camp on North Spec Pond in New Salem, MA. A yummy Italian buffet provided by our officers and others was enjoyed by all. Plans and committees for the coming year were discussed; new members were given information for ordering their badges; and members who have chosen to be "Fairy Godmothers" to those members still teaching received updated information regarding their "God daughter"! A raffle was held for our Scholarship Fund. We closed with the singing of the DKG song.

We gathered once again on October 18 at The King Phillip Restaurant in Phillipston, MA for our "Dress As A Song" evening! A scrumptious buffet was the meal. Those recognized for their efforts in song selection and how they "dressed" for it were: Most Effort-Liz; Hardest to Guess-Mary C; Most Original-Ann H; Most correct Guesses-Michelle. ALL efforts were enjoyed and it was a fun evening together. Clothing and accessories were collected for donation to Dress For Success in Springfield, MA. Members signed up to take turns delivering the donations. The usual raffle for our Scholarship Fund was held and song sung to conclude the evening.

On Dec. 1, we were at the Barre, MA Legion for our annual Christmas Gathering and Yankee Swap. A delicious Potluck was enjoyed by all who attended. Many lovely gifts were exchanged with few wanting to "swap"!!! It seemed as if a suggestion of Christmas themed gifts had been made this year!!! A bottle of wine (made by sister, Helene Carroll-Pascale and her husband Guido) was raffled for our Scholarship Fund.

ALPHA ZETA *Submitted by Gail Saccone*



Alpha Zeta gathered for our annual Holiday Dinner on December 9th at our favorite place- the Fairview Inn in the Brandt Rock section of Marshfield. We started with our eleven gals enjoying a grab of beautiful gifts. Everyone also brought donations for needy teenagers in the Braintree area where our President Gail Saccone lives. We realized how much we enjoyed the afternoon and vowed to try to find a way to get together again in February. Unfortunately, as with so many chapters, it has become increasingly more difficult to find ways to meet together but we want to try!

PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FALL CONFERENCE

Submitted by Carol LaPolice



President Jill Flanders with Past President Claire LaBonte. Claire in her beautiful shawl. Linda Stewart, Diana Grady and Martha Cotton presented on the Leadership Conference.



Jessica Lupien and Jennifer Hoffer showing us a creative puppet show. We all had fun with "Drums Alive" (cardio drumming to music). Annette Shaw (bottom left) and Martha Colamaria had a wonderful time (bottom right).



JULY 9-13, 2024 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION NATIONAL HARBOR, MARYLAND

The 2024 International Convention promises to offer all the excitement you expect and more: enjoying keynote speakers, engaging in breakout sessions, networking with members, connecting with old friends, and using your member voice when you vote on proposed amendments.

The event will be held at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center in National Harbor, MD.

Near the area's most popular destinations, the resort overlooks the Potomac River with waterfront terraces at its back door and the town of National Harbor at its front.

From malls to boutiques, live entertainment to casinos, wine bars to restaurants, and ferry terminals to Ferris wheels, National Harbor has whatever might be your interest. And just a trip across the river takes you to Washington, D.C., and Alexandria, VA.

Margot Shetterly

AWARD WINNING AUTHOR | RESEARCHER | ENTREPRENEUR

Keynote Speaker | Wednesday, July 10 Luncheon

Margot Lee Shetterly is the Author of the #1 New York Times best-selling book *Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race*.



Andre Bradford

AWARD-WINNING SLAM POET | AUTHOR

Keynote Speaker | Friday, July 12 Luncheon

Andre Bradford, a.k.a. S.C. Says, is an Austin based slam poet who has been performing slam poetry since 2013. He's toured and featured at venues and universities across the country, and his work has been featured in the Huffington Post, Write About Now, The Edge radio, The Culture Trip, and Blavity. He is a two time Austin Poetry Slam Champion, the 2022 Texas Grand Slam Champion, and is the author of the poetry collection *Golden Brown Skin*. He also once popped a bag of popcorn without burning a single kernel, which is arguably one of his greatest achievements. His poetry covers a gamut of topics ranging from being mixed race, to social justice, to mental health awareness, to never settling in relationships. Slam poetry is an art form he loves due to its raw vulnerability and its ability to cultivate transparency and dialogues into many different walks of life.