

The Reporter

The Delta Kappa
Gamma Society
International

Epsilon Kappa
Chapter #130

Alpha State
Austin, TX
Area 7

International Mission: Delta Kappa Gamma promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education

International Theme: DKG: Leading Women Educators, Impacting Education Worldwide

State Theme: You are the key

Chapter Theme: Women Educators and Learners... inspire, create and empower

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President's Message

The fall semester is gone and with that teachers in the US get ready to finish the school year. Parents, teachers, and students have teamed up to keep students learning and staying safe. It hasn't been an easy task, as every day we try to find a balance between personal and professional lives. From parents working from home and having remote students, to teachers reporting to school and having their own kids at school taking the risk of getting sick, it is definitely a challenge.

Lately, I have felt that the load is getting heavier; every day it feels a little harder to complete simple tasks. Even when I have days off, I don't feel recharged once we go back to school. Why is it so hard to reset and recharge? It was all very clear after I came across an article on bbc.com, "Cognitive Load Theory: Explaining our fight for focus."

This article applies the **Cognitive Load Theory (CLT)**, developed by Australian educational psychologist John Sweller, to help explain why "living in the age of Covid-19 may have turned our minds to soup."

According to the article, there are three big issues that are causing this feeling of lack of focus:

- *First, being forced into **new tasks adds new stress**; forcing us into new routines, robbing us of the ability to do things on auto.*

- *Second, **emotions can interfere with information processing** — for instance, when you're anxious, this is known to reduce working memory capacity, thus making it more difficult to work through any mental problem that requires conscious problem-solving.*
- *Third, CLT refers to "extraneous cognitive load" — the **demand on your working memory** capacity imposed by distractions that are not directly relevant to what it is you're trying to do.*

By the time I was done reading the article, I knew I wasn't the only one feeling this way. It was all so clear! it is our new reality; trying to continue with our old routines in a new environment that makes us be on our toes at all times.

So, what can we do so we don't feel so overwhelmed? As the article mentions, I'm going to focus on one thing at a time, even if that means taking longer on completing certain tasks that may seem simple or ordinary, and also I will take some time to really disconnect and recharge. What are you going to do?

If you are interested in reading this article follow this link: <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201103-cognitive-load-theory-explaining-our-fight-for-focus>



—Hilda Diaz

December Meeting Highlights

At our December meeting, Epsilon Kappa members shared some research and personal connections to Christmas celebrations in 13 countries. You will notice that both England and Great Britain are listed. *England* is a country. *Great Britain* is the name of the island that is home to the countries of *England*, Wales, and Scotland.

It was exciting to find out that several of us had family traditions that were directly tied to cultures of many countries. We learned about the special foods associated with festivals along with how decorations are similar among the European countries. Because we were using Zoom it was easy for everyone to show items from their own Christmas scenery. Several ladies shared pictures from books or provided a slideshow. Being able to see ornaments that were personal treasures was a treat. Since a number of our members have traveled to our sister DKG countries, those reminiscences were truly touching. One of the most astonishing traditions revealed by Marcia was that Japanese people go to KFC for their celebration. When we did our annual sing-a-long of carols, we had to mute ourselves because of the audio delay, but that still helped us focus on the joy and wonder of the Christmas season.

—Bernadine Eaton

Countries	
Country	Member's name
Mexico	Hilda Diaz
Italy	Jeanette Abrajan
The Netherlands	Norma Jost
Sweden	Ashley Busby
Iceland	Marilyn Gregory
Germany	Debra Wissman
England	Cathy Nitsch
Guatemala	Lisa Richardson
Estonia	Bernadine Eaton
Finland	Pam Kelly
Ireland	Kathy Mihalik
Japan	Marcia Kirkland
Canada	Evelyn Barron
Great Britain	Earin Martin

Upcoming Meetings

(Note: Date and time changes)



Thursday, February 11, 2021, 6:00 pm – Zoom

Program: Capturing Kids Hearts (CKH) – a program that helps the entire school community build relationships and helps students to be aware of their behavior and classroom/school expectations. <https://www.capturingkidshearts.org>
 Speaker: Michelle Brooks, 3rd grade teacher, Georgetown ISD

Thursday, March 11, 2021 6:00 pm – Zoom

Program: Number Talks
 Speaker: Mandy Partida, STEM K-5 Georgetown ISD

We will keep you posted on future meetings. Thanks to members for being flexible.

Epsilon Kappa Good News!

Ely Rodriguez teaches at Caldwell Elementary in Pflugerville.

The campus would like to thank Epsilon Kappa Educational Foundation for the gift card we sent in December! They used a portion of the gift card to provide hot cocoa, cider and tea for their staff on a cold December morning!



Events, Publications and News!



92nd Annual TSO Convention

<https://dkgtxas2021convention.weebly.com/>

June 17 - 19, 2021

Denton Convention Center, Denton, Texas

The 92nd TSO Convention will be held at the Denton Convention Center. The center is adjacent to the Embassy Suites Hotel. There will be plenty of rooms for breakout sessions, general meetings, and vendors. The hotel is ready to take your reservations for the TSO Denton Convention June 17-19, 2021. Call 844-684-9427, use the group code DKG, or go online at the link on the convention website to make your reservation. First thing to do after checking in is to pick up your convention information packet and peruse the convention program book so that you are aware of all of the exciting events and the times that will be happening.

For the registration form, schedules and speakers log on to <https://dkgtxas2021convention.weebly.com/>

This website also provides information on how to sign up to present a breakout session or be a Vendor/Exhibitor. A great place for chapters to sell their products.

The convention website has more information including *Convention Newsettes* under the resources tab. [The Key, Volume 4](#)

2021 International Conferences

International Conference

July 21-24, 2021, San Antonio, Texas

The final format of the conference (hybrid vs virtual) is pending. See the [Jan/Feb DKG News](#) for more info.

Annie Webb Blanton had a vision for our Society, and it will come alive at the San Antonio, Texas International Conference July 21-24, 2021! President Becky Sadowski invites us to celebrate the DKG: Opportunities • Contributions • Impact our members have realized because of their membership in the organization. The San Antonio Marriott River Center Hotel, situated on the vibrant River Walk in downtown San Antonio, TX, offers stunning views of either downtown San Antonio or the picturesque River Walk.

International Conference

July 7-10, 2021, Portland, Oregon

Join us in Portland, Oregon for “DKG: A World of Opportunities, Contributions, Impact” for the **International Conference on July 7-10, 2021**. The Marriott Waterfront Hotel adjacent to a waterfront park on the Willamette River will provide for your comfort. Inspiring speakers, informative workshops and takeaways, and fun in the art gallery, exhibits, and vendors will stimulate you!

The DKG International website has more information including the latest edition of the **DKG NEWS**.



[2021 Jan-Feb DKG NEWS 78-1](#)
(Adobe PDF File)

Member Spotlight



Elizabeth Newell

Growing up in Smith County where she was born, Elizabeth Newell always knew she wanted to be a teacher. After graduating from Lindale High School she went to Tyler Junior College before transferring to the University of Texas. She completed her undergraduate degree and masters there. She chose chemistry as her major because she saw the connection of applying math, her other interest, in that subject area. Unfortunately when she received her diploma in education, Austin ISD was not hiring women who had young children. However, the Leander District was desperate for science teachers so she began her career there. Elizabeth taught all of the sciences and a few other subjects as needed during her tenure. When she finally got a position in AISD, it was at Johnston HS; she taught for 13 years before moving to Austin HS. After 25 years there, she retired. Elizabeth has the distinction of serving Epsilon Kappa twice as its president; first from 1988-1990 and again from 2006-2008. She also received Alpha State's Golden Rose Award in 2015 — one of only two members of the Epsilon Kappa Chapter to be honored to receive that award. She and her husband Bob have a son and daughter, two grandchildren, and one great granddaughter. During this pandemic time, they are providing daycare for that five-year old which keeps Elizabeth back in the education arena once again!

Marielo Arazoza Morales

One of our newer members, Marielo Arazoza Morales, was born in Havana, Cuba. Her parents were medical professionals. Her father was an orthopedic surgeon and her mother an RN in the operating room. The nuns of the Ursuline Academy taught Marielo so she learned English at an early age. In 1959 the family escaped the Castro revolution and relocated in El Paso. As she grew up, Marielo knew that she wanted to teach because she loved sharing her knowledge with others. After graduating from UTEP she earned her master's in administration from Sul Ross University. During her classroom days, she taught French at Coronado HS in El Paso. She then served the school as its principal and also became an area superintendent. An unfortunate accident in which she broke her foot led her two sons, who live in the Austin area, to advise her to come here so they could help her when needed. So when she retired, Marielo relocated to Pflugerville. Soon she was asked to be a long-term sub for the principal at Blake Elementary in Manor. Of course that became a permanent position and she is happily back at work. When asked about the challenges in today's education, she replied that the change to remote learning is hard not only on the teachers but the students, as face-to-face learning is the best method. Yet, she acknowledged that technology is here to stay as a tool for life. Her wish is that students be willing to evolve positively, be collaborative, and accepting of change. In addition to the two sons in Texas, she has one son in Seattle and another son in Memphis. She hopes to see more of her 5 grandchildren soon.



—Bernadine Eaton

Alpha State Texas Educational Foundation

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International



"Breaking News" from ASTEF

Monthly recurring donations ... February Foundation Focus Month ... applications for Aspiring Educator Awards — a lot is happening in the Alpha State Texas Educational Foundation!

- Eliminate the hassle of filling out forms or writing and mailing checks by setting up a recurring monthly donation to the Projects Fund. Go to the ASTEF website — www.astef.org — and click on either the **Donate** button or the **Donate Now** tab. Follow the clear directions to initiate your recurring donation. Your selected donation will be automatically charged to your Paypal account or credit card each month.
- Special activities during February will include an online auction during the week of February 21-28 and a special "Golden Ticket" fundraiser. Watch for more information in upcoming publications and on the ASTEF website.
- **March 1** is the deadline for submitting applications for Aspiring Educator awards, one of the programs supported by the ASTEF Projects Fund. Applicants may be DKG collegiate members or non-member women who are pursuing a bachelor's degree in education or Texas teacher certification. An applicant must be sponsored by a DKG member. Guidelines and application forms are available on the ASTEF website.

Upcoming Epsilon Kappa Chapter Programs 2021

We will keep you posted on future meetings.

Thanks to members for being flexible.

Thursday, April 8, 2021, 6:00 pm – TBD

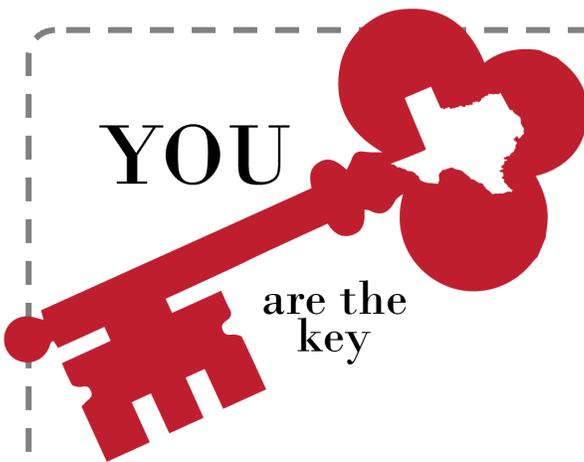
Program: Recognizing Achievers • Induction of New Members •
Presentation of Member Awards and Outstanding First-Year Teacher Award
Speaker: Sandi Causey

Saturday, May 1, 2021 – Chez Zee Party Room

Founder's Day Celebration
Speaker: Becky Sadowski, DKG Int'l President
Event Sponsored by Coordinating Council of Austin

**Mark
Your
Calendar**





Newsletter Information

Please submit your articles and highlights for our next Chapter newsletter on or before Friday, March 19th. You can send your submissions by email to Kathy Mihalik at kmihalik@airmail.net.

During this year, members may be asked to submit articles about their reflections of meetings or other DKG activities. We want to involve as many people as possible to highlight the diversity of our chapter. Also, let us know about your Life Milestones, whether you have attended a meeting or not. News is always appreciated.

Please contact Marcia Kirkland if you wish to receive a printed copy of the newsletter, though we are trying to “go green” and send most by e-mail. Thanks, Marcia, for your help with communications!

**Epsilon Kappa Chapter
The Delta Kappa Gamma
Society International**

Chapter Website: <https://www.epsilonkappatx.com>

Looking for New Members

As a new school year begins, Epsilon Kappa wishes to invite new members to our chapter. We hope to identify potential new members, invite them to an orientation session, and induct them into membership at our April meetings. Please let Bernadine Eaton, Membership Committee chair, know about any potential members. It is always nice to have several new members, since that makes it more fun for them. ANYONE can invite a new member, so look around at school, church, community and tell women educators about DKG!!

Let's Celebrate!

February...

- 4 Priscilla Sanchez Emamian
- 12 Glenda Bell
- 17 Ely Rodriguez
- 29 Lisa Richardson

March...

- 17 Kitty Mellenbruch
- 30..... Gracie Esquivel
- 30 Phyllis Richards

