

The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin

Collegial Exchange

2019 • Volume 85-4

Carpe DKG!

**Leadership:
An Opportunity,
Not a Burden**

How do Women Become Leaders?

*Using Think-Aloud to Strengthen
Inquiry and Research Pedagogy*

A Bright Marketing Strategy

Key Pins and Wedding Rings



2019 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

International Conference: Arts & Humanities

Asheville, NC

June 27-29, 2019

International Conference: Leadership

Des Moines, Iowa

July 10-12, 2019

International Conference: Technology

Costa Mesa, CA

July 17-20, 2019

International Conference: Professional Research

Reykjavik, Iceland

July 25-27, 2019

International Conference: Global Awareness

Mashantucket, CT

July 30-Aug. 1, 2019

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The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin Collegial Exchange

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The *Bulletin*, an official publication of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, promotes professional and personal growth of members through publication of their writings. Three online issues per year, subtitled *International Journal for Professional Educators*, focus on research-based and documented works—applied and data-based research, position papers, program descriptions, reviews of literature, and other articles on announced themes or other topics of interests to educators. Two print issues, subtitled *Collegial Exchange*, focus on articles based on practice and experience related to education, the Society, women, and children, as well as personal reflections and creative works. All five issues include book and technology reviews, letters to the editor, poetry, and graphic arts.

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Call for Submissions

Members are encouraged to submit manuscripts for consideration by the *Bulletin* Editorial Board. The Delta Kappa Gamma *Bulletin: International Journal for Professional Educators* accepts research-based articles including Action/Classroom Research, Qualitative Research, Quantitative Research, Reviews of Literature, Program Descriptions, Position Papers, and Book/Technology Reviews. The Delta Kappa Gamma *Bulletin: Collegial Exchange* accepts articles of a more practical, personal nature, including Classroom and DKG Practices/Programs, Viewpoints on Current Issues, Personal Reflections or Anecdotes, Inspirational Pieces, Biographies and Interviews, Book and Technology Reviews, and Creative Writing.

Submissions should be focused, well organized, effectively developed, concise, and appropriate for *Bulletin* readers. The style should be direct, clear, readable, and free from gender, political, patriotic, or religious bias. For more detailed information, please refer to the Submission Guidelines and the Submission Grids at www.dkg.org via the Apply/Submit tab.

Listed below are the deadlines and, where appropriate, themes. Although there is a suggested theme for each issue of the *Bulletin: International Journal for Professional Educators*, manuscripts on all topics are welcome. The *Bulletin: Collegial Exchange* is not theme-based.

Journal: Democracy in Education (86-1; Online)

(Postmark deadline is May 15, 2019)

Creating Independent Thinkers + Civic Education + Generating Student Engagement and Leadership + Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Collegial Exchange (86-2; Print)

(Postmark deadline is August 1, 2019)

No designated theme

Journal: The Ways We Learn (86-3; Online)

(Postmark deadline is October 1, 2019)

Brain Research + How Individuals Think/Organize + Technology Impact Storing and Processing Information + Models of Instructional Delivery Formal/Informal Learning + Experiential Learning

Collegial Exchange (86-4; Print)

(Postmark deadline is December 15, 2019)

No designated theme

Journal: Evolving Nature of Schooling (86-5; Online)

(Postmark deadline is March 1, 2020)

Public Education in an Era of Change + Alternative Models + Home Schooling Charters + Vouchers + Online Learning and Education + Responses to Social Issues International Perspectives + Private Education

Submit all materials to:
Bulletin Editorial Staff
bulletin@dkg.org

Full Submission Guidelines and other resources are available at the Apply/Submit tab on www.dkg.org.



Of Doors, Red Carpets, and Smorgasbords



This issue of the DKG *Collegial Exchange* puts the lie to an adage thought to originate as early as 8 A.D.: “Opportunity knocks but once.” The essence of the adage is that an individual has only one chance to do something important or profitable. If one fails to “answer the door” to that opportunity, she misses it! The more appropriate analogy for DKG, however, is not that of discovering what is temporarily “behind door #1,” so to speak, but of stepping out onto a red carpet—an extensive fabric of opportunities spreading out endlessly before a member and welcoming her to professional and personal growth!

Those opportunities—amply explored and detailed in this issue—include not only the chance to learn and live leadership but also to embrace new practices for the classroom and for DKG; not only to increase one’s knowledge base but also to ponder varied viewpoints; not only to share one’s gifts but also to discover the value of others’ talents and perspectives. And the beauty of these opportunities—these benefits of membership in an international organization of key women educators—is that they exist and expand over time, just waiting for the member to step forth.

To shift the analogy, being a member of DKG is like being invited to a smorgasbord; in this case, the table is heavily laden with opportunities of every sort, ranging from those at the chapter level to those that impact education worldwide. If one only nibbled on a basic breadstick from a real smorgasbord, think how much variety and delight she would be missing—not to mention how much value would be bypassed! The miraculously varied tastes and textures of DKG await those who fill their plates with opportunities that appeal—and that are included in the price of admission!

In DKG, opportunity keeps knocking...the red carpet keeps rolling out...and the smorgasbord offers endless choices. May members come to fully realize the opportunities available to them as key women educators impacting education worldwide.

Judy Merz, EdD
Editor



Carpe DKG!

Cathy P. Daugherty



DKG International President (2018-2020) Daugherty shares inspirational remarks from a joint chapter meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, on October 6, 2018.



At my recent 50th high school reunion, classmates shared updates on their retirement: the traveling they were doing, the grandchildren they were caring for, the joys of sitting back and taking it easy! On the outside, they presented a picture of contentment and lives well-lived. But upon further observation and deeper conversations, I discovered that most of these classmates were a bit uneasy with the concept of retirement from work that had fulfilled—or actually consumed—their lives for decades. Many had no personal interests outside their former jobs and now defunct careers. They were floundering as they sought more than golf outings and gardening to fill their days and their lives. That is, all but one...Linda Murphy Truitt, a childhood friend from my early elementary days more so than from our high school days.

Why was Linda beaming (yes, beaming!), and why was she so much more animated than I recalled from our youth when the two of us, total introverts (but unaware of that scientific label at that point in our lives), had often huddled in a corner to share news, favorite book titles, and childhood gossip? What had caused this change? Mere minutes into our conversation I knew the answer. Linda announced proudly that she was an educator, a long-time member of DKG, and even more actively engaged *after* retirement in her chapter in the North Carolina State Organization. She named projects she was working on as well as cited a recent *Collegial Exchange* article that featured her chapter's work (Volume 84-2, pp. 23-24). Here was a member of the Class of '68 who exuded purpose, vitality, and happiness in the life she was living *now*. It was a memorable moment that had me in tears.





Spurred to Action

Never in my wildest dreams had I expected to run into a DKG member at this reunion. Then, I thought, “Why not?” I looked around and saw women whose careers were dedicated to education and who had never been invited to join our Society. They were the very best of the Hickory High School Class of ’68, but their talents had gone unacknowledged by an organization that could have made an impact on them—not to mention the impact they could have made on the organization itself. It should have saddened me, and it did, but it also inspired me to share Linda’s and my secret to a life worth living every single day. So, I did what I’ve learned to do over my years as a DKG member. I started “working the room” as my poor husband looked on in both amazement and pride. Business cards flew out of my purse and into the hands of girlfriends from long ago. People I didn’t know in high school spoke to me for the first time, including a former cheerleader who had never given me the time of day! Classmates were mesmerized when I told them about my work in DKG: what DKG had done for me when I was actively employed and how it was continuing through my work in Austin, Texas, as international president. That 2-year move to Austin alone shocked each one. They all had heard of Austin traffic, and they all recalled that I was the last of their classmates to take driver’s ed. They remembered that I was forced to take the road instruction with only my teacher, Mr. Garrett, in the car because he feared I would have a wreck! Many noted that I was not the same quiet girl who listened more than spoke when in a group of peers. I had found my voice and was using it. It was literally in that moment that I realized clearly for the first time that DKG had given me the confidence to be the person I was meant to be—probably the best gift of all the many gifts I’ve received from this organization.

Today, months later, I’m still inspired by my childhood girlfriend, Linda Murphy Truitt. She represents for me **every** chapter member’s potential through membership in our Society. She embraced her membership and, like so many of us, became that person she was meant to be and continues to be that person because of DKG. Her career did not define her. It gave her access to a group that let her define herself in unrestricted ways.

Will You Take Action?

Now, please **do** realize that merely going through an induction ceremony or whatever route a chapter takes to recognize its new members does not guarantee one’s future happiness and growth through this organization. Both the chapter and the individual member must provide the necessary ingredients to ensure the well-being of each. What are those ingredients and what are the benefits, the results?

First, I urge all members, new and seasoned alike, to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. Don’t put off taking hold of a project, position, or challenge that presents itself. I’m not advocating saying “Yes!” to everything. We’ve all learned over the years that the old dictum of always “saying ‘Yes!’ to DKG” is not wise. But **be open** to taking on new endeavors. That’s how you grow. That’s how you strengthen your chapter, too. Find something that will make you say “Yes!” You never know where it will lead. **Take advantage of opportunities.**

Second, ask members what they want or think **or** tell members what you want or think. Sitting back and letting others dictate the work of the chapter won’t cut it. Everyone needs input and ownership. Consider how you use “groups” in your classroom instruction. Don’t you insist that everyone contribute? Don’t you check to be sure that one person doesn’t do all the work or dominate with his or her ideas? “Spreading the joy” gives everyone purpose, and that spells happiness that will make you keep coming back—that will make you stay for life. It will make your attendance at chapter meetings and other DKG events matter. **Ask others what they want or think and tell others what you want or think.**

Third, get to know one another. As a new member you might not know many, if any, women in your chapter. As a seasoned member, you might not know any of the newer members in your chapter. Avoid the 8th grade dance syndrome...you know what I mean: boys on one side of the gym; girls on the other; one couple on the dance floor. Introduce yourself. Sit with someone you don’t know. Encourage each other. Share opinions with each other. Find ways to value each other’s values. The chapter should be a safe haven for all members, just as your classroom was or is for students. Again, if you follow the lessons and instructional strategies you use or used in your career,



your membership in DKG will become more meaningful and purposeful. **Get to know one another.**

Fourth, go beyond the chapter...way beyond! Inductees from the chapters represented here [in this joint meeting] are already a step ahead of others. What a smart move to provide a venue with many chapters for these new members to attend today. They are already experiencing the excitement of networking with even more members beyond their chapter. You are already setting the stage for their work beyond the chapter! They are already experiencing women uniting “in genuine spiritual fellowship” while stimulating “personal and professional growth.” BRAVO!!

But, are all the members of each of your chapters here? Have all of them actually attended events *beyond* your chapter meetings? Do you have work to do on this score? To go beyond the chapter itself is to open doors to rooms of possibilities that lead to larger rooms of realities for experiences that emphasize our Society’s work, international projects, and colleagues in 17 countries worldwide.

My closest friends are DKG members—women whom I trust, whom I revere, whom I aspire to emulate. Of course, I have friends who are not DKG members, but truly the depth and quality of those friendships are different. DKG members have a bond, a commonality that I haven’t found with other groups to which I belong or have belonged, even those associated with education. By not going beyond the chapter, my life would be so diminished, so very different. **Go beyond the chapter!**

Conclusion

So, **why did I join?** That’s simple and succinct. I was asked by three women educators whom I respected and whose confidence in me transcended the lack of confidence I had in myself at the time. **Why did I stay?** That’s more complicated and anything but succinct. Indeed, the answer changes all the time because the richness of the experiences one has in this organization changes all the time **because I permit opportunities to shape me in different ways.** As a Latin teacher I exposed my students to the grammar, the history, and the mythology of the Romans. But many of the adages I shared from this language proved to be the “takeaways” that students most often recall. Among their favorite was “*Carpe Diem*,” “Seize the day.” It’s a favorite of mine, too, but now I propose a bit of a twist to the phrase...“*Carpe DKG*.” You can’t miss, no matter your age or employment status, if you make the most of DKG membership opportunities by following the simple phrase: *Carpe DKG*.



Leadership: An Opportunity, Not a Burden

By Joan Wolfe

A member of the 2016-2018 DKG Administrative Board reflects on her experience and urges members to step up to the opportunities of leadership.

The end of a biennium in a leadership role is a perfect time to reflect on what you have learned and in what way that learning has transformed your life. The journey as Area Representative Canada (ARC) has been exciting, enriching, and enlightening. The ARC wears two hats, sitting on the international administrative board and serving as chair of the Canada Forum. Journeying across Canada visiting many state/provincial organizations and chapters allowed me to experience the Society at the grass roots level, even as I gained a broad global perspective. It is overwhelming to see how the DKG Purposes are being lived out in chapters, large and small, each demonstrating what past international president Dr. Beverley Helms emphasized: that chapters are the heart of our society.

So much is being accomplished by so few in individual chapters, and seeing the universal nature of what is going on in individual chapters and provinces was awe inspiring and humbling. The “butterfly effect” highlighted by immediate past international president Carolyn Pittman during her biennium emphasizes the impact DKG members have worldwide. Each chapter was a microcosm of the breadth of DKG work. It was thrilling to see the spirit of generous giving and sharing with and for each other; creativity in encouragement, affirmations, and recognitions

small and large, acknowledging achievements and service; creative problem solving for challenges and fundraising initiatives; heartfelt responses to needs, both among our members and in outreach to others; the broad variety of outreach projects significantly impacting others positively; creative and inspiring projects and informative programs; collegial functioning; outstanding sharing of gifts, talents, time, energy, wisdom, and caring hearts; impacting education in meaningful ways; and a definite love of and devotion to making a significant difference in the lives of others through the vehicle of DKG. Accolades and gratitude to each member who participates in the work of her chapter to keep those butterfly wings making a difference energizing the world.

The same challenges are being faced among all—common challenges that require networking and brainstorming to find creative solutions and that are aided more and more by electronic possibilities. The growing resources available on the ever-expanding website and DKG app assist with communicating membership suggestions; some have had excellent results in Canadian provinces. Founder Annie Webb Blanton’s dream is as relevant today in Canada and across the globe, so we **MUST** continue fulfilling the purposes she set forth, in a manner to draw in new members to continue the legacy established.





To accomplish that, we need leaders, and this Society was established to provide opportunities to develop leaders. Leadership is a life-expanding opportunity. DKG leadership opens awareness to just how much is accomplished by the efforts of our DKG members across the globe. Of course, it takes work. Anything worthwhile takes effort and energy, and the blessings received far outweigh the giving it takes! Have you ever experienced a worthwhile endeavor that didn't require effort?

Leadership is a major common challenge at both chapter and state levels. International Nominations Committee Chair (2016-2018) Libby Watson noted that confidence is often an issue that prevents stepping forward. I said "no" three times when approached to let my name stand, feeling totally inadequate to fill the big shoes of predecessors. I will be eternally grateful to Aggie Moynihan, who filled out the forms, in spite of being far busier than I, inspiring me to accept the opportunity. So: invite, ask, and encourage members you know who have the potential and heart to carry the torch. You are NEVER alone in DKG. Help is a phone call away. Headquarters staff are there for YOU, all members! The leadership training is exceptional, and you are always surrounded by incredible women who model, mentor, and support you on the journey, building the confidence that may be lacking in the beginning. My life has been transformed in many ways by the leadership opportunity provided both as a state president and as ARC in a dynamic, far-reaching organization that is making a positive difference in the lives of so many.

A particular honor and wonderful learning experience was working as a team with all four forum chairs to prepare the inaugural presentation of what hopefully will become an annual event on a relevant global awareness theme. This year's theme, *Teaching Tolerance and Promoting Peace*, required deep reflection and resulted in a well-received, thought-provoking presentation at the international convention. An additional benefit has been meeting the phenomenal women who inspire and bless me with their example and friendship, creating a network of what I know will be lifelong friendships enriching my life. This priceless benefit and the insights achieved mean far more than all the time, energy, and, yes, work put forth.

We are candles in the night bringing light to inspire and guide others... in order to allow others to shine brightly as well. Take a risk, welcome the challenge, and step forward to grow personally and professionally by accepting a leadership opportunity to be part of the continuation of the wonderful DKG legacy. Annie Webb Blanton's goal to promote and enhance the personal and professional growth of women educators continues today as we indeed are "Leading Women Educators Impacting Education Worldwide."

Joan Wolfe, Eta Chapter, Ontario State Organization, served as Area Representative Canada, 2016-2018.



What's in a Name?

By Donna-Faye Madhosingh

A member revisits the “hot topic” of proposals to change the name of the Society!

At the 2018 DKG International Convention in Austin, Texas, one of the most hotly debated proposals was to change the name of the Society. A proposal from my state organization suggested “Women Educators International (DKG),” and several amendments were proposed for variations. We need a favorable name that is concise, denotes who we are, and encompasses transparency and visibility upfront. Visibility and transparency are key if we want to be recognized in the modern world and in our 17 member countries and to attract prospective members. Succession is vital to our survival.

Does Our Name Work in Our Favor?

We want to be visible. We want the public to be aware of our Society. We want to be transparent and bring in new, active, energetic, passionate educators. If we want to continue to be recognized for “impacting education worldwide,” then a name such as Women Educators International (DKG) is appropriate. The current name creates too many problems in perception, meaningfulness, inclusivity, and relevance.

Perception as sorority. We set ourselves up to look like a **sorority** and then have to explain that we aren't because we are so much more. But we look like a sorority, sound like a sorority, hide under the letters of a sorority—whether those be *Delta Kappa Gamma* or *DKG*—so people automatically think we must be a sorority no matter how we try to defend our position. These terms do not say who we are.

Appearance is crucial as we have only seconds to get our message across. Individuals' attention spans have gradually shortened to 8 seconds—the length of time researchers say our modern society gives us to make our presentation (McSpadden, 2015). Our **identity** is not obvious but clouded in letters. There are no words in our title to say we are “women educators international.” The current name leaves people in limbo. We are located in 17 different countries and need to be respectful of their problem of communicating our Society as an organization of international women educators. We are no longer a secret society!

Meaningfulness. Does our current name attract new members? When I tell people I belong to DKG, they say, “What's that?” When I start with “I belong to International Women Educators,” their eyes light up and they are very impressed. Are we forward moving with our title or are we just holding on to the past? To not say **the who, what, and where** of our Society up front in our name handicaps all of us. When I joined this Society in 1986, there were 163,580 members. Today there are approximately 67,000 members. Where will it go from here?

Inclusivity. Some educators may also be turned off as we may sound elitist (i.e., only for a very few), self-serving, and unapproachable. As we appear to be a sorority, we can be seen as **excluding** people. Using such words as **key** and **honor** and **invitation only** gives the impression of exclusivity. Every educator is a **key** to education. **Honor** implies only some are allowed to join. Membership by **invitation only** limits who we can reach. I am sure we want to be inclusive just as we are with our students and clients and friends.

Relevance. Our official operating language is English. Would we appear more modern by having an English title? In a modern society, holding on to a foreign language with which outsiders may not connect may appear regressive. Are we steeped in the past with rituals and so forth that could be holding us back from moving forward? We need to move into the 21st century to survive.



We have started to rectify this partially through one constitutional amendment put forth by British Columbia State Organization that was approved at the 2018 convention, i.e., states shall now be known by **geographical names not Greek names (designations)**. When British Columbia State Organization wanted to change its name from Alpha Province (State) 6 years ago, I said, “But International won’t let us.” Thankfully, our province’s leaders were forward looking enough to ask International—and they said yes.

The environment has changed since 1929, but have we? The three letters *DKG* have no intrinsic meaning in either English or Greek; they are simply letters. “D” may stand for the Greek word *daskalos*, which means *teacher*. *Kleidi* is the word *key* in Greek. “G” may stand for the word *geneka*, which means *woman*. Does the public know this? Do our members know this?

We must not allow ourselves to speak in acronyms if we want to be visible, have an immediate impact on the world stage, and be influential for external marketing. I had first-hand experience with the use of acronyms when I attended the University of New Mexico for my master’s degree. I didn’t have any idea what they were talking about for the first 2 weeks. They spoke in acronyms that weren’t part of my language. Finally, I memorized all that I needed to know and added to them as time went on, so I was able to understand and converse in their language. Is this what the public experiences, too, when it hears “DKG”? Let us not talk in acronyms as they do not create visibility.

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International
International Society for Key Women Educators

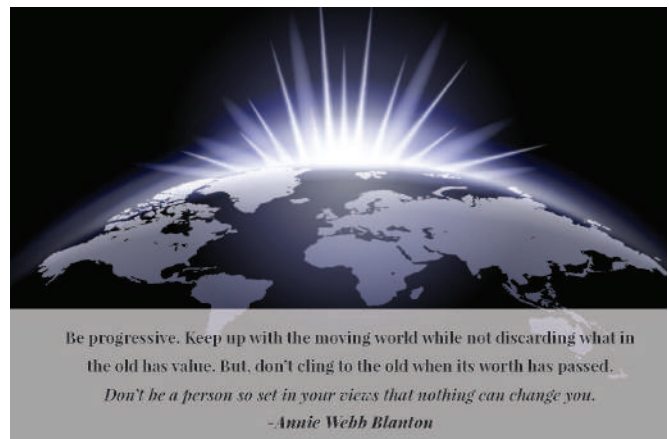
to

Women Educators International (DKG)
International Society for Key Women Educators

The Proposed Change

The amendment of the Society’s name put forth in Austin by British Columbia was **Women Educators International (DKG)**, which, as my state organization president argues, “says it all!” The reason “DKG” was put at the end was to honor and recognize our past. Some organizations put “formerly known as ...,” but “DKG” was put with the new name to be visible to **our** members and connect us to the past. Ultimately, the proposal sought to rearrange our name, not change it. Unfortunately, only 27% were in favor of the motion.

Nevertheless, we must heed the words of our Founder, Dr. Annie Webb Blanton:



We must continue with a growth mindset and accept and acknowledge new ideas. Our Purposes and mission statement have served us well and continue to do so. Let’s keep them—they are golden.

Ultimately, impact, influence, and visibility are essential for any organization to survive. Internal and external marketing are also vital to the survival of an organization. Let us move into the 21st century by being transparent and clear as to who we are. A reorganized, transparent name will hopefully draw in new members to continue our lifelong journey to promote the personal and professional growth of woman educators and excellence in education! We are women educators impacting education worldwide. We are on the path to modernization. Let’s keep moving in that direction: “Forward moving ever!”

Dr. Donna-Faye Madhosingh is a member of Vancouver Chapter in British Columbia State Organization. She has served as Area Representative Canada, a member of the International Communications Committee, and member of the Arts & Humanities Jury, which she now chairs.
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Open Schools Created a ‘Movement’ Years Ago: Ongoing Research Now Tells Us We Should Never Have Moved!

By Myrna J. Santos

An ongoing debate in American education has been: Do students learn best when they are sitting in rows at their desks or when moving around, exploring on their own? Back in the 1960s and 1970s, that debate led to a new school design: small classrooms were out; wide-open spaces were in. The Open Education movement was born. Offices were adopting the same plan. Structured walls were down! Cardboard partitions were up (Gross, 2017)!

My high school, for example, moved to a sprawling brick building surrounded by yards and yards of wide-open spaces. It was close to reminiscent of the song lyrics, “Don’t fence me in!” The building housed both an upper and lower school. Inspired by architectural trends of the preceding decade, the classrooms in one of its wings didn’t have doors. The rooms opened up directly onto the hallway, with bits and pieces of the curriculum of the specific subject topic—inclusive of all grades K through 12—drifting along. Sound waves blended sometimes inappropriately or confusingly with an entirely different topic of study; levels of material for upper school study floated into elementary lessons.

A growing body of evidence suggests that the open office and the open classroom undermine the very things they were designed to achieve. The trend was a response, historians say, to fears that the United States was falling behind in key subjects such as science and math. Creativity was being stifled. There should

not be any formal lessons or standardized tests. Students would learn at their own pace and would focus on exploring concepts utilizing their individual strengths and affinities (Cuban, 2014). But within just a few years, the enthusiasm for the open-schools movement had faded.

Running parallel to that, the open-office concept was crumbling as well. In 2014, a study from two Harvard researchers suggested that the concept of open-area learning and working was not achieving the positive goals originally thought. The study by Bernstein and Turban (2018) tracked the face-to-face interactions of employees from two different multinational Fortune 500 companies as they transitioned away from workspaces





with walls. Badges containing a microphone, an infrared sensor, a Bluetooth transmitter, and an accelerometer captured to whom employees were speaking, where they were standing in the office, whether they were listening or talking (but not what they said), and if they were moving. Bernstein and Turban also analyzed e-mail and instant-messaging data from both offices and found that a change from a traditional layout to an open-floor plan fundamentally changed the quality of communication. In fact, open offices reduced face-to-face interaction by a shocking 70%, with electronic communication assuming only a portion of the exchange of thoughts. (Digital correspondence increased between 20 to 50%.) “Many organizations transformed their office architectures into open spaces with the intention of creating more [face-to-face] interaction and thus a more vibrant work environment” (p. 6), wrote Bernstein and Turban. What they often received was an open expanse of proximal employees choosing to isolate themselves as best they could (e.g., by wearing large headphones) while appearing to be as busy as possible (since everyone could see them). Rather than have a [face-to-face] interaction in front of a large audience of peers, an employee might look around, see that a particular person was at his or her desk, and send an e-mail. According to James (2018), “Companies have spent billions of

dollars to create these supposedly-collaborative workplaces and the net effect has been for those same companies to suffer billions of dollars in lost productivity.”

No one wants to profess an idea out loud, to be heard by all their peers, if he or she is not certain of its credibility. This applies for school as well as work. The same limitations were taking place in the classroom. Instead of enacting a feeling of freedom of expression, students were becoming more reserved. The quiet, shy, or more introverted students were becoming even more submerged by their extroverted counterparts; their more innovative ideas were not being expressed. They could not compete with the assertiveness of their more clamorous peers.

Speaking from Experience

I spoke with George R. Keidan, a veteran teacher of Grade 5 who taught for 45 years at Cypress Elementary School in Pompano Beach, Florida. He remembers the open-school classroom very vividly. In his own words, “The kids had a tow tray rack, which was a movable rack where they kept their belongings. It was 6 to 8 feet tall, so it did not reach the ceiling, and the noise could travel over the wall that contained the rack. And there was always noise, not distinctive understandable noise necessarily, but there were always sound waves moving from room to room, which was a major distraction, and none of the teachers was adjusting to it very well.”

Keidan went on to say that a tree house was constructed in the library, and the principal could see all the classrooms from this tree house. She had a view of the classrooms that were the noisiest or the most disruptive, and those students who were the loudest were dismissed later than the students who were behaving well. He also said that he did not know of any fellow faculty members who liked or enjoyed teaching in the open-school environment. The open-school movement lasted 4 years in his school, and, in the end, the teachers were making their own partitions and trying to put up their own walls in an effort to separate themselves from the other classes. This transition began in the late 1970s; since then his school has been rebuilt and contains only structured classrooms.





Cutting to the Core

I have always been a proponent of the sharing of knowledge; creative ideas, and factual material should not be contained. I am a believer that there is much to be gained by acknowledging and embracing others' points of view. And so, it would follow, and one would necessarily think, that the best way to accomplish these milestones would be through working together—exchanging ideas and thoughts and opening the mind and heart to an assortment of different ways of thinking. I remember when my son first arrived on the MIT campus, where he was to study physics and mathematics. There would be no system of ranking. Students would not be competing for the highest ranking place. They were encouraged to share and discuss their thoughts and to expand their knowledge. This meant that the individual student could relax and just think and learn without fear of being judged. I loved this system! It was an environment where the greatest of great minds were able and willing to share their intellect.

Knowledge can be acquired in different ways, and students learn through their own strong points. Whether their preferred learning mode is by sight, sound, or tactile means, having the time and the opportunity to think things through on their own before presenting their completed theory can only support an individual's knowledge acquisition.

I believe that a structured classroom that focuses on specific topics should be the beginning of the learning process. It is understood that collaborative learning has its own assets, as ultimately each student will go out into the world and will, most likely, be working with others. Teamwork is important. But, with the inception of an idea that can grow and expand into an invention, every individual must follow the path of this process alone and in his or her own mind. In an ideal world, open education might have worked, but as we factor in a diversity of people, distraction, and the feeling of 'nowhere to hide,' the open-school classroom should be *dismissed* forever!



The thought behind the open schools movement was that open spaces such as those pictured above would create open dialogue and open minds. Image retrieved from Bennett (2012).

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Doomed to Repeat

By Annabelle Boehm

“ **Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.** ”
—George Santayna, 1863, Madrid, Spain

America celebrates a unique tradition on February 2nd each year. If Punxsutawney Phil, a groundhog, sees his shadow, 6 more weeks of winter are expected. This premise was used in the 1993 movie, *Groundhog Day*, in which the main character relives the same day over and over until he learns from his mistakes and moves forward. This successful comedy has become synonymous with learning from one's past.

Since the February 14, 2018, shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, the media have been deluged with experts on how to prevent the next school shooting. By June 28, 2018, 154 mass shootings had occurred in the United States in 2018 (Robinson, Gould, & Lee). CNN reported on May 25, 2018, that 23 school shootings had taken place during 21 weeks of school in the United States. The soundbites become repetitive. The public and government officials pay lip service and then ignore the voices as they fade into the background.

My question is: Why are we, as educators, surprised? Although the actions have become more violent, involving better killing machines, teachers have been dealing with acts of terror swept under the carpet for years. Promises are made but never kept. Headlines change with no follow up or accountability. Allow me to share my personal experiences.

Personal Experiences

In 1995 I started my first-year teaching in a public high school in a suburban neighborhood. We had 19 bomb scares that winter. Because we always evacuated to the football field, the students joked how our haven was really a great target. One of my student's uncles was charged, and the bomb squad stopped coming. Security never changed, but the principal was fired. A few months later, two students had a fight in my room. I was held down and beaten to prevent me from ringing the bell on the wall for help. The administrators were not surprised. Children lived in areas influenced by drugs and gangs. The majority of the student body had witnessed violence to a family member. Eventually, to placate me, the students were assigned a 3-day suspension. The police were not called.

One spring, a group from another class pushed an old file cabinet in front of my door. They lit the papers and started a fire. The basement classroom had only one exit, and it was blocked. The windows were above our heads, overlooking the parking lot. We called for help. The fire starters told the security guard we were fine. The office finally sent a vice principal to end the commotion. The fire department was never called. The guilty students were never found. During my 4 years in the district, administrators displayed a learned helplessness. Requests for more guidance counselors and social workers were voted down in the school budget.

In 1999, a student in my class refused to take his final exam. He threatened me and said he knew where my assigned parking spot was located. His mom came



in and cut a deal. He had 3 days out. I was ordered to give him his final exam alone in my basement classroom. I was assured security would pass by. Even the student found this funny. During PTA meetings, parents will support school safety...until it hits home.

Language arts teachers required freshmen to keep daily writing journals as part of the curriculum. I provided daily prompts and read all entries. For some students, this became a conversation and discussion of hopes and dreams. As I reviewed the journals, one entry made me panic. I made copies and rushed to see my administrator. The student graphically detailed how he hated gym and gym teachers. He was planning to chain and lock all the gym doors with his classmates and all the gym teachers inside. He planned a gasoline fire and wanted to hear the screams. The parents were called in for a conference. The student was suspended for 5 days and mandated to receive monthly 30-minute counseling with the school psychiatrist. He was removed from my class because the parents felt I would grade him unfairly. He was back in my class the following year. There was no mental health follow-up. Police were never called.

These incidents cover 10 years in a variety of suburban schools. There were never enough guidance counselors, social workers, or psychologists to provide services to students at risk. My students witnessed violence in their homes and neighborhoods daily, even in a suburban environment.

Unfortunately, my story is not unique. Educators have been looking for resources for at-risk students and safety for all in school communities. On January 5, 2011, the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act was signed into law. This law strengthened the standards and procedures for preventing, reporting, investigating, and responding to incidents of harassment, intimidation, and violence. School administrators and faculty were trained. Programs were provided to parents to explain the rules and provide resources. Local police departments became neighborhood resources and outreach programs. The law did not solve all the issues, but it created a comprehensive plan and beginning.

Conclusion

On February 14, 2018, a gunman opened fire at Margaret Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, killing 17 people. This tragedy has inspired action. A new wind is blowing, bringing hope. And the voices are not from talking heads on TV or politicians. The students of Parkland led the demand for action and change. They were determined to be the last victims. They refused to be quiet and go home. On March 24, 2018, the March for Our Lives was held in Washington, D.C. Students led this successful protest. The Parkland students continue to advocate for change through the ballot box. The drive to register young voters and educate them to learn the issues is having a rippling effect. The politicians are beginning to listen.

I hope students and school personnel continue to demand to be heard. It is time to acknowledge our schools have a problem and need community resources. My hope is for mental health resources personnel actively working with students. Educational and municipal leaders have the opportunity and voice to break the chains of violence. We have suffered enough Groundhog Days. It is time to wake up and create a new history for tomorrow.

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The Seven Cs of Sisterhood

By Angela Wright-Nash

This article is derived from a motivational speech presented at the 2018 Jesslyn McBride Leadership Seminar conducted by Florida State Organization.

By virtue of being born female, we are born into a “sisterhood of women.” However, although descended from queens since the Cradle of Civilization, women sometimes forget to support each other with the level of respect due our important positions—as the bearers of future generations who bring forward traditions and ultimately break gender barriers.

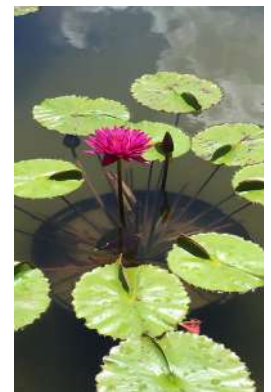
Because we are all in this together, I would like to propose the Seven C’s of Sisterhood:



Camelia ©
Photograph by Joan M. Erreca, CA, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.



Colorado Columbines ©
Photograph by Loretta B. Kerr, CO, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.



Graceful Lily pad ©
Photograph by Connie Phifer Savell, NC, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.

1 As sisters, we have a responsibility to **COMMUNICATE** with each other—honestly, transparently, respectfully, and in the spirit of love and growth.

4 We should **COACH** each other, sharing the best of ourselves with each other in the interest of building capacity.



Shades of Blue ©
Photograph by Phyllis E. VanBuren, MN, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.



Friendship ©
Photograph by Loretta B. Kerr, CO, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.

2 Likewise, we have an obligation to **COMMISERATE** with each other—not by wallowing together in negativity, but by identifying in a positive fashion with each other’s struggles and by offering support when and where we can.

5 Sisters joyfully **CONGRATULATE** each other, acknowledging and celebrating each other’s successes as enthusiastically as our own, and we ...



Yellow Flowers ©
Photograph by Dr. Donna Graham, MD, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.



Spring Blooms ©
Photograph by Susan Elizabeth Carlson, IA, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.

3 We should **COLLABORATE** with each other, sharing our resources and ideas in the pursuit of common goals, and ...

6 **COMFORT** each other. When everything is going sideways and the rest of the world is offering thoughts and prayers, a *real* Sister will call you up and say, “Girl, change your clothes and fix your face—I’m on my way with a gallon of bleach and a shovel to help clean up the mess and hide the bodies! It will be OK!”

7 And the final and seventh ‘C’ is **CROWNS** ... because *real* queens—and *real* sisters—straighten each other’s crowns.

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How Do Women Become Leaders?

By Peg Dunn-Snow

This sign posted on a Pinterest board several months ago immediately caught my eye. When I saw the crown and read the words, I thought, “Wow! I know DKG women who are ‘real queens’”—and so do you, and maybe you are a real queen yourself. Real queens are women leaders who empower other women to become leaders, too. In keeping with the metaphor, real queens help other women acquire their leadership crowns, and later, if a newly acquired crown should wobble a bit or go askew, real queens will help straighten and securely fasten it back on through mentorship.

The effects of having a mentor increase the chances of women reaching their leadership potential. Research shows youth, students in an academic learning environment, and young professionals in the workplace are three populations that yield positive benefits associated with mentorship (Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng, & DuBois, 2008). When DKG’s real queens mentor the younger members of the Society, they have a variety of strategies from which to choose, including setting an example, making encouragement and training available, and, *most* importantly, providing leadership opportunities and experiences in the Society.



By Setting an Example

DKG’s real queens set high standards for their own leadership performance, which includes modeling gratitude. The practice of gratitude is trending again through the current Positive Psychology Movement (Seligman, 2002; 2011). Positive Psychology has brought attention back to the benefits of cultivating gratefulness as a daily practice. Summarizing the research reports, those who practice grateful thinking benefit from improved emotional, physical, and *interpersonal* well-being. Those who choose to live a life of gratitude report fewer illnesses, feel better about their lives as a whole, and are more optimistic about the future (Emmons, 2009, 2011). What better qualities to have in our present and future leaders?

By Training and Encouragement

DKG’s real queens invite members to shadow them in their current roles and positions serving the Society. At the same time, DKG’s real queens encourage members to make a commitment to leadership training, both by attending a state or national leadership program and by applying to the Leadership Management Seminar held in even-numbered years.

Encouragement received in life, especially starting in childhood, has been reported for decades as a strong benchmark toward the development of creative individuals with independent ideas and the will to achieve the highest level of development (Rank, 1945; Winner, 1982). Encouragement activates prefrontal activity in the brain that results in the expression of positive emotions and the development of higher cognitive abilities, including creative and flexible thinking when processing information (Coleman, 1998, 2006).



By Opportunities for Success

DKG's real queens provide opportunities for successful leadership experiences that help others acquire leadership capabilities, become aware of their leadership abilities, and develop self-esteem and self-confidence about their leadership skills. Self-esteem and self-confidence are cornerstone characteristics of a strong leader. However, self-esteem and self-confidence cannot be given to someone. Instead, one must develop these characteristics through leadership opportunities. One must experience success in order to gain self-esteem and self-confidence (Leary & Baumeister, 2000).

DKG's real queens can mentor our younger members for leadership in the Society by using their own mentoring protocols, or they can participate in the Society's international mentoring program, Supporting Early-career Educators. But remember, DKG's real queens need to take care of themselves, too, and from time to time reflect and take a look in the mirror to straighten their own crowns as they help make DKG a Society of royalty.



Websites

More information on mentoring programs for women can be found on the following websites:

- ♦ Mentors for Women at <https://www.mentorsforwomen.com>
- ♦ ASPIRE at <https://www.mentoringwomensnetwork.com>

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A Noble Profession: From Austin to Lancaster

By Patricia Pemberton

Delta Kappa Gamma's international convention brought 2,000 women educators from 17 countries together in Austin, Texas, in July 2018. It was inevitable that new friendships would spark in that setting. On the shuttle from the airport to the JW Marriott, I met and started conversing with Chris Kowalski, a chapter member from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. During the next few days, good fortune caused our paths to cross many times, whether it was on the way to the meeting room, at adjacent banquet tables, on the way to view bats under the bridge, or on the same bus that carried us to one of many scheduled tours of DKG Headquarters, among others.

During one session, I was wearing a pin that depicted artist P. Buckley Moss's *First Lesson*, featuring a teacher on her first day with new students. Chris showed interest with magical sparkle in her eyes when I inquired if she knew of P. Buckley Moss. It was a given. Conversation soon revealed that we shared a mutual respect for Buckley Moss's watercolors. Then, during our interesting and meaningful tour of DKG Headquarters, we spotted a special painting (lithograph) hanging in a strategic spot on the wall in the membership area. Close examination revealed that it was none other than a painting by P. Buckley Moss! The depiction of a teacher, reading to her students with an open book in hand, with students from different cultures gathered in a circle around her feet, was framed and hanging there on the wall. A closer look revealed a vase holding a red rose on the shelf in front of books and positioned near a pencil cup on which were the Greek letters for DKG. Tour time was of essence, but I did snap a picture of our find.

Chris and I saw the bats under the Ninth Street Bridge; dressed up for the President's Banquet, where our assigned tables were side by side; had our pictures taken together by the stunning row of paper lantern-type world globes that lined the stage with a background of flags from the 17 countries represented; and voted on a multitude of amendments from the floor before the convention ended. We were in the airport headed home—I to North Carolina and she to Pennsylvania—when Chris texted to ask when my flight departed. We were three gates from each other! We connected again, taking advantage of time to share the joys of attending a DKG international convention together before saying final good-byes.

After I returned home, my interest in that painting on the wall at headquarters piqued. A call to the P. Buckley Moss Museum in Waynesboro, Virginia, confirmed the painting's title as *A Noble Profession*. While in Austin, I had learned that my new friend Chris had just accepted a teaching position at King Elementary School in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where she would be teaching migrant and refugee children from other



Pemberton and Kowalski bonded at the 2018 DKG International Convention.



parts of the world. Sensing a parallel between the students of different cultures depicted in *A Noble Profession* and Chris's migrant/refugee students inspired me to order the print and have it shipped to her in Lancaster. The print arrived as an affirming surprise that is now framed and hanging in a singular space in my new friend's classroom.

As I was speaking to Irene Thornburg, who presently serves as treasurer of DKG Virginia State Organization, I learned that on April 19, 2007, she (then Virginia State Organization President), Cathy Daugherty, and others gathered at the P. Buckley Moss Museum in Waynesboro, Virginia, where they conducted a ceremony to induct Patricia Buckley Moss as an honorary member of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.

Confirmation was given in a second call to the artist's museum that *A Noble Profession* was a commissioned painting. In a later phone conversation with Irene Thornburg, I learned about how she, Cathy Daugherty, Janet Goodman, and others from Virginia's Administrative Headquarters Board had requested of P. Buckley Moss that she paint a picture as a DKG fundraiser for their state headquarters. Thus, in 2009, 1,000 lithographs and 25 artist proofs of



A Noble Profession lithograph hangs on a wall at DKG Headquarters in Austin, TX.



A Noble Profession hangs in Chris Kowalski's classroom (near the flag).

1,000 lithographs and 25 artist proofs of *A Noble Profession* were printed. One of those lithographs—the exact one that hangs in the membership area at DKG Headquarters in Austin—was given to the Society by Virginia State Organization.

In a biennium when DKG International President Cathy Daugherty chooses to focus on multiple conference themes including arts and humanities, I am excited to share my story about how the P. Buckley Moss lithograph, *A Noble Profession*, hangs both in DKG Headquarters in Austin and in a DKG chapter member's classroom in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, inspired by a meeting of new friends at the 2018 Delta Kappa Gamma Society International Convention.

Patricia Truelove Pemberton, a retired English teacher and yearbook advisor from the Lee County School System in Sanford, North Carolina, is 2018-2020 co-chair of the Fine Arts Committee and immediate past president of Delta Rho Chapter in the North Carolina State Organization. pemberton7@windstream.net



Each and Every One of Them

By Beth McKay

*As educators, reflection is a part of our daily routine. We reflect while we teach; we reflect after we teach; we reflect when we are at home in bed trying to fall asleep. This past school year, my district encouraged all teachers to reflect on their WHY. **Why are you an educator?** Upon reflecting, I found that my why had evolved over the 12 years that I have been in the public school classroom. As a determined, on-fire, early educator, my WHY was to inspire students to love reading and writing. However, upon reflecting, I found that my motivation is no longer WHAT I teach but WHO I teach, and this has made all the difference.*



I mark him absent. We have only been in school for 5 days, but I've not seen him. Where is he? Is he safe? Is he hurt? Is he being cared for? You think I'm talking about a young child, an elementary school baby. I'm not. But to me, he is my baby. He is 17. He is a junior in high school, and he is my baby. A sense of relief sweeps over me when I see his precious, smiling face on Day 6 of the new school year. "Well, there you are. I am so happy to see you today," I tell him as I mark him present. Where has he been the first week of school? Well, he was stuck in Jackson with family who could not drive 20 miles to bring him back to Sandhill for the first week of school.

He is my WHY.

He hugs me. Children, even junior high children, need to feel loved. One time, I called his mother because he was failing my 8th grade English class. It only took that one phone call for me to know never to call her again. Her response to my request for support was that she had "given up on him." How could I be angry that he had given up on himself? Now it made sense. I understood. I got it. Fast forward 3 years, and he is my student once more. My stomach could burst with butterflies as I walk to the office. My hand shakes as I dial the number—her number. I must call again. She answers the phone in the same exasperated tone—the school's phone number obviously revealing my identity. I greet her warmly and proceed to inform her of her son's performance on his STAR Reading Test—his 12th grade reading level (as a sophomore). A transformation occurs. She is excited, happy, proud. She was proud of him. These phone calls never come for her. But today, one did. This child, student, young man is a gifted writer, and I have dreams for him, even if I am the only one dreaming for him.

He is my WHY.

As a 7th grade teacher, you could spot her easily among the students. She was the only one wearing a hat to class each day. Why? Because it helped her not to pull out her hair. Perhaps a little "learned helplessness" and only a smidge of confidence could describe her. She loves Xbox. She loves *The Walking Dead*. Biology, not so much. Math—never. Academics are a struggle, but when her game console experiences technical difficulties, she spends hours on the phone with support, suffers a breakdown because she can't understand their accented



English, and finally solves the problem herself. She laughs about the situation now, but last year—it was a crisis. Although she doesn't know it, and her grades may make her feel otherwise, she is smart. She is a problem solver. She is my WHY.

He is an extraordinary artist. He stands above the others. He is tall. Light skinned. And when he is not feeling depressed, he is dressed preppy in pastel shirts and matching shorts. He loves Barbara Streisand, and *Funny Girl* is one of his favorite Streisand movies. He is not like “the guys,” but everyone likes him and accepts him for who he is. His unique personality is with me wherever I go. When I see a '90s Nickelodeon coloring book at Wal-Mart, I think of him. When I see a *Golden Girls* shirt at Target, I think of him. When I see Rugrats blind bags at Toys R' Us, I think of him.

He is my WHY.

She wants to be a writer. She dreams of being famous one day for her creative writing and helping young writers by teaching them about creative writing. She will do this. I have known it for years. Actually, for 3 years—I've known it since the first time I read her writing. She was an 8th grader then. She wrote an anecdote as a hook for an essay. I read it in disbelief. This was the best student writing I had ever read, and I questioned the authenticity. However, she told me that she had written it and that she loved creative writing. Her dream was to be a novelist. Fast forward 3 years to today, we conferenced about her essay in dual credit Composition I. We talked about one sentence in particular. I knew the effect that she wanted to have on her reader, but the execution needed refining. I showed her some options and introduced her to my friend (—). I told her, “When I am not exactly sure how I want to word a sentence, a dash usually works. Just be careful not to use him too much.” I can help her be a greater writer. I can help her grow her love of writing. My feedback and instruction can help her become her best.

She is my WHY.

He had this smile. I can hardly describe it to you. It was so kind. It was so genuine. So happy. Many people missed his smile. He was the kind of young man that we all want our sons to grow to be. He had a great sense of humor and could laugh at himself. When I thanked him for coming to class after being absent, he immediately laughed. It turns out that although his family valued education, they valued life more. One day of every month, he could skip school to do something with someone in his family. I learned a lot from this special guy. My class is important. Learning to write an essay is important. Learning to read is important. And there are some things more important than all of these.

He would have missed prom that night anyway because of his travel basketball team, but when I got a phone call telling me that I would never see him again, I was numb, shocked, frozen, devastated. He had fallen asleep while driving to Alabama for his ballgame. He had started the trip late on a Friday night because he did not want to miss his high school basketball banquet. In 12 years, he was the first student that I've lost.

He is my WHY.

Every. Single. Day. I can show children love, compassion, and respect. I can help them feel proud and acknowledge their accomplishments. I can heat their lunches in my microwave. I can give them a warm hug or be the first smile of their day. I can build them up and give them hope. I can dream with them. For them. I can. I will. I do.

Each and every one of them. They are my WHY.

Beth McKay is a member of Pi Chapter in Mississippi State Organization. She teaches English III and dual credit composition and literature courses at Pisgah High School in the Rankin County School District. beth.mckay@rcsd.ms

Using Think-Aloud to Strengthen Inquiry and Research Pedagogy

By Dr. Deborah J. Williams, Nicholas Escobedo, and Skyler Vadnais

Think-aloud, a technique or strategy grounded in social learning views, can be implemented by teachers of all levels to support students' comprehension of any given process, including research and critical thinking. Social learning theorists propose that human beings learn by mimicking behaviors they see in their environment (Bandura, 1977) and that modeling is an important entity of learning in the classroom. According to Harris and Hodges (1995), a think-aloud is a "metacognitive strategy in which a teacher verbalizes thoughts aloud by reading a selection orally, thus modeling the process of comprehension" (p. 256) as students observe. That is, the teacher literally "thinks aloud," noting his or her process of understanding and thinking about what has been read.

Literacy experts have concluded that, when used effectively, the think-aloud strategy positively impacts student achievement (Anderson & Roit, 1993; Bereiter & Bird, 1985; Caldwell & Leslie, 2010; Fisher & Frey, 2016; Ness & Kenny, 2016); nonetheless, teachers continue to struggle with planning and routinely using think-aloud. In my work with teacher candidates, for example, I have discovered that aspiring educators require much support regarding how to teach inquiry and research skills to elementary students. Based on research on the strategy, I employed think-alouds to ameliorate candidates' efficacy in how to teach inquiry and research skills to elementary students.

Pursuing the Inquiry and Research Theme

In an advanced level language and literacy course, I involve teacher candidates in brief think-aloud activities, first as learners and then as practitioners, to facilitate rehearsal of the strategy in inquiry and research. Students select an autobiography or biography of their choice according to a broad theme: *Individuals Who Have Contributed to America's Greatness*. Steve Jobs, Ronald Reagan, Michelle Obama, Oprah Winfrey, Walt Disney, J. K. Rowling, Malala Yousafzai, and Cesar Chavez represent a few of the personalities teacher candidates have selected to research. Additionally, candidates identify a credible website and journal articles about the person. These resources are used throughout the semester either to practice teaching inquiry and research skills to colleagues or to participate in related lessons.

Teacher candidates' lessons using think-alouds are based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) inquiry and research objectives. Examples of these TEKS include (a) develop and follow a research



Sharing a think-aloud helps students understand the thinking processes behind research.



Students work on their think-aloud scripts in preparation for presentation to their peers.

plan with adult assistance, (b) identify and gather relevant information from a variety of primary and secondary sources, and (c) understand the difference between paraphrasing and plagiarism.

Think-Aloud by the Teacher Educator

To launch this semester-long unit, I introduce the concept of open-ended questions through think-aloud. Questioning is pivotal to the research process. To improve teachers' think-alouds, Ness and Kenny (2016) recommended reading a text three times prior to planning to demonstrate this metacognitive strategy. During the first reading, a teacher should identify text for stopping points. The second reading allows a teacher to reflect on the reasons for each stopping point, and the third reading enables a teacher to identify the exact script he or she plans to verbalize during the lesson as students listen. In order to provide a lucid demonstration for teacher candidates, I inform them that I read my biography several times and decided the best places to stop to pose open-ended questions and think aloud. Figure 1 is a snapshot of my think-aloud.

Think-Alouds by Teacher Candidates

After candidates gather resources on their noted individual and on their assigned inquiry and research TEKS, they submit a draft of a lesson plan that encompasses a detailed think-aloud script revealing their thought process. Prior to their peer teaching

of the lesson, we conference to discuss their think-aloud, planned instructional strategies, and learning environment. Revisions are then made. Figures 2 and 3 are excerpts from teacher candidates' think aloud scripts after revisions.

Concluding Thoughts

Teacher candidates shared that by participating in peer teaching of research lessons that involved think-alouds, they overcame apprehension about teaching inquiry and research skills to young children even while learning how to plan effective think-aloud lessons. In addition to recognizing such increased self-efficacy, teacher candidates concluded that think-alouds can be used to teach almost any skill to burgeoning students' metacognitive capabilities.

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Open-ended Questions

“Listen as I read aloud a few pages from a biography on Barack Obama titled *Yes We Can* by Garen Thomas. Now, before I start to read, I want to know what were considered challenges and successes in Barack Obama’s life before and after his presidency? I know this is an open-ended question because there is not one fixed or correct answer. I’m going to write my first open-ended question in my Flipbook and then I will continue to read. The author said Barack Obama’s mother was White. I wonder if his father was Black. The answer to this question is yes. Oh no, this is not an open-ended question because there is one fixed answer. I will change this question from close-ended to open-ended. I wonder how did people treat Barack Obama when they found out that his mother was White and his father was Black? This question is open-ended because there is not one fixed answer...”

Figure 1. Teacher’s think-aloud example.

Identify Relevant Information

“While you may believe that databases and academic journals are the only options for credible research, websites are also a viable option when conducting research. Listen as I read a few paragraphs of the biography of Cesar Chavez titled *Cesar Chavez: Crusader for Labor Rights* by Kekla Magoon. On page 48, I came across an organization that Cesar Chavez helped create: the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). I want to know more about the organization so I will look up the name of the organization on the Internet. I know that websites may not always be reliable, but how can I ensure the website I find contains relevant information? I know that some of the factors that help identify whether a website will have reliable and relevant information are the author, the date published, sources, the domain, and writing style of the website. I will search for the National Farm Workers Association to see if I can find a relevant website...”

Figure 2. Student’s sample think-aloud.

Credible Primary and Secondary Sources

“Before I begin reading a few pages from a biography on Steve Jobs titled *Steve Jobs: The Man Who Thought Different* by Walter Isaacson, I want to know if my source is primary or secondary. I know that sources that are written by people without first-hand experience are secondary sources, so my biography is a secondary source. Next, I want to find out if my biography over Steve Jobs is a credible source for my research. I know that the criteria for a credible source include reliability, authority, origin, and validity. As I read a few pages, I will review the criteria and find out if the biography is credible or not. Before reading, I know that one criterion is authority, which means is the author reliable? I have already done my research on Karen Blumenthal and have found that she is a critically acclaimed author for *The Wall Street Journal* and has written for them for 25 years. I have also found that her focus in her writing is that of social change and nonfiction books over business news. ...”

Figure 3. Student’s sample think-aloud.

A Dozen Things Effective Teacher Mentors Do

By Mary Clement

Teachers want to help newly-hired colleagues to succeed but often don't know exactly how to support the new teachers in their building. Not all districts provide mentor training or train building principals in how to establish successful mentoring programs. Yet, teachers have been effectively helping and supporting each other for decades. What can teachers do to mentor new hires effectively, either formally or informally?

A mentor can be defined as someone who serves as a guide to another who has less experience. A mentor often serves as a friend, as someone who listens to ideas, and as the person who shares experiences. In teaching, the mentor should also have the expertise to discuss and guide instructional practice. Above all, a mentor models professionalism to a new hire in the school. Mentors need time to work with the new hires, and some basic guidelines are useful. Twelve practical strategies for mentoring new teachers are outlined here. (This list was developed by the author for her mentor training programs and based on her experience and research. The author's two books on the topic are listed in the resource list.)

1 Introduce the new teacher to people and places

Consider the new teachers down the hall as you might next-door neighbors. Greet them and introduce them to others in the hallway. Let them know when you have a free moment and invite them to visit with you. Share how to find coffee and snacks or provide them with a small gift basket of goodies.

Next, talk with the new teacher about how to become acquainted with his or her students. Most student teachers never see the beginning of the school year and may need suggestions for creating interest inventories and first-day icebreakers. Additionally, share ideas for how to become acquainted with parents, such as sample newsletters.

2 Help the new teacher organize the classroom

Because most student teachers work in a room that was already organized by their cooperating teacher, they may not know how to set up their first classroom. The mentor can share ideas about desk arrangement, storage space, and placement of technology. Safety reminders are good to discuss as well.

A well-organized classroom has procedures and routines. Ask the teacher how students will enter and find their desks on the first day. How will lunch count and attendance be handled? How does the teacher plan to dismiss the students? What will be the procedure for quieting the class? Help the new teacher make posters for the most commonly used procedures.

3 Create a classroom management plan together

In the best of circumstances, a school has a schoolwide management plan. Additionally, each teacher should post three to five rules for his or her classroom, including the positive reinforcements and consequences. Share how to communicate the rules with the students and their parents. Remind new hires that procedures and rules should be taught in the first days and reinforced throughout the early weeks of school just as the curriculum would be. After all, the curriculum can't be covered in a chaotic classroom.



1 Plan the first day's activities

Noted educators Harry K. and Rosemary Wong (2018) have written much about the need for the teacher to succeed on the very first day of school. A successful first day sets the tone for the entire year. Encourage the new teacher to “over plan” for the first day, having some back-up activities. Remind the teacher of special events that take place the first day and of how lunch and dismissal are handled. Of course, if teachers plan together by grade or subject, be sure to include the new teacher in those planning sessions.

2 Make resources available

Many teachers express regret that there wasn't a manual for what to do as a new teacher when they started their careers. Actually, there are many such guidebooks! See the resource list at the end of this article for suggested readings. Share a favorite book, article, or website with new teachers. Let them know where professional books and journals are located in the school. Thousands of resources exist about how to teach, so perhaps the best advice to give a teacher is to suggest one thing that is practical and easy to read.

3 Invite the new teacher to observe in your classroom

Because every school is different, a new hire may gain much insight by visiting your classroom. Seeing how procedures work is more memorable than hearing about those routines. Every veteran teacher should have special skills and strategies for management and instruction, so inviting a new hire into your classroom to observe can be very helpful.

The key word is “invite,” as the mentor shouldn't pressure the new hire, who may feel overwhelmed immediately. Observing the mentor teacher may take place throughout the year, with an emphasis on collegial conversation about the observation. Effective mentors provide suggestions and don't implore new hires necessarily to “do as I do.”

4 Observe the new teacher

Once the trust level between a new hire and a mentor has been built, it is time for the mentor to observe the new teacher. To be effective, a classroom observation should have three steps: a preconference, the observation, and a postconference. The two teachers should talk about the lesson to be presented and what the teacher wants the mentor to observe. Examples include management, transitions, student participation in a discussion, or clarity of the teacher's presentation. Both teachers agree on the date and time.

The teachers should discuss the lesson afterward, with no students or other adults present. A strong mentor knows to start a postconference with a question—“How do you think the lesson went?”—and to listen to the teacher's reflection before making comments. Giving the teacher practice in self-reflection about teaching is important. Of course, a new hire, even one with experience, needs a positive compliment about the lesson.

5 Share best practices in teaching

Although all graduates of teacher education programs complete courses in methods of teaching, implementing best practices takes some time. Sharing time-filling activities, a review sheet, or a special lesson introduction with the new teacher can be very helpful. Assessment can also be a challenge to new hires, so explaining the electronic grade book and established school-wide policies early in the year is important. Reinforcing the new teacher's strengths may help the most.

9 Provide ideas for working with parents

Although not all new hires are 22-year-olds, many are! It can be a bit overwhelming for a young teacher to talk to the parents of a 7-year-old or a 17-year-old. Share your best hints for working with parents: have adult-sized chairs in the room for the parents; show samples of student work; start and end conversations with positive comments; and inform parents of specific ways to help their child with school.

Additionally, promote the use of newsletters or syllabi that are sent home. Remind new hires of confidentiality issues, especially with the use of social media.

10 Invite the new teacher into a professional group

Professional organizations exist to support teachers. Invite the new teacher to join an organization that is specific to his or her teaching area, such as the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) or the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). Next, invite the teacher to join an organization that provides a different kind of support, such as Delta Kappa Gamma. DKG offers so many diverse supports: local chapters, online resources, and conferences. Being part of a network can help a new teacher not only to survive but also to thrive.

11 Model positive time and stress management

When I was a new teacher, a group of veteran teachers invited me to join their Thursday after-school bowling group, and it proved to be a great stress reliever. Teaching is stressful, and there never seems to be enough time to get everything done. Veteran teachers usually know some time-savers to share. Have a straightforward discussion with a new teacher who is arriving early, staying late, and taking work home. Remind him or her to do one or two of those things but not all three every day.

12 Encourage, encourage, encourage

The day that a new teacher's math lesson goes perfectly will probably not be the day the administrator observes to evaluate! Build a relationship with the teacher so that he or she can run down the hallway and let you know how well it went. Then, congratulations are in order! Today's new teachers are part of a generation used to accolades for every accomplishment and seek positive feedback and encouragement. You may be the only one to provide such encouragement.

Keys for Effective Mentoring

Do you remember your first year of teaching? What do you wish that someone had told you? Who helped you and how did they do so? Answering these questions may guide you in how to help the new hire in your school.

Mentoring may be a very rewarding experience for you, as well. Mentors find that explaining what they do to another teacher focuses their own work. They discover that they have grown a lot as teachers and that they are more skilled than they realized. It feels good to give back to the profession.

An effective mentor may make the difference in the effectiveness of a new hire and in his or her decision to remain in the profession. Whether you are a formally-assigned mentor or the teacher next door, you can make a difference to another person's teaching career through mentoring. Teaching is a gift—pass it on.

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Developmental Coordination Disorder: Implications for Educators

By Susan J. Grosse

Developmental coordination disorder (DCD) in children is a condition that may go undetected. While recognized by the American Psychiatric Association and defined in the DSM-5, behavioral manifestations of developmental coordination disorder are perceived by many teachers as representing some other situation or circumstance. The author clarifies this disorder by providing a definition as well as detailed information and examples of the various aspects of coordination and how coordinated motor behavior is demonstrated in typical classroom behaviors. She offers suggestions for providing support for the child with developmental coordination disorder so that the condition can be remediated, thus avoiding lifelong negative effects on career, health, and wellness.

He is always bumping into other students' desks...If he would just slow down.

Her handwriting is barely legible...She needs more writing practice.

She never wants to go outside for games...Maybe she just prefers to read.

These and many others are common classroom situations. . . and probable common teacher assumptions. In many cases these assumptions are right on target. However, for some children, these assumptions miss the mark. If you have children who seem to fit these or similar situations, it is time to take a closer look. Perhaps *developmental coordination disorder* (DCD) underlies observable student behavior.

What is Developmental Coordination Disorder?

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition*, of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-5) lists four criteria for a diagnosis of DCD:

- ✦ Acquisition and execution of coordinated motor skills are substantially below that of chronological age peers.
- ✦ These motor deficits interfere substantially with activities of daily living appropriate to the age of the individual.
- ✦ Onset of symptoms is in the early developmental period.
- ✦ These deficits cannot be explained by some other condition. (APA, 2013, p. 74)

Almost every child experiences lack of coordination at some point in his or her development,

perhaps when learning and practicing a new skill or when trying to remember how to perform a skill not used for some time. For example, a very young child may appear uncoordinated when learning to walk. A child learning to play soccer may miss easy kicks when first learning soccer skills. These are natural occurrences, and with development, learning, and practice, lack of coordination resolves into coordinated motor performance.

For other individuals, the ability to put together movements into productive motor patterns remains elusive due to a presence of a diagnosed disability (Kadesjo & Gilberg, 1999). Individuals with cerebral palsy, for instance, may experience motor planning difficulty as a result of that condition. Motor activity continues to be disorganized and resolution through development does not always occur.

For another group of individuals, coordination remains undeveloped long past normal developmental milestones, even though no diagnosed disability is present and most peers appear better coordinated. These are the individuals who may have the *neurodevelopmental disorder* called DCD. Figures generated in 2013 by the American Psychological Association estimated that in an average school of 800 students, up to 60 students may have a DCD. Figures generated in 2018 confirmed 5-6% of children are affected by DCD (Zwicher, Suto, Harris, Vlasakova, & Missiuna, 2018). This suggests that, in a typical school class of 30 children, between one and two children and up to three children may have some form of DCD (APA, 2013, p. 75). These students are in regular education classes and are expected to demonstrate



peer-level coordination. This population is enhanced when considering the number of students with disabilities who include coordination problems as part of a broader group of presenting factors, such as those with autism, ADD/ADHD, or physical, sensory, learning, or cognitive disability. Teachers must be prepared to take a closer look at children whose motor behavior appears different from that of peers. It is up to the teacher to meet the challenges presented by children with coordination difficulties.

What is Coordination?

The single term *coordination* encompasses a wide variety of behaviors. Coordination is not a discrete entity. Coordination has many different component aspects and manifestations, any or all of which can contribute to a child having DCD. Listed in random order, these include but are not limited to:

- *Hand-eye coordination*—the ability to integrate what the eye sees with motor activity of the hands and arms. Throwing a ball at a target requires hand-eye coordination. Placing written letters on a line on a paper requires hand-eye coordination.
- *Foot-eye coordination*—the ability to integrate what the eye sees with motor activity of the feet and legs. Kicking a ball into a soccer goal requires foot-eye coordination. Walking stairs requires foot-eye coordination.
- *Arm-leg coordination*—the ability to move arms either with or in opposition to legs.

Walking with reciprocal arm movement requires arm-leg coordination.

- *Total body coordination*—the ability to combine arm action, leg action, and body turning to accomplish a task. Avoiding bumping into desks and tables while moving around the classroom requires total body coordination.
- *Object manipulation coordination*—the ability to use objects in an organized fashion to accomplish a specific purpose. Putting a puzzle together requires object manipulation coordination.

Further complicating a more detailed diagnosis is the circumstance that impairment in any of the following can also affect coordination or lack thereof:

- *Perceptual-motor ability*—Balance, body image, laterality, directionality, and spatial orientation when not part of a primary diagnosis of learning disability, for example, can impair coordination.
- *Physical fitness*—Strength, endurance, cardio-respiratory function, and flexibility when not part of the primary diagnosis of a disability such as muscular dystrophy, for example, can limit the capacity for coordinated movement.
- *Sensory integration*—Processing sensory input with past experience to generate motor output, when not part of a deficit in vision, for example, can impair the information the brain must process to plan coordinated movement.
- *Language acquisition*—The ability to receive, comprehend, and express information through spoken, written, or sign symbols, when not part of a speech and language disability, for example, can mean the child does not comprehend the directions from which coordinated movements on specific tasks results.
- *Memory*—The ability to utilize feedback and past experience in modifying motor behavior, when not part of traumatic brain injury, for example, inability to remember the multiple steps in any

complicated motor task can affect development of coordination.

- *Environmental opportunity*—Nutrition (affecting obesity/body fat), safety (affecting movement environments), instruction (affecting feedback during motor development), security (affecting self-confidence in movement), and cultural mandates (affecting clothing appropriate for movement, as well as beliefs about approved activities) can affect opportunities to develop coordination

How Can You Identify the Child Who May Have DCD?

The first step in identification of children with DCD is to forego assumptions. The child who is always bumping into things may need to do more than just slow down. The child with poor writing may need more than just repetition. The child who does

not like games and sports may have more happening than just a love of reading. Take a closer look.

Motor development. Are the child's motor skills appropriate for his or her

“ At the least, this child needs understanding—understanding that he or she may need additional time to master tasks, patience in providing hints and coaching, and empathy in stressful situations. ”

chronological age. Generally, tasks to be assessed fall into three categories: gross motor patterns, gross motor skills, and fine motor skills. These categories can be further delineated as follows:

- *Gross motor patterns*—walk, run, skip, jump, gallop, side slide.
- *Gross motor skills*—throw, catch, kick, hit, retrieve.
- *Fine motor skills*—grasp, release, pinch, place, wring out/twist, manipulation.

For more detailed assessments specifically related to physical activities, also refer to work by Horvat, Block, and Kelly (2007). Also remember, each pattern or skill assessment should contain a variety of levels, speeds, directions, and targets.

Coordination necessary for fine motor activity, such as writing, begins with development of large motor activity. It may be difficult for a classroom

teacher to make determinations regarding large motor activity because the child is usually seated or moving in a small classroom space. In addition, a teacher may have no information on when a child met developmental milestones. No single observation can provide an accurate picture. Rather, look at a variety of situations and behaviors.

Academic functioning. In addition to taking a closer look at motor abilities, teachers need to do a closer evaluation of the child's overall academic functioning. For example, researchers have found that the numerical abilities of children with developmental coordination disorder are also affected (Gomez, Piazza, Jobert, Dehaene-Lambertz, & Huron, 2017). In this research, eye tracking was found related to numerical abilities; hence, math skills may also be found lacking in children with DCD.

Peer interactions. How well does the child fit in during gross motor play activities? Does the child seek out or avoid sports and games? What grades does the child earn in physical education? A child with difficulty in coordination may not fit in well with peers during gross motor play, may avoid physical activity, or may not do well in physical education.

Classroom behavior. Is the child well behaved in class? Can the child work independently? Is the child's drawing and handwriting age appropriate? Poor behavior can be a cover-up for ineptness. The child needing frequent assistance and reassurance may already know his or her performance may not be up to the standard. Drawing and handwriting both require hand-eye coordination. Poor performance in either may signal a problem.

Professional assessment may also be an option. Has the child been evaluated by professionals in the child development or medical field? Identifying correctable conditions, such as a hearing or vision problem, may be necessary. It is as important to rule out what could be a contributing factor as it is to make a specific diagnosis. In addition, another professional can also initiate family contact to obtain input from parents and caregivers.

How can Teachers Help the Child with DCD?

Recognition of the problem is the first step. At the least, this child needs understanding—understanding that he or she may need additional time to master tasks, patience in providing hints and coaching, and empathy in stressful situations. DCD can be remediated, and teachers can play a large part in that process.

Ward, Hillier, Rayor, and Petkow found “group intervention programs for developmental coordination disorder can be run by either a health professional or a school assistant (supported by physical therapist) in either the school or clinic environment and provide successful outcomes” (2017, p. 236). Therefore, if possible, refer the child for additional work with a professional who can provide remedial activities to develop coordination. This might be the physical education teacher or physical or occupational therapist.



It is unlikely that a classroom teacher will be able to provide the gross motor activities from which coordination develops. However, the classroom teacher can do a variety of things to enhance the environment for all children, including those with DCD.

- *Create an orderly classroom environment.* Order and structure assist children in developing their own framework for academic work. Strategies ranging from reminding children to keep their work surface clear and orderly to managing classroom space in order to avoid clutter can all assist in providing order and structure.
- *Discourage random noise.* A child with developmental coordination problems will need to concentrate strongly on difficult tasks. Reducing noise will enhance the opportunity to do so. Rather, use music and the resulting entrainment to help provide structure for all children, including the child with DCD. Individuals with DCD are unable to motor plan and structure combinations of basic motor patterns and skills. Because of entrainment—being “in step” or “in sync” with music—adding music to activities can greatly facilitate the motor development process. To quote Campbell, originator of the Mozart effect,

When we dance, we are like hobos who jump on the freight train of the beat. Swept along, our bodies automatically adjust to the pace, pulse, and rhythm of the sound; the music evokes an organized pattern of responses. (Campbell, 1997, p. 135)



Key words here are **automatically** and **organized pattern of responses**. When an individual hears music, particularly music with a specific

beat, that person’s brain processes the music and cues the body to move to the music. This is an unconscious, involuntary process. The individual does not have to think for it to happen. Furthermore, the motor responses of the individual as he or she hears the music are organized. They have structure that might not occur otherwise without the music.

- *Encourage activities such as meditation or mindfulness breaks.* Taking just a few moments to relax, gather thoughts, decompress, or just breathe will assist the child with DCD to de-stress. Researchers find children with this disorder have to “struggle,” both in doing everyday tasks and as a result of being excluded from play (Zwicker, Suto, Harris, Vlasakova, & Missiuna, 2018). That struggle can be very stressful, and a mental break can help reduce that stress. This research group says it best:

Parents, educators, physicians, and therapists working with children with developmental coordination disorder must recognize how their quality of life is affected by the physical and emotional toll of their efforts to participate successfully in daily activities. (2017, p. 72)

Conclusion

Teachers can make a difference. A child with developmental coordination disorder needs to do more than just slow down, practice more, or be indulged in preferring to avoid games and sports. DCD is not a condition that a child will outgrow. Left unrecognized and untreated, coordination impairment will continue to exist. This may cause interference with learning job-related tasks or participating in active leisure, thus further diminishing self-esteem. Unresolved difficulty in coordination can continue throughout an individual’s life, affecting career as well as health and wellness. Teachers must take the initiative to help children affected with DCD meet the challenges of this condition.

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FlipGrid to Enhance Communication in Distance Education

By Tia Agan, Dara Anderson, Ashley Atwood, Lesley Casarez, Audrey Heron, and Raelye Self

The purpose of this article is to review the use of FlipGrid video discussion software (www.flipgrid.com) to enhance communication in distance education. Learners tend to internalize and accept the values and practices of those to whom they feel connected, and that sense of relatedness in the educational setting is associated with learners perceiving that faculty members genuinely like, respect, and value them (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). However, distance students do not have traditional immersion in the university culture (Simonson & Schlosser, 2003), and asynchronous online learning environments with discussion boards, e-mail, or other text-based formats lack the personal elements, such as tone of voice and facial expressions, that often make students feel more connected to their instructors and comfortable asking additional questions to continue the learning process. Therefore, building positive relationships between learners and instructors—and even between and among learners—in the online environment can present a challenge due to limited opportunities for social and affective support (Kim & Thayne, 2015). To overcome this challenge, video technology may be one method that instructors can use to create a more personal learning environment.

FlipGrid is a video discussion platform in which the instructor creates a grid similar to the starter thread in discussion boards. The instructor can specify what topic students are to discuss and how long the video lasts. Students share short video responses to ignite dialogue. FlipGrid

recently announced that it is now free for educator use, making it ideal for online classrooms or face-to-face classes that integrate technology.

An advantage of FlipGrid is the automatic transcription of audio. Educators can activate Closed Captions and videos will automatically include this property. Other accessibility features include navigation via keyboard and the ability to increase font sizes. Additional uses for FlipGrid to elevate teaching include documenting student understanding and learning, teaching empathy through interviewing skills, providing a video platform for feedback, providing teachers a platform for modeling a new skill (Kompar, 2018), and promoting professional presentations and collegial communication.

Use and Impact

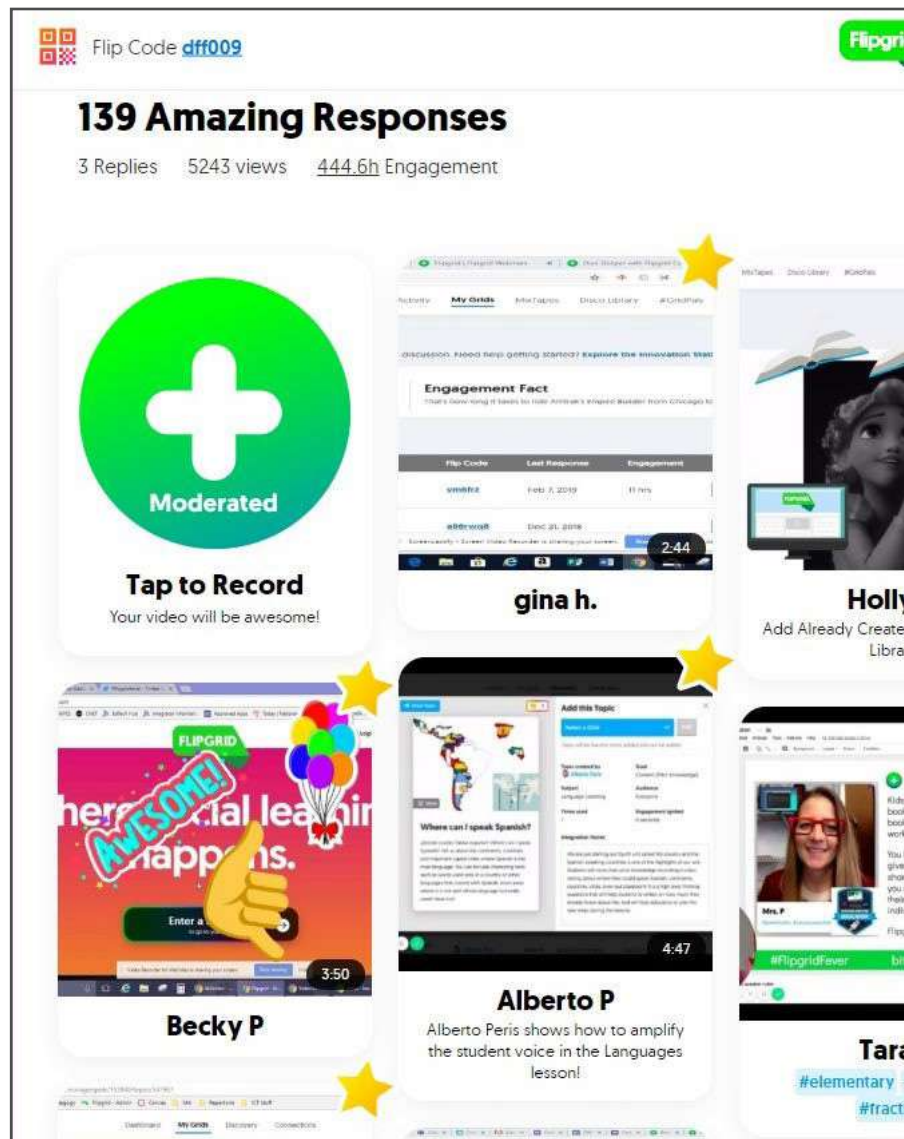
Recently, courses within online programs in a department of curriculum and instruction utilized FlipGrid as a way for students to get to know each other. The objectives of the assignments indicated that students would share introductory videos and collaborate with their colleagues to grow their online learning community. These introductory assignments allowed students to introduce themselves by letting fellow classmates know their name, degree program, expected graduation date, and desired role in education upon completion of the program. Depending upon the course, students were asked additional questions, such as identifying their own strengths and weaknesses in particular academic

areas. After posting an introductory video, students were required to view and respond to two colleagues with thoughtful and thorough responses.

Student feedback obtained via a Likert-scale survey in an IRB-approved pilot study conducted by faculty showed that although students did vary in their overall perceptions about the use of FlipGrid in their course, 40% of them agreed that the use of the software program allowed them to gain a more personal connection with their classmates. In addition, 50% of the respondents “strongly agreed” that the use of FlipGrid was more personal than completing a traditional introduction assignment via a discussion board, and 60% reported they believed that, overall, they gained a better understanding of who their classmates were through the use of FlipGrid versus the use of a traditional introduction discussion board. Furthermore, 30% of the students reported that, with the use of FlipGrid, they felt a stronger sense of community in the course.

The pilot study also incorporated two open-ended questions to elicit information on the aspects of FlipGrid students liked best about using the application and what they liked the least. In describing what aspect was most enjoyable, one student reported,

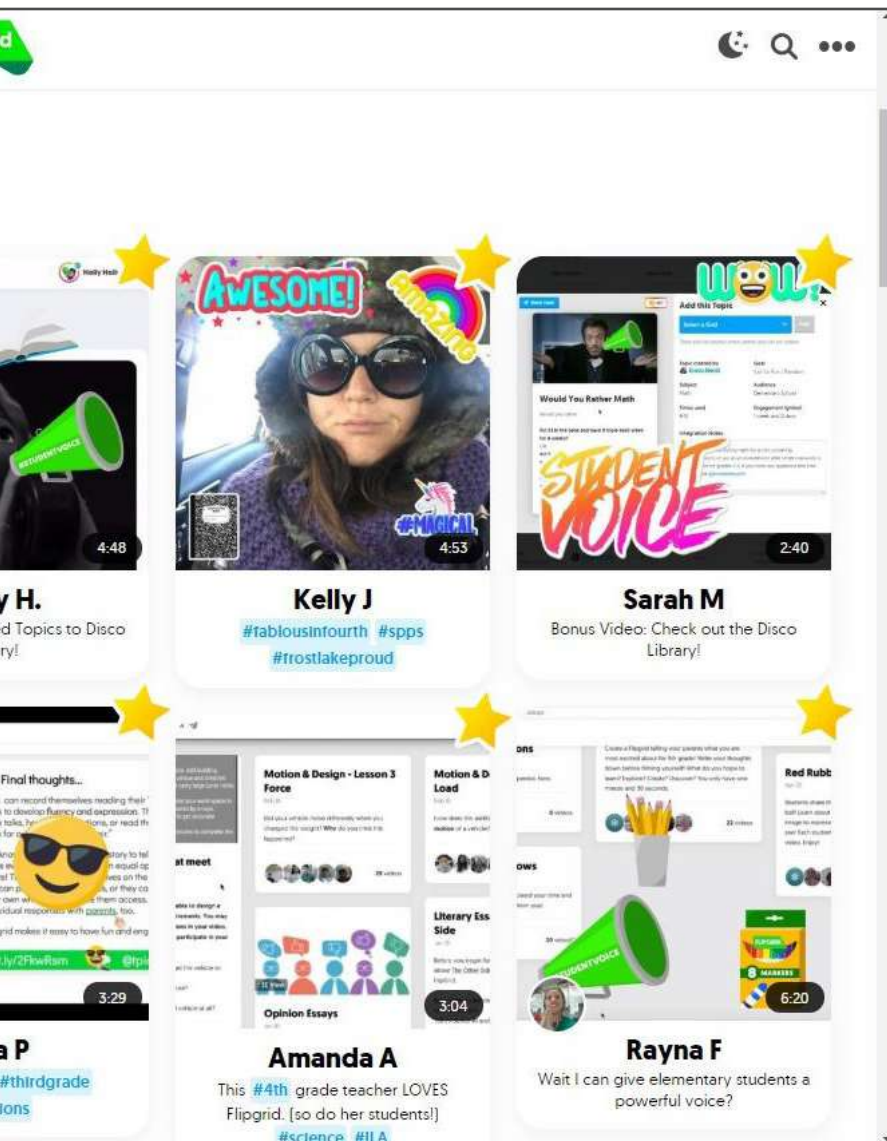
I could see my classmates through a video, as opposed to an avatar picture, so it was more of a personal connection. Plus, I was able to respond in person, which made it a better experience than reading typed words on a page.



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Conversely, in reporting the aspect that was least enjoyable, one student reported, FlipGrid usage is based on the assumption that everyone has a camera readily available. Also, I know many others who'd prefer to not be recorded and simply write their remarks. Being recorded does not always convey the same feeling as addressing others in person.

Although the results of this study did show some variance in students' perceptions of FlipGrid, it was clear that some students both enjoyed the experience and felt it was useful to the online course experience.

Through the use of FlipGrid, students were encouraged to make connections with peers and to use those connections throughout their course and their degree programs. This technology helped to create a warmer online environment. Other online professors had similar outcomes through the use of video technology. In fact, Lieberman (2018) reported that when one online professor began integrating asynchronous voice and video interactions into her courses, her students reported that those interactions in particular made them feel that she was there for them and that they were more strongly connected to their classmates.

Conclusion

Building positive relationships among learners and instructors in the online environment can present a challenge due to limited opportunities for social and affective support (Kim & Thayne, 2015). The purpose of this article was to review the use of FlipGrid to enhance communication in distance education. As determined by several research studies cited here and from personal application in courses, using FlipGrid can enhance communication, as well as the learning experiences and outcomes for students.

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Playing with History

By Gloria Jones

It could have been a long, boring day waiting for the bailiff to call my name for jury duty. Instead, as I waited to be summoned, an idea that had been swirling in my head began to gel. It was 1999. The end of the 20th century was drawing near, and I wanted to do something special with my Grade 3 gifted students to remember this great century of change.

What would be an engaging way to remember the many historical events, issues, and concerns, as well as the amazing decades? This was the century that transportation changed from horses to cars to planes. The century began with the Wright Brothers' flight of the first plane and continued with World Wars I and II, the Great Depression, man walking on the moon, and other notable events. Social concerns included emerging women's rights and civil rights, pollution and recycling, hunger and poverty. The century included the roaring 20s, the rocking 50s, the hippie 60s, and the Techno 70s. Major changes had occurred over time.

How could I get my students to internalize the 20th century as it came to a close? The notion of toys came to me, but how could I connect toys with the 20th century? Memories of Hula Hoops, Silly Putty, GI Joe, Mr. Potato Head, Barbie, Monopoly, and the Teddy Bear were interwoven with the times of my childhood. Could toys elicit similar connections for my students?

An Idea Emerges

With no call from the bailiff, I formulated a list of 20th-century toys that would pique students' curiosity for research. The objective was to learn about a historical event, concern, or decade of the 20th century through connecting it to a toy. As a class, we would brainstorm a list of events. The students' challenge would be to pair a toy with one of these topics to show changes over time.

This became an excellent example of creative thinking or forcing relationships. For example, the story of the Titanic was told through a Teddy Bear's eyes. Recycle Barbie taught about recycling. Waropoly was a study of World War II.

I took this idea back to my cohorts, and we developed lessons for this unit, such as applying math skills to create timelines of toys and of historical events. A collection of books on toys and 20th-century events was provided as a student resource. Computer research was a major component. Students worked with the technology specialist in the computer lab and their teachers in their classrooms.

We also partnered with The Levine Museum of the New South in Charlotte, North Carolina, allowing students to display their final projects for their parents and guests for a special one-day exhibition and reception. A museum representative taught students how to research, as well as create, an authentic museum label for their chosen toy and another for their historically adapted toy. Students learned that some of these toys were invented in other countries, such as Legos in Denmark.

The students selected their toys and then determined their approach to this toy's new role in history. For instance, Barbie was not just a fashion doll. She became a spokesperson for recycling. Instead of real estate cards in Monopoly, students developed cards about World War II.

They came up with creative titles for displays, such as

- ♦ Teddy Bear on the Titanic.
- ♦ Land of the 20's (Candy Land).
- ♦ The Easy Bake Oven Heats Up Civil Rights with a Dream.
- ♦ Recycle Barbie Says... Consider to Not Litter.
- ♦ Dominoes Decrease Drop Out Rate.
- ♦ Sherlock Temple: Rescuing the Great Depression.
- ♦ Rock 'n' Roll Mr. Potato Head, Hippie Mr. Potato Head, Disco Mr. Potato Head.
- ♦ Waropoly.

The projects were displayed on tri-fold boards with a replica of the toy in front. Two museum labels were required; additional research and pictures were added.

Impact

The projects were first displayed in 1999 and still continue today as a yearly research project. "The last several years, between five and seven schools across the district have participated in the project and presentation at Levine Museum," commented Amanda Kershner, the current magnet coordinator where the unit is being taught. "The project is still relevant as it incorporates historical content, research in areas of interest, and the advancement, or change, over time. Over the years, the format, research criteria, and types of toys researched have changed, but the spark of creativity generated is still as bright!"

Parent reaction was very supportive. "The Toys through Time project allowed my children to think like scholars. It captivated them and catapulted my kids to a higher level of thinking," said one mother whose son and daughter participated in the project. "I'm not sure I knew at the time that this would shape their educational career in such a positive way. Their attitudes toward school changed. The confidence to think differently and out of the box was, and is, prevalent in every action they take. They are critical thinkers now, and this skill has molded them into successful students."

Awards were presented at the museum. They were called "Mirror Awards" for best reflecting an historical event, concern, issue, decade, or changes over time. Although I never served on a jury that day, my time was well spent. In 2000, my fellow teachers, Donna Nesbitt and Betty Bell, and I received an outstanding curriculum award by the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) for this unit.

While reflecting on pastimes of other eras, students gain a sense of times gone by and learn valuable research skills. They learn to play with history.



Students used well-known toys in unique ways to emphasize a key historical event or concern. Here, Barbie promotes recycling!

Gloria Jones taught 32 years in elementary education, primarily in gifted education, and coached Odyssey of the Mind for 20+ years. Recognized by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in 1995 with the Break the Mold Award for Innovative Teaching, Jones was named NC Association of Gifted and Talented, 1996 Teacher of the Year and received The Church World Service Presidential Leadership Award, presented by Ambassador Andrew J. Young, Jr. for her work with students on hunger. She is co-president of Kappa Chapter in North Carolina State Organization. gmj1948@hotmail.com



DKG Inspiring Leaders: Tribute to International Founders

By Dana Cantillo-Perilloux and Mindy Crain-Dorough

Two members provide thoughts about leaders through a poem and reflection that might be used to celebrate our DKG Founders.

LEADERS

Pursue righteousness.
Be committed to giving and serving.
Be generous and willing to share.
Guide, love, protect, and teach.
For they are entrusted in your care.
Devote yourself with purpose and passion.
Instruct them with truth and facts.
Teach what is good.
Stay pure and sound in faith.
Provide encouragement, joy, and peace.
Have great patience and careful thoughts.
Offer hope.
Make wise.
Show grace.
Share the spirit!

This poem summarizes the first author's dissertation findings regarding effective educational leadership; the second author served on her dissertation committee. The study unfolded to reveal *vision, collaboration, and sustainability* as key concepts to effective leadership. DKG members are **leaders** in our individual roles in education and strive to make a difference in the lives of educators and children through the actions detailed in the poem.

DKG leaders in education, let us be committed to giving and serving by providing a *vision*. Every leader, person, or organization needs a mission, vision, and purpose to thrive and survive. Just as it was in the United States in Texas in 1929 when Dr. Annie Webb Blanton founded DKG, key women educators are coming together today leading our organization in the twenty-first century worldwide. DKG's Mission is to *promote professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education*. DKG's Vision is for *leading women educators to impact education worldwide*. DKG's main goal is clear in Purpose 1: "To unite women educators of the world in a genuine spiritual fellowship." That is, DKG exists not only to honor or reward those who have given genuine service but also for those who show genuine leadership in education.



DKG leaders, let us be generous and willing to share. *Collaborating* and sharing shall promote programs and projects for excellence in education. As leaders, we inspire, mentor, and strengthen members' growth. We promote the personal well-being and global awareness of women educators. Let us continue to encourage educators at international and state organization conventions and conferences.

DKG leaders, let us offer hope and make wise choices to ensure *sustainability*. DKG membership provides multiple opportunities for members to make a difference to impact education worldwide and sustain that impact over decades. Sustainability is a focus for all organizations. Over time, DKG leading women educators are sustaining and impacting education worldwide as an international Society with members in 17 countries.

Now, almost nine decades later, we realize our Founders were ahead of the game thinking globally when they began the DKG Society. Therefore, as DKG key women educators, we must continue to have the *vision* to lead, inspire, and provide possibilities for gifted women worldwide to expand their skills in leadership. We can be proud of our international Society and its Mission, Vision, and Purposes.

Amazingly, each one remains current, relevant, and meaningful as the world progresses today. As twenty-first century leaders, we must continue to *collaborate* to support each other and help the voices of women be stronger. Let us learn from other women's leadership and experiences and raise questions that are relevant for women. Let us seek to *sustain* our organization and our efforts by leading women and girls to possibilities for careers in education and by giving

scholarships for further studies and economic support for projects. Let us support education internationally through projects such as Schools for Africa and programs such as World Fellowship.

We give thanks for the leadership of the 12 Founders who were our beginning DKG leaders: Annie Webb Blanton, Mamie Sue Bastian, Ruby Cole, Mabel Grizzard, Anna Hiss, Ray King, Sue King, Helen Koch, Ruby Lomax, Cora Martin, Lalla Odom, and Lela Lee Williams. We are women who embrace DKG's Mission, Vision, and Purposes to promote a brighter future, a future with knowledge and leadership in a rapidly changing world. May we be the leaders who continue to lead and make a difference just like our Founders. Through having a *vision*, *collaborating*, and seeking *sustainability* as leaders, we can thrive to keep it alive!



Founder Dr. Annie Webb Blanton (front row, second from left) surrounded herself with strong women to lead development of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.

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A Bright Marketing Strategy

By Staci Schettone



The Beta Pi Chapter of Pennsylvania State Organization decided to take a different approach to marketing this year. In prior years, our main focus was to contact first-year teachers new to our local school district. Through our Supporting Early Educators (SEE) Project, we welcomed each new teacher to the district with a Lakeshore gift card, a pamphlet explaining what DKG is and what we do, along with an invitation to join our Society. This strategy was not beneficial to our chapter, as we did not gain any new members. We then created a website, Facebook page, Twitter page, and Instagram page to share our story. Over the past year, while networking with teachers from other districts and organizations, we have inducted five new educators. The website and social media pages have been fantastic tools used to recruit interested prospects.

While sharing our story and gaining followers on our social media pages, our chapter also learned that many veteran educators in our local school district had never even heard of our organization. This revelation sparked an “ah-ha” moment for us. As a chapter, we discussed different ways to get our name out to female educators in our local district.

We decided to hand out back-to-school favors to *all* 315 female educators. We distributed a highlighter attached to a DKG pamphlet with a tag wishing each teacher “A Bright School Year.” We also included our website address on the back of the tag. Educators of Upper Merion Area School District received these favors in their mailboxes on the same day during the third week of school.

As the webmaster, I posted a picture of the favors on all our social media pages, making followers aware of our project, and we received many thanks! As a result of gifting the favors to local educators and sharing on our social media pages, we made our name known and gained a significant number of new followers on Facebook and Instagram. As a chapter, we plan to follow up by e-mailing each educator, issuing a brochure that highlights our chapter, and, hopefully, welcoming many new women at our next induction ceremony.

Those interested can contact our chapter with any questions by visiting its website, www.dkgbetapipa.weebly.com, or by e-mailing us at dkgbetapipa@gmail.com.

Staci Schettone is recording secretary and webmaster of Beta Pi Chapter in Pennsylvania State Organization. Staci.Schettone@gmail.com



READER LEADERS—Helping Struggling Readers Achieve Success

By Carol Bostian

Reader Leaders, a community outreach project to support struggling readers, was conceived following a “Pick Your Passions” program in which members of Nu Chapter from North Carolina State Organization shared their passions. Two themes immediately emerged—early literacy skills/reading and serving other teachers. The Reader Leaders project was designed as a way to merge the reading and volunteering passions of almost 65% of the members of Nu Chapter with the needs of area students.

Goals and objectives. The first step in our project was to review literacy research to determine goals and objectives. The research revealed several startling statistics. Kutner, Greenberg, Jin, and Paulsen (2006) reported that more than 90 million adults in the United States read at or below the basic literacy levels needed to contribute successfully to society. Parents

who are unable to read a simple story to a child prevent the child from developing the foundational skills necessary for learning to read. According to High and Klass (2014), “Reading aloud with young children is one of the most effective ways to expose them to enriched language and to encourage specific early literacy skills needed to promote school readiness” (p. 404). Children’s vocabulary development is hindered in homes where the adults cannot or do not read to the children. Without effective reading role models, these children are at a disadvantage to become proficient readers.

These findings led to the core goal for Reader Leaders: Nu Chapter members will model effective reading skills and their love of books. The objectives of the Reader Leaders project were to provide enthusiastic reading role models for students; to donate reading materials for students so that they could practice reading skills at school and at home; to support classroom teachers in their efforts to improve literacy skills; and to involve Nu Chapter members as volunteers who shared their love of reading. The Reader Leaders’ enthusiasm and interest in involving the students in the reading process would encourage students to read at school and at home. Providing books for the students to use at home would provide parents with materials to read with their child.

Implementing the Program

In order to place the Reader Leaders project into area classrooms, collaboration with the testing and accountability departments of the three local school systems was necessary to identify seven low-performing schools. Principals in the identified schools were asked to choose one classroom for the Reader Leaders to support and provide

“**At home, students were then able to use their book to practice reading skills, to learn new vocabulary, to enrich their experience, and to increase their proficiency and reading stamina—valuable reading skills.**”



reading incentives for every child in the class. The Reader Leaders team then planned with each of the seven selected teachers to coordinate times each quarter to read to the class, select a specific theme for each reading lesson, and choose appropriate skills to reinforce during the visits. Reader Leaders team members who visited the seven classrooms were volunteers from our retired chapter members. Actively employed chapter members participated in the project by helping to develop the lesson plans and preparing materials for the reading activities as well as by assembling the reading incentive bags distributed during the second classroom visits.

Roskos and Neuman (2014) stated, “Having children engage in books of high quality introduces them to new words, ideas, and events outside of their daily experience” (p. 50). With this research as a guide, Nu Reader Leaders carefully selected high-quality books for our lessons. New vocabulary was presented during each visit. Children were encouraged to build connections from their own experiences to the content of the new text as books were read and discussed. The instructional skill activities were designed to involve students actively so that they were motivated to practice skills that helped to develop their reading proficiency. The Reader Leaders lessons were designed to support classroom teachers in their efforts to improve literacy skills and to encourage a love of reading.

During two of the Reader Leaders visits, Nu Chapter members gave each student his or her own copy of the high-quality book used during the lesson. At home, students were then able to use their book to practice reading skills, to learn new vocabulary, to enrich their experience, and to increase their proficiency and reading stamina—valuable reading skills. Funding for the books and reading incentives presented to the students came, in part, from a grant received from The North Carolina Delta Kappa Gamma Educational Foundation. The purpose of the Foundation is to encourage and support learning and literacy projects. With the decline in state funding for education, the Foundation provides much-needed support via grants for literacy/learning projects.



Impacts

The most rewarding aspect of the Reader Leaders project involved the relationships that members developed with the students and teachers in the program. The teachers were willing to share the skills that they were teaching so that we could tailor our lessons to the needs of students in each class. We were also able to share the resources and materials that we used with the teachers so that they could continue to use them in their classrooms. When we returned for our second and third visits, the students were excited to see us and welcomed us to their class. They responded to the activities with enthusiasm and demonstrated the progress they had made in their reading skills since our previous visit.

A final step of the Reader Leaders project was to ask participating teachers to evaluate the objectives of the program using a Google Form. Every teacher who



to support teachers and students in the three school districts. They learned of the chapter's "First Year Friends" support for beginning teachers, school supply drives, and annual grants to area educators. These personnel now have a better understanding of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society and its influence in education. The community also has a deeper knowledge of Nu Chapter's projects through articles published in the local newspaper. Finally, our chapter had several of the Reader Leaders classroom teachers express interest in becoming members of the Society. All of these results are positive indicators of the impact that we are making in our community.

Conclusion

After completing and evaluating the first year, Nu Chapter voted to renew our commitment to community involvement through Reader Leaders by including this project in our annual budget. The Reader Leaders initiative will continue to provide an opportunity to impact many area students and to promote excellence in education, part of the mission of Delta Kappa Gamma.

Carol Bostian, a member of Nu Chapter in North Carolina State Organization, is the chapter's immediate past president, newsletter editor, and webmaster and the *Eta State News* (NC) editor. She is a retired kindergarten teacher for Catawba County Schools in Newton, NC. cdbostian@gmail.com

responded ranked achievement of all the objectives as "excellent." The form also allowed teachers to leave comments. One teacher responded, "I enjoyed working with these talented educators. They were quick to share their resources with me." Another wrote, "This was an amazing experience for my students. The students loved the books they received and always looked forward to your visits. Thank you for sharing your love of reading!" A third teacher shared, "The activities were outstanding. They were well planned and age-appropriate for the students." The teachers whom the Reader Leaders visited and those Nu members who were involved in the project were enthusiastic about the success of the program.

The Reader Leaders project also produced several unexpected outcomes. First, administrators at the central office and the school level became more aware of Nu Chapter's efforts in Catawba County



Chapter President Interviews Show Trends in State Leadership, Membership

By Pat Graff

Introduction

As part of its membership revitalization efforts, New Mexico State Organization's executive officers decided to conduct an "outreach" interview (see Appendix) with each of the 13 chapter presidents in the state. These interviews were designed to start a dialogue with these chapter leaders, who often feel isolated and need support as they do their important work with local Delta Kappa Gamma members. In addition, the interview questions sought insights into strengths and weaknesses within the chapters. Potential issues that could result in a chapter's success or failure were identified through these conversations.

Interview questions were developed by Pat Graff, the state organization's second vice president and membership committee chair, using some DKG International tools as well as other concepts discussed in recent state leadership meetings and officer gatherings. State officers helped polish the questions, and then the interviews were conducted between September 10 and October 20, 2018. Most interviews were conducted in person, either face-to-face or on the phone. One interview was completed via e-mail, but personal conversations with that chapter president occurred to follow up and clarify some answers. Each interview took between 30-90 minutes. Several of the state officers conducted the interviews, with no one doing more than three and most conducting two. Results were reported by each officer as she completed the interview, sending answers via e-mail as Word documents. Then, Graff and New Mexico State Organization President Ella Kelly compiled the answers to the questions and presented the summarized results to those attending the state organization's fall business meeting in November 2018.

The results of these interviews are now being used to direct the work of the state organization's membership committee for the next year. In addition, chapter presidents are using the report to add new

programs and seek solutions to issues based on ideas and comments shared in the interviews.

It is important to note that local presidents and their chapters were guaranteed anonymity as the interviews were conducted so they could speak freely. As the state summary—and this article—were prepared, no identifying names or locales have been offered in order to honor this promise of confidentiality. The goal of the interview was to obtain honest, accurate information and perceptions so that the state could realistically address issues of a declining membership, lack of new inductees, and retention of current members.

The state has lost five chapters in the last 3 years, which is an almost 30% drop in local chapters. One goal of the interview was to gather ideas on how the state organization can support local chapters and their leaders. Opening fresh dialogue between the state leaders and the local presidents was an additional plus that is already reaping benefits for the state organization's revitalization work.

A brief summary of the findings from interviews with local chapter presidents follows.

Pride in Service and Programs

Chapter presidents and their members are most proud of their service work in their local communities and their scholarship and grant programs. "Everyone is involved because they are successful," said one chapter president when talking about the service activities. "Our members are happy to help teachers because we know they are overwhelmed," said another in a chapter that reaches out to local teachers and offers help on a regular basis.

Other programs that are popular with chapter members include speakers on educational issues, hosting events for groups like new teachers, and joint meetings with other chapters. "We try to have activities that meet the needs of active teachers, administrators, and retirees," said one respondent.



Several presidents echoed this challenge of trying to provide programming that meets the interests and needs of their diverse chapter membership. “It takes developing an atmosphere of trust among members that the variety of topics will help us all continue to be lifelong learners,” noted one.

Communication Challenges

Presidents are grappling with effective communication among their members. Some use newsletters, e-mails, text messages, Facebook posts, and phone calls. “We need to do more one-to-one communication, especially when members miss a meeting,” said one president. Respondents suggested ways to improve communication and support between the state organization and local chapters. One president asked for more programming ideas from state officers and other chapters to help in her local planning.

The loss of five chapters in the last 3 years has been disheartening for some, and respondents identified the lack of a systemic communication effort of reaching out to those members who have lost their chapter “homes.” Others asked for more frequent reminders of what needs to be done and when as it applies to various expectations of the state organization for local chapter officers. However, several mentioned that Kelly has been available for chapter visits and support when needed. “Ella’s visits help chapter members feel special,” one president said.



Finding Leaders

Problems often occur when trying to fill leadership positions in chapters. “Everyone has served their time,” said one president who talked about trying to get members to step up. Time and other professional commitments are often barriers to members’ agreeing to take leadership positions. “We need people to take leadership jobs,” said one president. Another reminded the interviewer that some chapters fold because there are simply no volunteers to serve as officers. This is a crucial issue for chapter survival, and several presidents asked the state organization leaders to look at this issue and develop solutions.

Several suggested one simple change: to recognize local chapter presidents and their vital work at as many state events and gatherings as possible. “I was surprised at a recent state conference that the local presidents were never even introduced at any gathering. These leaders are as vital as the state officers, but they were not honored or even recognized during the entire weekend,” said one leader.

It was also suggested that there should be more ongoing training sessions and supports available for chapter presidents to increase their efficiency and success right away. “This past summer leadership training in Hobbs, conducted by former New Mexico State President Kay Hannum, I learned a lot,” said one president. “I wish I could

Follow Me Stratford, Ontario © Oil Painting by Anne Marie Gitto Laurin, Quebec, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.



get more training like it.” Currently, state organization officers are exploring using online resources to facilitate more “face-to-face” idea-sharing among chapter presidents during the year.



Dripping Cones © Photograph by Susan Elizabeth Carlson, IA, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.

Membership Challenges

Most chapter leaders interviewed indicated that their chapter has embraced the state’s Membership Challenge of inducting at least 10% new members to their chapters. Many are focusing on recruiting younger members, including those who are current teachers. In hard numbers, this means chapters will recruit 27 new members. As of early December 2018, chapters had reported at least 20% progress toward this goal statewide. The state’s membership committee will be studying the new collegiate membership initiative coming from DKG International and sharing this new policy and practice with members at the next state organization convention.

For some chapters, recruiting new members is essential. “Unless we get new blood in our chapter, we are going to die,” said one president bluntly. It was also important, however, to many presidents that chapters look at retaining the members they have. “We need to ensure that our new members are being provided what they need,” suggested one president. Retention will be a major focus of New Mexico State’s revitalization plan in Year 3, 2019-2020, according to Kelly.

When asked to “dream big” about what DKG and New Mexico State Organization could do to help local chapter members and their leaders, chapter presidents had many different unique ideas and possible programs to suggest. These included providing a system of support for newer teachers in the community; waiving dues for first-year members; more benefits and programs for working teachers and educators; and creating videos and other technology aids to help those in the classroom with WIN (What I Need) strategies. The possibility of a “New Teacher Leader” seminar throughout the state is being explored as an additional professional development opportunity for selected state organization members.

Conclusion

Overall, these interviews provided many rich and thought-provoking comments and ideas with which state organization leaders and their partner chapter presidents can work to continue the state’s revitalization work. According to a recent e-mail from DKG International President Cathy Daugherty, New Mexico State Organization has begun—ever so slightly—to stem the losses. The rate of membership losses in the state DROPPED this past year from 7.95% to 5.42%. “Your state organization members are slowing down your membership loss and in fact are moving ahead,” said Daugherty.

“These interviews are designed to help us, as state officers, to better understand the triumphs and challenges our local chapters face these days,” said Kelly. “We want to provide a support system to help our chapters do well and to celebrate their successes.”

Electronic copies of the summarized results are available. Contact the author by e-mail.

Pat Graff, NBCT, has been a member of Gamma Chapter in New Mexico for nearly 20 years and is currently serving as the state organization’s second vice president. She taught secondary journalism, English, and social studies in the Albuquerque Public Schools for 36 years before retiring in 2013 and was the first New Mexican inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame in 2006. pgraff@aol.com



Appendix: Theta State Chapter Presidents Interview Questions 2018-2019 Membership Outreach

Directions: Use these questions to conduct an informal “interview” with your assigned local chapter president(s). You can add more questions and gather more information if the conversation lends itself to that.

Please take notes during the interview and then transpose them to readable notes to send to Ella Kelly no later than Oct. 20, 2018. Interviews may be done in person or via telephone or other electronic means. Please do NOT send this as an email for the chapter president to fill out; the one-to-one conversation is important.

REMEMBER: This is designed to start a friendly conversation between the chapter president and you, a Theta State officer. In no way should this interview be perceived as a threat or a problem. Please emphasize that we are gathering information and building contacts to build and grow our wonderful organization of Delta Kappa Gamma.

Results will be compiled and highlights shared at the Fall State meeting Nov. 3, 2018. No chapters or individuals will be named.

Membership & Chapter Information Interview Questions

1. In general, how do you feel your members are engaged in your chapter activities and work?
2. Are there a few programs or events that you have that are especially popular?
3. What kind of community service does your chapter do?
4. In general, how do your chapter members feel about the community service you do?
5. What are some educational topics in which your chapter members are interested?
6. What means of communication do you use to stay in touch with your members? List all that you use.
7. How connected do you feel to our state organization as a chapter leader?
8. What could the state organization do to support your work this biennium as a chapter leader?
9. Does your chapter have plans for future growth? Please explain.
10. How difficult is it for your chapter to fill leadership positions?
11. Are you aware of the state “Membership Challenge” issued at this year’s state leadership training? It asks each chapter to build its membership by 10% this year. (Refer to the summer *Theta State News* for each chapter’s specific target #.) Do you have ideas on how you might be able to do this?
12. What do you think are two significant barriers to recruiting and maintaining membership in your chapter?
13. Dream big. If you could ask the state or international DKG to do ONE thing to help your members and your chapter, what would it be?
14. Anything else to add?

Thank you for your time! We are planning to use this information to help us build programs at the state level to support local leadership and members. These specific results will be shared ONLY with the interviewer, the state president, and the state second vice-president/membership committee chair. Unless we specifically ask your permission, all results from this interview will be reported anonymously (no names or chapters).



Sharing Members' Gifts: DKG Arts and Humanities Gallery

Readers may notice that the *Collegial Exchange* often includes connections to or pieces from the DKG Arts and Humanities Gallery. This is done not only to share members' talents and delight readers but also to increase the visibility of the Gallery, which exists to

- ✦ showcase our members' creative talents;
- ✦ create visibility for our organization through the public viewing ability,
- ✦ give members the opportunity to publish their works,
- ✦ connect members and communities through art,
- ✦ stimulate personal and professional growth, and
- ✦ remind us of our Purposes.

The categories encompass visual arts, performing arts, and literary arts.

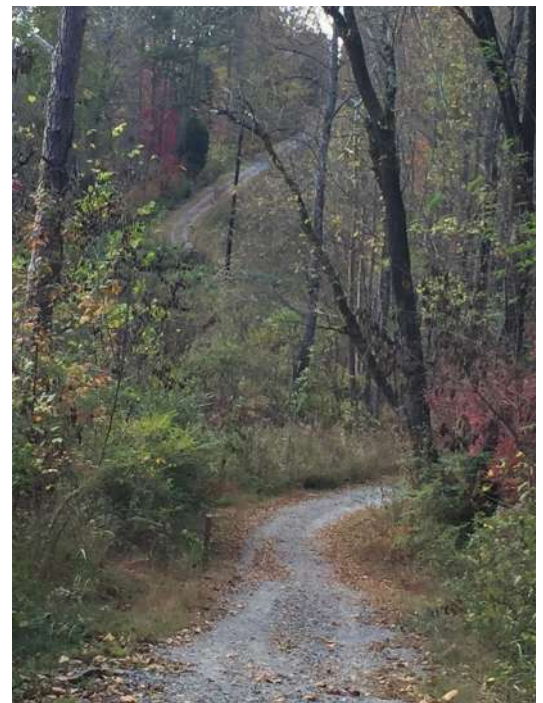
As one of our artists has said, "I visit the Gallery both for inspiration and relaxation...[It is a] great place!" (personal correspondence, Phyllis VanBuren, 2018). However, the basic premises for experiencing art in general are many. They include to

- ✦ stop and stare,
- ✦ contemplate,
- ✦ expand our thoughts,
- ✦ reflect,
- ✦ enjoy and revel in an experience,
- ✦ calm our minds,
- ✦ excite and stimulate our minds,
- ✦ inspire,
- ✦ remind us of our purposes,
- ✦ reminisce,
- ✦ feel what the artist wants to portray, and
- ✦ bathe in the luxury of a moment of silence.

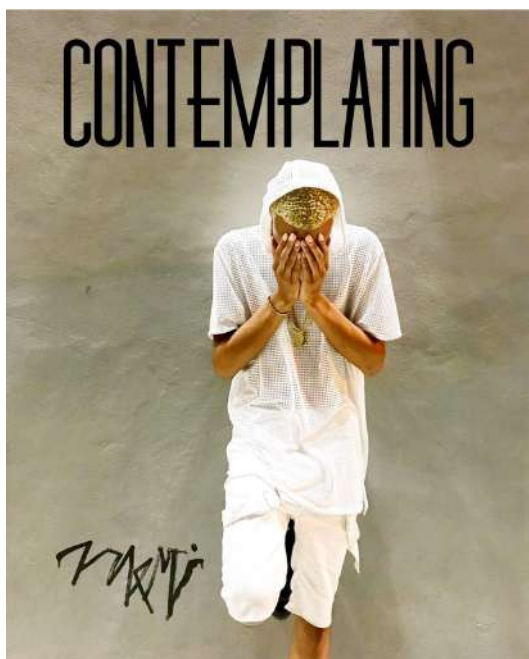
The Gallery was started in 2012 with action from that year's convention attendees. Sandra Smith Bull was asked to chair the committee named by then-international president Beverly Helms. The vision, courage, and dedication to put forward passion for the arts empowered the initial Jury members—Bull, June Bowers, Janye Brainard, Catherine Bringselius-Nilsson, and Linda Eller—to take this step forward. Accompanied by other advocates for the arts, together they implemented a "Fine Arts Gallery" to showcase the many talents of our members. The name *DKG Fine Arts Gallery* evolved from competitive submissions from members. Not only do our members get to view the Gallery but the public can enjoy members' talents as well! Thus, we saw the butterfly effect in action.



Art Viewer © Photograph by Catherine Bringselius Nilsson, Sweden, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.



Trail Kings Mountain © Photograph by Connie Phifer Savell, NC, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.



Contemplating © Photograph by Rita L. Odom, MD, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.



Light as a Feather © Watercolor Painting by Kathleen Phelps-Rusche, MI, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.



River Rock © Photograph by Glenna Yee, CA, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery.

The Gallery has two submission periods a year: January 15 to February 15 and August 15 to September 15. The new easy-to-submit application goes live on the website at the beginning of each submission period. Accepted applicants see their works showcased for a biennium and then archived for a second biennium. Some state organizations have a Gallery Liaison. The regional directors, state presidents, and artists are informed of successful applicants, and state liaisons continue their work to encourage, inform, and locally publicize their artists' works.

Visit the Gallery often and take advantage of these artistic and creative "gifts to the world." And don't forget to submit your own gifts!

Dr. Donna-Faye Madhosingh, chair, authored this article on behalf of the International Arts & Humanities Jury 2018-2020.



Marketing through Partnerships for Professional Growth: A Model

Myriad communications and marketing opportunities exist within DKG, both to assist members and to make the Society's name known in the educational community. Through author Debbie LeBlanc, the Communications & Marketing Committee offers a description of a professional growth opportunity that exemplified strong communication by members and others; was supported by a grant from the DKG Educational Foundation; and served to increase the visibility of the Society in the state. This example models the synergy between the many facets of DKG that promote the professional and personal growth of educators and excellence in education.

Background

Illinois is home to over 850 school districts that range not only in size but also in their locations and the needs of the communities they serve. Schools across the state are struggling to support vulnerable populations, challenge students with rigorous and meaningful learning, and elevate the expertise of teachers as leaders in the profession. In a state struggling to define teacher leadership, teachers need support in viewing themselves as the leaders they are. Teachers need the opportunity to learn about ways to step into the teacher leader role in order to identify systematically and solve the varied challenges in their unique school settings. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to challenges in our school because our students and our teachers are unique individuals (Kaufman, 2018). The Powered by Teach to Lead Summit is an initiative that supports this type of leadership development training.

I was fortunate to participate in the first Powered by Teach to

Lead Summit (PBTTL) when I was invited to work with a small team of teachers and their administrator to solve a local district problem. I was chosen to be the "critical friend/coach" for this team because of my expertise with the problem to be solved. Close to 120 participated in this Summit, and before the end of the day, it was clear that this was one of the most powerful and profound learning experiences of my life.

Partnering DKG

With that power in mind, I contacted the teacher leader who had asked me to serve at this Summit and offered a partnership with DKG Illinois State Organization for a Spring 2018 Summit. Plans were developed to write a proposal to secure a 2017 DKG Cornet Seminar Grant for Professional Development to support funding of the event. The grant proposal included plans to provide a pretraining workshop that included an introduction to Teacher Leader Standards (2011), comparison of leadership practices

in two disparate districts, and a "Q and A" with leadership experts from around the state. The second day of the PBTTL was structured to allow the actual work to occur between school teams and their individual critical friend.

Funding was secured through the generosity of the DKG Educational Foundation, the DuPage County Principals Association, private donations, and in-kind services of other organizations. In preparation for the event, planning committees were formed, including communication and publicity, agenda, applications, and logistics. Members of the committees were drawn from DKG, Teach to Lead and Illinois Teacher Leadership Network members, local regional offices of education, and other educational leaders in our area. The various committees communicated among themselves, primarily via online meetings. They also shared many updates and documents and answered questions that arose. Also included in these conversations



was the representative from the U.S. Department of Education, whose focus was to ensure compliance with requirements at the national level.

Invitations for the 2018 Summit were sent to all district superintendents and principals in the state. Additionally, information was posted on the Illinois State Board of Education website, DKG Facebook page, and other social media platforms. Webinars were offered to assist participants with the application process. Opportunities were provided for teams of educators from the same school or district to (a) identify challenges within their schools and the root causes of those challenges; (b) develop a comprehensive plan for addressing those challenges with the help of a critical friend; and (c) build opportunities for teachers to learn from one another the skills and instructional practices that were necessary to implement their plans successfully. Practices discussed ranged from trauma-informed instruction to curriculum alignment to change management approaches and successful team building.

Committee members contacted colleagues and asked if they were willing to serve as a critical friend. If the individual accepted, he or she completed a questionnaire to provide specific areas of expertise that might benefit a school team. Once matched with a school team, the critical friends received training via webinars and live chats to ensure they understood the purpose of the Summit, were

prepared with thoughtful and insightful questions, and fully comprehended the process that would lead the team to develop consensus for a successful plan. The critical friends read the application to familiarize themselves with the background of the school district of their focus. This process provided them insight into the critical issues that might impede the success of the work. Although the committee members had hoped for 20 teams, they were proud to accept 16 successfully completed applications.

Meanwhile, the agenda team secured speakers for the event by asking two Illinois school districts, Effingham and West Aurora, both of whom are heavily involved in teacher leadership development, to present their work to the group in the preconference training. Katherine Bassett, former President and CEO of the National Network of State Teachers of the Year and key author of the Teacher Leader Model Standards, agreed to be the keynote speaker at both sessions. Gillian Cohen-Boyer, Director of Teach to Lead at the national level, presented the training for the Logic Model (Figure), a template with guiding questions for problem solving. The logistics team contacted two local regional offices of education for assistance and support. The DuPage County Regional Office of Education graciously offered a large auditorium at the county building to house the conference. The Kane County Office of Education provided all the materials for the conference and

Activities:	Outputs:	Outcomes:
	1 month:	Short Term: 1 year
	3 month:	Medium Term: 2 years
	6 month:	Long Term: Beyond 2 years

Figure 1. A worksheet on the logic model used at the conference.



handled registration procedures. The logistics team arranged for all video equipment and food and beverage needs, as well as provided participants with hotel and travel information. In-kind services offered for the Summit included the use of the auditorium, all materials for the conference, registration services, and completion of appropriate professional development forms for hours for working teachers. DKG Illinois members volunteered to assist with all registration and conference functions.

At the Summit

At the full-day Summit, teams assembled in person and included a critical friend, one administrator, and at least five other working teachers in the district. They were welcomed by the DuPage County Regional Superintendent, the representative of the U.S. Department of Education, and leaders in the Powered by Teach to Lead initiative, several of whom were Illinois State Teachers of the Year. After a motivating welcome speech by the respected dignitaries, a brief training was provided on the different components of the Logic Model (Figure) that provided a format for teams to identify a problem statement and a goal. Indicators included rationale, inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. Finally, each team completed the last sentence, “student impact: (if.... then....).” It may sound simple, but it was very challenging to peel back the layers of what has been done in the past, pinpoint the obstacles standing in the way of success, and most importantly, consider how the teams were going to identify outputs at monthly intervals. The outcomes statements were even more thought-provoking because it was necessary to think short term at 1 year, medium term at 2 years, and even beyond. The difficult role for the “critical friend” was to ask the team to examine these different aspects to dive deeply into their problem.

The last part of the day was equally as fulfilling because the teams were instructed to develop a 1-minute elevator pitch to share with other members and then to receive 4 minutes of feedback. This was especially powerful for the teams to synthesize their work into several statements in order to obtain feedback. Once this was completed, Logic Model posters were displayed across the room where everyone took the time for a Gallery Walk and

provided written feedback with the use of post-it notes. Members provided comments, resources, contact information, and other ideas to each other. The meeting ended with a Charge Going Forward, which was to include regular contact with the critical friend and updates on the Teach to Lead website.

Impact

The Powered by Teach to Lead Summit was successful as evidenced by the evaluations and implementation of the plans by district teams. The PBTTL team was recently contacted by the Elevating and Celebrating Effective Teaching and Teachers (ECET2) Conference to collaborate on an even more powerful conference for Spring 2019. Title I schools in the state of Illinois will be invited to submit a proposal and work with a critical friend in a similar situation as described above. The goal is to develop teacher leadership further while also creating a path to sustainability. The conference will consist of 2 full days with keynote speakers who are Illinois Teachers of the Year; Colleague Circles that will allow teams to work with critical friends; and breakout sessions for teacher-led professional development learning. A new feature of the Summit will be to provide continued contact and support from the critical friend long after the team has returned home.

Our most valuable resource, children, are the true beneficiaries of experiences such as Powered by Teach to Lead. There is nothing so impactful to a child’s learning as an empowered teacher.

Dr. Debbie LeBlanc is 2017-2019 President of Illinois State Organization and a member of the 2018-2020 International Communications and Marketing Committee. dleblancedd@gmail.com



Closets, Constitutions, and Changes

Consider the relationship between clothes closets and constitutions. Although it may be strange to imagine, the two actually have a lot in common. Think of the steps you take when you decide to do a major cleaning of a clothes closet. First, you examine each article of clothing and then decide whether to keep it, toss it, or repair it. When we, as a Society, examined our international constitution in 2018, we studied every part of the document and had to decide whether to keep each part, delete it (toss it out), or mend it by writing that piece more clearly.

A year ago, the 2016-2018 Constitution Committee asked members to “Propose to Us”—and you did. After thoughtful and diligent consideration, members attending the 2018 International Convention in Austin, Texas, considered 122 proposals and adopted 89 (57 to the *Constitution* and 32 to the *International Standing Rules*). With these changes, our organization opened the door of membership to more women, provided more latitude for chapter and state organizations, realigned dues payments to match the fiscal year, and updated responsibilities and rules to meet the needs of our changing world.



Home of the Free © Photograph by Judith A. Baxter, CT, as seen in the DKG Fine Arts Gallery

The New Challenge

The faster pace of our world demands that our organization be able to address proposed changes in a timelier manner, and we can do just that. One of the many adopted proposals now allows for constitutional amendments to be addressed every 2 years rather than every 4 years. Thus, at the 2020 DKG International Convention in Philadelphia, you will have the opportunity to “decide whether to keep it, toss it, or repair it” regarding our *Constitution* and *International Standing Rules*.

As you contemplate the work of our Society and what steps we need to take to move forward, you may discover a chapter rule is blocking the path forward. Work to break down barriers and make changes with your local members. Has your state organization become stagnant and is no longer meeting the needs of the members? Work to make positive changes in your state organization bylaws or standing rules. Perhaps you have an idea that would streamline the work of the Society. Work to make that change to our *Constitution* or *International Standing Rules*.

As DKG members, we are the ones who make the rules that shape the Society’s culture and stimulate professional and personal growth. We are the ones to provide the platform to inform members of legislative

and social issues. We are the ones to make a pathway to honor women worldwide. What changes can we make to our governing documents to allow chapters and state organizations to address the needs of our members in a way that best meets the needs of the group?

Members must provide their proposals for changes to the *Constitution* and *International Standing Rules* to the 2018-2020 Constitution Committee by October 1, 2019. The proposal form will be available on the website. All proposals will be submitted digitally. What possibilities will come forward from our membership as we gather in Philadelphia?

Consider the following: What is holding your chapter back from making a bigger impact on your community? What is holding your state organization back from fulfilling the seven Purposes of the Society? What is holding our Society back from becoming the most prestigious professional organization for women educators? Let your thoughts be heard. Consider the possibilities!

Imagine the joy of having a well-organized, clean closet—and the power of a streamlined *Constitution*. We can do it!



Key Pins and Wedding Rings: A Perspective on the Symbols we Revere

When first initiated into DKG in 2002, I felt a deep sense of honor that I should be included in this group of key women educators. I wanted to do all I could to grow into and live up to all this organization represents. After my initiation, a colleague told me that I would have to order a key pin. She also advised that the larger pin was the only way to go: “The small one is too hard to close, and you don’t want to lose your key pin.” I swung for the fence and ordered the large gold pin.

It was with great pride that I wore my large key pin on my lapel to my first meeting as a full-fledged, pin-sporting Delta Kappa Gamma member. At some point that night, a seasoned member quietly pulled me aside to inform me that my beautiful large key pin was in the wrong place. Seeing my embarrassment, she then gave me my first workshop on proper key pin placement. With her right hand over her heart, she placed her thumb in the center of her décolleté and spread her fingers out so that her pinky landed on the precise and perfect place to wear the key pin. I could see that her pin happened to be in the center of this imaginary bull’s eye. This was, of course, no accident. So, because I assumed that anyone knew more about the rules of proper key pin display than I, it became my practice to execute the handprint measuring procedure before ever closing the clasp.

Several years passed. I was now the chapter president and feeling pretty confident that I had honed the key pin protocol down to a comfortable inconvenience. I attended my first regional conference in 2005, where I saw what appeared to be many clever members who had beaten the system by producing magnetic name tags with dangling ribbons on which their key pins (and others) were displayed. Now I was not sure whether these devices actually met the handprint prescript or if they were even legal! I

observed that no one seemed upset by this behavior. I saw more and more of these ribbons with more and more pins on each at subsequent events.

After a few more years, I decided that the rules must surely bless the ribbons. I ordered one with my name on it. I was pretty certain that my ribbon would simplify the whole key pin matter. No more handprint



measuring and then pinning, removing, pinning, removing, adjusting, pinning, and so forth until that little pin sat precisely at my pinky tip and somewhat straight. I already knew that *no* pin was to be worn above my key pin...another helpful member had shared this nugget a few years earlier. I abided. Now it was just a click of the back to the front of the magnet and out the door.

As I continued to attend more international events, I noticed more and more pins on these ribbons. Pins of all sizes, shapes, and colors were displayed proudly. I was impressed that the members with the most pins must hold high rank within our membership. Often, I would inquire about a certain pin and what it meant. Some of the pins indicated an office held or a committee membership or participation in a special event. Some were

souvenirs from states and countries visited. I followed and added every type of pin I acquired in my DKG experiences to my ribbon. I recall feeling a sense of shameful pride when a young member at her first state meeting saw my pin-laden ribbon and stated with awe (or something), “I’ll *never* have that many pins.” My pride was quickly checked, though, when a very seasoned member leaned in and said, “You *really* shouldn’t have anything except official Delta Kappa Gamma jewelry on that ribbon.” So, I deduced that there must have been some magnetic-name-tag-dangling-ribbon rules after all! I must admit that I felt embarrassed, confused, and ignorant. But because I am a rules follower, I stripped my ribbon of all non-



official pins when I got home. I felt much lighter for it. However, now years into my DKG membership, I was still unsure of the pin protocol.

In 2012, I was honored to participate in our Society's Leadership Management Seminar at the University of Texas in Austin. While there I had the opportunity to learn many things. Among them was a good deal of DKG history. I learned that the Greek name was a bit of a ruse to ensure that this one-of-a-kind organization for women teachers would not die in its infancy. The key pin was a part of the subterfuge. A sorority was viewed as a harmless social group, whereas a group of women activists? Not so harmless to the status quo. So, our Founders wisely chose to use the Greek name to protect the upstart Society and its members' employment.

While in Austin, our class visited DKG Headquarters. There we saw much, but one thing that really caught my eye was the portrait of Annie Webb Blanton.

I noticed right away that our Founder was not wearing her key pin! At all! She was wearing a presidents' bar such that it appeared to be holding closed the graduates' robe she wore for the sitting. Nary a key pin was in sight! Surely, she knew that this portrait was to hang in our Society Headquarters! Did Annie not know the protocol? Or could it be that, perhaps, *we* don't know the protocol?

“**That's right. Delta Kappa Gamma has never, ever adopted any official directive stating how or even if a member must wear her key pin.**”

When I was later blessed to serve as my state organization's president (there is a pin for that), I was actually asked more than once, “What *is* the correct pin-wearing protocol?” Aware that I was not the only member who had been confused by the assumed protocol, now with certainty I could respond that there is none. There never has been any official protocol for this. That's right. Delta Kappa Gamma has never, ever adopted any official directive stating how or even if a member must wear her key pin. Still, members are too often given “rules” for the key pin. Some are even fined for not wearing their key pins at meetings. I am certain that Annie Webb Blanton would not support this action nor does our *Constitution*.

I have come to appreciate that my key pin is merely a symbol. There are many symbols we adopt, and each has its place of importance. My wedding ring is a symbol. While I value my wedding ring, it is not my marriage. If I forget to wear my wedding ring, I am no less invested in and devoted to my marriage. If I wear it all day every day and neglect my marriage, the ring will not save it. My point is that symbols are neither the focus nor the heart of the things they represent. Our practices and purposes are what matter most.

I felt insecure about the way I wore my key pin for years—especially when precious, well-meaning members would kindly let me know that I was breaking nonexistent rules. I seldom wear it now. I am as dedicated and proud of my DKG membership as ever. But when my time is over and my friends in the Society remember me, I hope that their first thoughts of me will *not* be, “She sure had great pins and she knew how to wear them.”

Candi Martin, Immediate Past President Arkansas State Organization, authored this article on behalf of the International Membership Committee 2018-2020.



Rumor has it...

The International Nominations Committee dispels rumors and offers an insider's view of its work.

Noted over the years are recurring rumors that we need to dispel or confirm. It's human nature for a person to fill in the blanks with what one believes to be true. It's our job to better inform members, and we welcome members to ask questions of any of the ten members of the committee.

Rumor has it that you must have a doctoral degree to serve at the highest levels of the Society.

This is simply not the case. One's level of education plays a role, but the wide variety and scope of the applicant's work (both in her career and in DKG) weigh heavily. Prior service in the Society often is a better factor to determine success in elected positions. Over the last decade, two of our international presidents have not had doctoral degrees.

No applicant is ever overlooked. The committee selects a slate composed of the most qualified candidates for nomination. Highly qualified members apply, and decisions are reached after many hours of discussions. All applications are taken seriously.

Well before the committee meets face to face in Austin to select the proposed slate, each member receives all complete applications. Committee members review these applications privately using a rubric and descriptions outlining the duties for each office. No member discusses any applicant with other committee members until the individual committee member has put in hours upon hours of work reviewing and scoring individual applications.

When all committee members arrive in Austin to select nominees, it is the first time any applicant is discussed. The committee works to arrive at consensus for each elected position. Quite often individual ratings are the same or very close. Careful study prior to the Austin meeting and a clear picture of the Society's needs set the stage for the resulting slate of nominees.

Rumor has it that some very qualified applicants are overlooked.

Rumor has it that applicants may be asked to take a different position than the one sought.

This may happen. If an applicant is not selected for the office or committee desired, she may be asked to take another office or committee. In so doing, the committee views this as a means of noting that she stood out and fits the other position perfectly. This scenario only occurs if the office/committee to fill has no applicants or the applications for that position are incomplete. If the committee feels that no applicant meets the guidelines for a position, then that position will be open from the floor at the international convention. The committee cannot nominate someone for any position unless that person has submitted an application.



Rumor has it you must be from the United States to hold a high office, and many nominees are from the same region in the United States.

It certainly seems the case at first glance, but nothing could be farther from the truth. If quotas for each region and/or state organization were in place, what would that say about the committee seeking the most qualified members? Bottom line, we are looking for the most qualified members to serve DKG.

Leadership Management Seminar (LMS) is *not* a prerequisite for serving at the highest levels of the Society. A member's professional position (12-month contract, etc.) may preclude her being given time away from the job to attend this seminar. At least one past president can testify to that situation. Leadership experience reviewed by the committee is not limited to attending LMS.

Rumor has it that you must have attended Leadership Management Seminar to be selected.



Unfortunately, many applicants are not asked to serve. This is *not* because they don't qualify. There are many more key women educators applying than there are positions to fill. Don't be discouraged if you are not selected for a position. The more applicants displaying a variety of talents, experiences, and vision for DKG, the larger the pool from which to select throughout the Society. This altered adage certainly applies: "If first you aren't selected to an international office or elected committee, try, try again."

The International Nominations Committee works hard for the Society. The committee is dedicated to confidentiality while advocating transparency to members regarding the selection of nominees to elected positions in the Society.

Peggy D. McCall, MEd, Past President Georgia State Organization, authored this article on behalf of the International Nominations Committee 2018-2020. McCall has already served 2 years of her 4-year term on the committee.



An Alaska Cruise

Cruising to Alaska following the 2018 DKG International Convention proved to be the perfect way to unwind for the 15 DKG members and 3 guests who took advantage of this fourth Go Ahead Tour for the Society. The Celebrity Solstice® afforded the group a beautiful ship from which to spot whales and at least one pod of orcas as the group traveled via sea. Land excursions included Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway, and Victoria. Under the direction of Go Ahead Tour Director Ann Boulais and DKG Ambassador Carolyn Rants, the group met each night at dinner to catch up on the activities enjoyed by each traveler. Along the way, two members of the party realized specific aspects of the cruise that addressed their individual interests. Their unique views follow.

From a naturalist's point of view . . .

Most cruise ships offer classes devoted to crafts and shopping tips for port stops, but Go Ahead's Alaskan Glacier Cruise on the Celebrity Solstice® gave passengers the opportunity to learn from lectures at sea and guided tours on land. Nationally renowned naturalist Brent Nixon, listed in a 2014 issue of *Porthole Magazine* as one of the top naturalists in the country, offered amazing talks both in the ship's theater and on the viewing decks as we passed glaciers, whales, and sea lions. He stressed understanding the planet as he led passengers to appreciate the necessity of caring for Earth and its wildlife. Nixon's presentation on whales was both passionate and convincing. He kept the audience's attention with videos, still photography, and a well-choreographed verbal delivery that focused on the behavior and physiology of whales. He vividly illustrated his lecture on seals and sea lions by donning flippers on his hands and falling to the floor to demonstrate just how seals move.

The cruise experience also addressed learning about Alaskan wildlife associated with the land. A guided tour of Ketchikan that provided travelers the opportunity to see a bear catch a fish was followed by Nixon's presentation on the bears of Alaska. His talk reinforced the earlier guided tour and the need to be safe when coming upon a bear in the wild. Later the group learned how to spot bald eagles by looking in the trees for "a white golf ball with a body attached." Nixon's photos impressed the group as he described the enormity of the bald eagle nest, how to spot a nest, and the intense role of parent eagles in raising their young. Passengers who went to the Kroschel Wildlife Refuge in Skagway saw falcons; fed reindeer, moose, and porcupines; and stroked a wolverine. Some in the group even watched a bear eat a fruit pie and then run quickly toward the owner!

Experiencing this Alaskan cruise further opened the eyes and heart of this DKG member to the beauty of nature. From a naturalist's viewpoint, it was an exceptional tour.

Merry Lewis, Arizona



Bears were fun to see—but dangerous to approach!



Sightings of whales were among the joys of the cruise.



Working from photos taken during the cruise, artist Jane Winston began to create this landscape sketch.

From an artist's view...

One of my “bucket list” items was to take a cruise. How great would that be—to take a cruise? I fulfilled my dream when a cruise to Alaska was advertised on the Delta Kappa Gamma website. Alaska! I had been there back in the 90s when Alaska hosted a regional conference. I gave a workshop there, but now I was going to enjoy the beautiful scenery and hopefully create some art for myself.

Alaska has many stunning outdoor scenes from which an artist can paint. However, I decided to leave my art supplies behind and take my camera instead. I would work from my photos at home when I returned.

Our first stop on the cruise was Ketchikan. The DKG group boarded a bus to tour the area. We stopped at a creek where we saw salmon and a bear upstream feasting on them. What a great subject for a painting. The bus driver showed us a nest made by a bear where the tall grass and weeds were trampled down in a circle form. The bear was getting ready for winter and hibernating. I took photos of this also.

We went to a place where totem poles were made by Tlingit natives. A totem pole depicts emblems of animals and mythological creatures. It symbolizes the guardian spirits or helpers that each of the animals represents. Two poles were under construction, but none were being worked on while we were there. Finished totem poles were standing around the area. I took lots of photos for future paintings. I wondered if I could place a bear among the totems in a painting.

Of course, we also saw whales—humpback whales to be specific. It was fun to see them breach. Sketching would be necessary in order to create the eye-catching composition of the whales. Using the photos I took of the humpbacks and combining those with various breaching scenes would generate the subject for an ideal watercolor and colored-pencil product.

Every place we stopped and disembarked had gorgeous landscape scenes, rustic buildings, or historic icons that would make excellent drawings and paintings. Ideally, I would have liked to have drawn or painted while on the cruise, but I chose to use my camera as my canvas to record the trip. Maybe someday I will go back to Alaska and record my trip with brushes and pencils on site. Until then, my Alaskan photos will suffice.

Jane Winston, Idaho



Magnificent wildlife greeted tour members at every stop.

Future Go Ahead Tours planned by the International Non-dues Revenue Committee include touring Iceland in connection with the 2019 International Conference in Iceland (July 28-August 2) and a tour of San Francisco and California's wine country from October 9-14, 2020. Additional information about these and other tours being planned can be accessed by going to the DKG website.



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