

The Reporter

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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*The Delta Kappa
Gamma Society
International*

*Epsilon Kappa
Chapter #130*

*Alpha State
Austin, TX
Area 7*

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President's Message

Reach out...help a teacher

We've all been there: you gather your computer, books, curriculum documents, planner; you have an idea on how to map out your lesson; and two hours later you are done. Unfortunately this is not the case right now. Two hours of your time are only enough to plan for one subject; you still need to plan the rest of the week for the rest of the content areas you're teaching.

Because of COVID-19, teachers' working schedules have increased exponentially. Planning for their remote and in-person students doesn't only include thinking of the pedagogy behind the lesson; nowadays it also involves keeping kids engaged in front of a screen for several hours a day. In addition, teachers need to make themselves available to their remote students via online meets: on several occasions to address specific how-to questions, other meetings for content, and also time to meet with parents.

Teachers are hardcore overachievers; they will always go above and beyond to meet the needs of their students. However, is this rhythm sustainable? How long can they keep doing this? According to Courtney Tanner from *The Salt Lake Tribune* (September 25, 2020), principals are saying that teachers are crying and having panic attacks under COVID-19 workload.

An article on The Conversation website (<https://theconversation.com>), published on August 3, mentions the impact on the mental and physical health of teachers in addition to the technical, pragmatic and workload issues. The article, "Exhausted beyond measure: what teachers are saying about COVID-19 and the disruption to education," quotes some of the teachers' statements:

One teacher told us:

I struggle at night for thinking about work all the time, anxious my physical health has been impacted.

Another said:

It has challenged everything I enjoy about teaching.

And another wrote:

All the teachers I work with are EXHAUSTED beyond measure.

So, what's my message, you may be asking? Reach out to teachers! Offer your knowledge, experience, but most importantly, offer your time and support—they need it! Reach out, ask how you can help, what support they need; this action can go a long way. I understand you can't plan their lessons, but you can for sure run copies, grade activities, provide feedback on turned-in assignments, record videos for them, offer to take care of their dinner, remember they still need to go home and take care of their family. They will appreciate these efforts way more than you may think. Let them know they are appreciated and that you will support them in any way you can. We are all in this together; let's lend a helping hand.

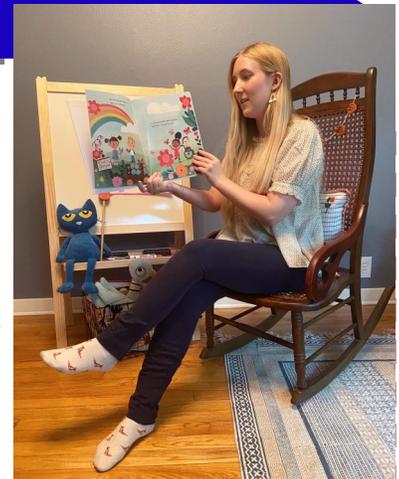
—Hilda Diaz



Epsilon Kappa Good News!

Distance learning with Mrs. Busby

I was REALLY nervous about doing distance learning this year, as I don't consider myself too tech savvy. I was also worried we wouldn't have any participation, because during distance learning in the spring I had very few students doing any work. I spent most of August watching trainings and YouTube tutorials from other teachers (or asking my husband, a software engineer, for help).



Ashley reading to her class on Zoom



Our class homepage on Canvas

Once school actually started, I was SO excited! Most of our class joined our Zoom lessons at least once a day and they were always so excited to participate and talk to each other. I keep my Zoom meeting open all day in between lessons so kids can pop in for help and so many kids just drop in to say hi or that they missed me; it's so sweet! Don't get me wrong; we've had a ton of technology issues and many confused parents and kids every day. But for the most part it's been pretty smooth. The kids log into Zoom several times per day, and complete their daily activities on the Seesaw app (which I'm loving so far). I'll start meeting with kids for small group lessons and to access kids individually over Zoom. Everything has been a learning curve, but it's also been fun to challenge myself and learn new ways to teach.

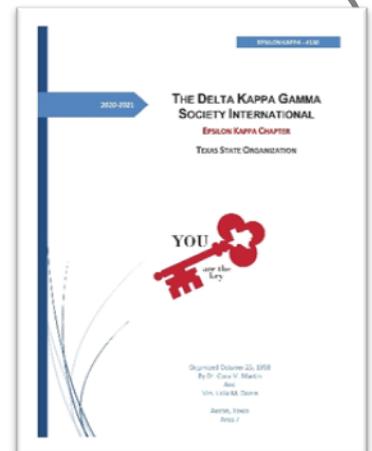
Epsilon Kappa Chapter Yearbook Has a New Look!

After many years of a smaller format, our 2020–2021 chapter yearbook is now an 8½ x 11-inch document. Yearbooks were sent to chapter members by email the last weekend of September. Printed copies will be provided to members who do not have internet access. This new format will be easier for members to use on their electronic devices and to print if they desire a printed document.

While the yearbook still contains all of the usual information about our chapter — officers, committees, programs, governing documents, contact information for all members, and so much more — both the international and state sections are less detailed than in the past. This has been necessitated by data compromises that have occurred in recent years. Names and contact information for international and state personnel may be found on websites as listed in the yearbook.

Please explore all that is in your yearbook and use it as a data resource. At the same time, remember that it should be treated as a secure document because it contains a lot of valuable information that can be misused by unscrupulous people.

Contact Evelyn Barron at ebarron106@aol.com if you did not receive your yearbook or if you have difficulty downloading or printing the document.



ASTEFL

10th Birthday Celebration !!



We hope that you enjoyed the Count Down to ASTEF's Tenth Birthday via the Constant Contacts sent leading up to the big day of **September 17th**. If you missed one or would like to read and see the photos again, simply click on the button below. We hope we provided an overview of who we are and how we have gotten to this place in time. Happy Birthday ASTEF ~ ENJOY!

[Tenth Birthday Memories](#)

Leadership Seminar 2021



2016-2018 Epsilon Kappa
Chapter President, Pam Kelly

I was selected for Leadership Seminar 2017 along with 28 other DKG members from across the state.

We named ourselves the “Dream Girls” and designed a shirt for the Leadership Seminar 2017 to wear each year at the TSO Convention. Before arriving at the Arlington Sheraton we took the Gallup Strength Based Leadership Assessment and read Tom Rath’s *Strength Based Leadership*. We learned how to combine each person’s strengths to maximize working together as a team. Our large group was divided into four teams. We had a fast-paced, jam-packed weekend of leading by learning from one another. Our culminating project was to create a solution to a given task by making a video. Our final activity was the opportunity to see everyone’s videos. We all enjoyed a memorable weekend and made lots of new friends. Think about applying to attend; it is truly a worthwhile experience.

— Pam Kelly

ASTEFL FUNDS LEADERSHIP IN A MAJOR WAY

Leadership is one of the three major components of ASTEF. ASTEF has funded events such as convention speakers, but the major way ASTEF funds Leadership is through the Leadership Seminar held in odd-numbered years. So far, ASTEF has funded five seminars and is excited to have the opportunity to fund a sixth one this February.

The TSO Leadership Seminar Committee is hard at work planning the 2021 event to be held **February 26-28, 2021 at the Arlington Hilton Hotel**. Thirty TSO members will be selected to participate in this life-changing event.

The deadline to apply is **October 15, 2020**. The [application](#) and the [Chapter President's recommendation form](#) is on the website. More information can be found on the Leadership Seminar committee page on the DKG Texas Website. (www.dkgtxas.org).





EPSILON KAPPA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION — A SUCCESS STORY

October 7, 2020 is a significant date for Epsilon Kappa Chapter members — the tenth birthday of our chapter foundation. With approval of the chapter membership, seven chapter members prepared and submitted an application to the State of Texas seeking to establish a nonprofit corporation “to provide financial support for the personal and professional development of women educators and for projects designed to promote educational excellence in the greater Austin, Texas area.”

Having gained state approval, these seven chapter members — Kim Thonhoff, Pam Kelly, Bernadine Eaton, Mary Louise Poolman, Marcia Kirkland, Debbie Sansom, and Evelyn Barron — became founding directors of the foundation. They continued their work to obtain 501(c)(3) nonprofit status from the Internal Revenue Service.

Beginning with funds generously donated by chapter member Dr. Phyllis Richards, as well as a small amount provided by the chapter to cover expenses of incorporation, the foundation has raised funds, managed funds, and distributed funds to carry out its stated purposes. In nine funding cycles since 2011 (no grants were awarded in 2020 because of cancelled events), a total of \$7,265.70 has been awarded in 26 Phyllis Richards Grants. These grants went to chapter members to support their attendance at DKG leadership events.

The educational foundation also funds activities of our chapter’s SEE (Supporting Early-career Educators) Project. The project is supported by grant funding, contributions from chapter members and the community, and fundraising activities. Since 2011, almost \$53,000 has been raised and spent for classroom and instructional supplies and equipment, benefitting many early-career educators in the Austin area — including several who have become members of our chapter! Proceeds from the ongoing sales of DKG logo masks will go to support the SEE Project.

How can you participate in the celebration? Buy a mask, make a tax-exempt donation to the foundation, encourage your friends and family members to donate. Support **your** foundation as it continues to support both chapter members and early-career educators in our community.

— Evelyn Barron



We’ve got you Covered!

Thanks to our wonderful Vice-President Gracie Esquivel, who told us about her friend in the mask-making business, our chapter has sold over 350 DKG masks. We have shipped to more than a dozen states and Canada!

Any profits benefit our chapter SEE project — if we ever get to go back into our schools. If you would like to purchase a mask, please email Marcia Kirkland at fhollandhaven@sbcglobal.net.

Profits support Epsilon Kappa Educational Foundation
SEE Project — Supporting Early-career Educators

Membership Spotlight:

New members — welcome to our Chapter!



Iliana Barrera-Lubman and
A.I.S.D Superintendent Dr. Paul Cruz

Iliana Barrera-Lubman

Iliana became a member last spring. Because 2020 has been different in offering us new ways to move forward, Iliana did just that; she moved forward and paid her dues and became a member of our chapter without our formal induction process. Iliana is an Assistant Principal at Sanchez Elementary in Austin ISD. She is shown in the picture to the left with Dr. Paul Cruz in 2017. Dr. Cruz is presenting a “SUPERintendent Coin” to Iliana for her hard work at Sanchez Elementary. She continues to move forward making a difference for her school and her students. [Bienvenidos Iliana!](#)

Lisa Richardson

Lisa is a 2nd grade Bilingual teacher at Walnut Creek Elementary in Austin ISD. She is one of our chapter’s (Supporting Early-career Educators) SEE mentees. At our chapter’s December 2019 meeting Lisa and her teammate Michelle Burciaga showed us new technology purchased from the SEE project. They demonstrated how they used technology in their classrooms and what the students are learning using this technology.

Lisa attended Texas A & M Kingsville and graduated from Southern Methodist University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Foreign Languages (French, Italian) and a minor in Archaeology. She was a teaching assistant at Cunningham and Sunset Valley before joining the faculty at Walnut Creek. Lisa immediately involved herself in school committees including health, science, technology, and GT groups. She actively searches for classroom or school wide grants which have secured over \$17,000 in monetary or in-kind aid. In 2019 she gave the keynote address to the Austin Ed Fund. We welcome another empowered educator to Epsilon Kappa.



Lisa Richardson

September Meeting Highlights

On September 10th, we had a great kick-off from our new Epsilon Kappa DKG president Hilda Diaz. Our theme for this biennium is “Women Educators and Learners... inspire, create and empower.” She inspired us to be resilient and creative in these changing times. We must see the world around us with a new lens that perceives problems as opportunities! Problems are an opportunity to create, learn or take on something new — a “Probletnuity.” Hilda shared with us that a “Probletnuity” is an opportunity that arises when a problem has to be solved. The opportunity may give rise to benefits that are unrelated to the problem being solved.

In this meeting we also learned more about who we are by engaging in the activity “name story.” This powerful and interactive session allowed us to share the story of our own name and hear the stories of others. To know more about these exciting times together, you can view a portion of the meeting that was recorded.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/19U3hVEBN8YKZw2e7OkSSPILZ4dN6ZDUR/view>.

Upcoming Meetings

October Meeting

Thursday, October 8, 2020, 6:00 pm – Zoom meeting

Program: “Women”— Celebration of women’s suffrage and the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment • Celebrating Epsilon Kappa’s 62nd Birthday • Induction and Remembrance

Speaker: Patti Belknap, current Texas State President.

Thursday, October 8th, we will start our meeting with new member inductions. This will be followed by the unique opportunity to hear from Patti Belknap, current Texas State President. She will share some inspirational words and we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of women’s right to vote. Also, we will celebrate Epsilon Kappa’s 62nd Birthday and remember those members we have lost this past year.

November Meeting

Thursday, November 12, 2020, 6:00 pm – Zoom meeting

Program: Unveiled Truth

Speaker: Gail Goolsby

Gail Goolsby, recipient of the 2020 Educators Book Award, will be our guest speaker. Goolsby’s book, *Unveiled Truth: Lessons I Learned Leading the International School of Kabul*, tells her story of living and working in Afghanistan for 7 years. The author is a DKG member who currently lives in Wichita, Kansas. A question and answer session will follow her presentation.



Mark Your Calendar

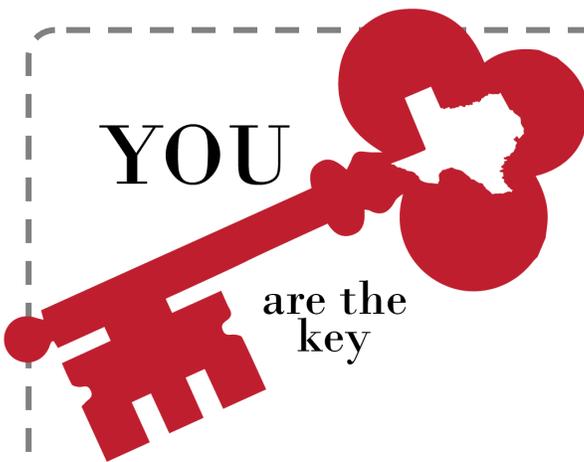


Upcoming Epsilon Kappa Chapter Programs 2020—2021

Note: The first meetings of this new biennium will be on Zoom.
We will keep you posted on future meetings.
Thanks to our members for being flexible in the next few months.

- Thursday, October 8, 2020, 6:00 pm** – Zoom meeting
Program: “Women”-- Celebration of women’s suffrage and the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment • Celebrating Epsilon Kappa’s 62nd Birthday • Induction and Remembrance
Speaker: Patti Belknap, current TSO State President
- Thursday, November 12, 2020 6:00 pm** – Zoom meeting
Program: “Unveiled Truth” Goolsby’s book, Unveiled Truth: Lessons I Learned Leading the International School of Kabul
Guest Speaker: Gail Goolsby, recipient of the 2020 Educators Book Award
- Saturday, December 12, 2020, 10:00 am** – Home of Pam Kelly
Charity: Silent Auction
Program: Celebrating Christmas Traditions • Silent Auction • Christmas Brunch • Sharing Stories • Singing Carols
- Saturday, February 6, 2021, 11:00 am** – Saltgrass Restaurant
Program: Capturing Kids Hearts (CKH) – a program that helps the entire school community build relationships and helps the students be aware of their behavior and classroom/school expectations.
Speaker: Michelle Brooks, 3rd grade teacher, Georgetown ISD
- Saturday, March 6, 2021, 10:00 am** – Huston–Tillotson University
Program: Touring Huston-Tillotson and visiting with students in the educator preparation program
- 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





Newsletter Information

Please submit your articles and highlights for our next Chapter newsletter on or before Friday, November 13th. 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 October or 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!

Here is a list of birthdays to celebrate:

October...

- 9Evelyn Barron
- 12Deb Acevedo-Tamminga
- 14Pam Kelly
- 28Cathy Nitsch
- 30Charlene Zimmermann

November...

- 8Evelyn Bollinger
- 22.....Bernadine Eaton
- 29.....Hilda Diaz
- 30Debra Wissman

