

State of the Society Message

2015-2017 Biennium

January, 2017

Joan E. Wiggins- Maryland State Organization President

To: Chapter Presidents
Past State Presidents
State Officers
State Committee Chairs

The following conversation took place on a First Friday during the 2015-2017 Biennium of President Wiggins. Joan is speaking to someone who commented on the DKG scarf that she was wearing.

Hello, What a Lovely scarf. What is the meaning of the flowers and the color of the scarf?

Person on the street

This represents Delta Kappa Gamma, a society for key women educators. I am the state president of Maryland Let me tell you about

Joan's response

Joan talks about International

Our headquarters is located in Austin, Texas. We have an International President along with her staff that oversees the organization. Our International President, Carolyn Pittman wants us to spread the good news of DKG. She reminds us of the Butterfly Effect that tells us that a small action can result in a large consequence. The small activities that the members carry out at the state or chapter level will make a difference for children around the world. Our vision which is "Leading Women Educators, impacting Education Worldwide" keeps our focus not only on Maryland, but around the world. DKG wants to make a global impact on education.

This organization offers so many opportunities for personal growth. If you desire to continue your education, international offers grants and scholarships and other opportunities for continued education such as applying for funds through the DKG Educational Foundation. I remind Alpha Beta State, the name of the Maryland organization that the deadline for applying for the International scholarships is Feb. 1st. We continue to encourage our members to read the various publications that are distributed by International as well as making individual contributions to these publications. Other means of communications in DKG for the tech savvy of ABS includes Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest and YouTube. The YouTube Channel is a great resource to see speakers and events that one missed at an International event. The channel has 47 videos that include DKG members sharing their stories. I enjoy reading the International newsletter and the Get Connected news that we can receive via email.

This summer, our Maryland members are making plans to attend the Northeast Regional Conference in Windsor, Ontario. At the conference, they will receive the latest news about the Society, experience personal and professional development through speakers, breakout sessions and other activities. Training will occur for newly installed state organization presidents and other specific state leaders. These events are wonderful opportunities to enjoy great fellowship with DKG sisters from other states and countries.

Wow! What a great organization but didn't you say that you represented the state of Maryland?

Person on the Street

Joan talks about the State

Yes, I was elected the State President of the Maryland Organization in 2015. I have a team of women who assist me with the duties as State President. In the state of Maryland, we have 25 chapters in every county except Frederick County. We have 750 members who dedicate themselves to sharing DKG in their communities, volunteering in schools with various projects and reaching out across the ocean to bring changes for the environments of children. Sadly, our membership keeps declining so we have put some initiatives in place to reverse that trend. We market our organization through an initiative called First Friday and we plan effective workshops featuring our own sisters as instructors. Our state participated in the first Four States Creative Arts seminar with Delaware, the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania. That was so much fun but lots of work to plan such an event. We are now planning for the State Convention that will take place in April in Solomons Island. All members are encouraged to attend so that they can vote on bylaw revisions, see the initiation of a State Honorary member, share in a mass initiation of new members, meet our Society Representative, Flor Perez of Costa Rica, participate in workshops including "hot topics" and congratulate the new incoming State Officers for the 2017-2018 biennium. As the State President, I oversee the activities of the state, preside over Executive Board Meetings and plan training sessions for the State Committee Chairs and State officers with my Leadership Development Committee.

The State operates similar to the International organization with Committees under the headings of Society Business and Society Mission and Purposes. Each committee works on goals that contribute to the success of the state. We groom our leaders by assigning them to work on the committees along with providing adequate training so that they can feel confident in their roles. Even though members of the committees live in various parts of Maryland, the members meet through emails, free conference calls and face to face. Every biennium, we seek new members to serve on committees and we know that each person that is a member has that leadership potential that qualifies them for the task.

A dashed-line speech bubble containing the text: "I like what I'm hearing. How do you become a member of this organization?"

Person on the street

Joan talks about the chapter

It all begins at the chapter level. We initiate key women educators into one of our 25 chapters. The new members are recommended by other current members. We have active, retired and honorary members and continue to seek new members to keep this organization going. Our goal is to increase our membership so we can build it back to where it was 20 years ago. We had 1600 members so there is work to do. Our chapter members are the heart of this organization. I am proud of the work that happens at this level. Let me tell you about some of the chapters. Xi chapter in Baltimore County has distributed "*Blankets for Kids at Ronald McDonald's house*" and they will make "*Valentines for Vets*" in February. Delta Chapter located in the Silver Spring area supports the "Good Shepherd School in Zambia Africa" and they recently celebrated their 75th Anniversary. Knowing that schools are in need of funds for field trips, Sigma Chapter subsidized a field trip to the colonial village in St. Mary's County. Tau chapter devised a Bakeless Bake Sale as a fundraiser and offers the "Flora Wiley Book Grant" to a high school student. In Cecil County, Zeta chapter created a "Build a book Basket" project for the children in their area. Many of our chapters support high school students offering scholarships, mentoring opportunities and collecting school supplies for children. Omicron chapter in Carroll County sponsors a "Friends Helping Friends" shopping pass that gives the consumer 25% off their purchases. Alpha Beta State members are truly embodying the purposes of DKG by their genuine fellowship, stimulating their personal & professional growth and advancing the professional interest of women in education. We're looking for new members to join us. If you have some potential members in mind, please direct them to our fantastic website- www.dkgmd.org.

Thank you for the overview of DKG and it seems that Alpha Beta State is moving toward a positive change. Who are the “movers and shakers” in your organization?

Person on the street

Joan gives her concluding remarks

Each member of Alpha Beta State adds their special personality to our organization but let me highlight the special work of a few members.

- Dr. Minnie Young, newsletter editor- completely revised the newsletter making it so colorful and eye-popping. We have received so many compliments from other states about the quality and information in our newsletter
- Wendy Happel- member of the Arts Seminar committee who held an opening and artist reception at the Gallery at Liv2eat in Federal Hill of her “Nature’s Angels”.
- Christine Redman- member of the Arts Seminar Committee who organized the instructors and made scrumptious cupcakes at the Joint Arts Seminar in Delaware.
- Lorraine Johnson- her poem “The Door” was selected for inclusion in the 2016, Volume 83-2 issue of The Delta Kappa Gamma Collegial Exchange.
- Susan Moger- wrote her first novel “ Of Better Blood” published by Albert Whitman Teen, 2016
- Dottie Hardin- published her second children’s book “ Zander’s Frogtastic Adventure” in 2016.
- Janey Snyder, state treasurer- keeps an accurate record of our finances and communicates well with our chapter treasurers
- Mary Makinen, Executive Secretary- This organization functions well due to her dedication in attending meetings, inventories, signing contracts, ordering supplies and the list goes on. We are grateful for her service.
- LaTanya Eggleston, webmaster- she maintains our website to the highest degree with current information
- The State Officers- Their participation and input at State meetings have been invaluable. They truly have my back during this biennium
- State Committee Chairs- I count on them to maintain the goals of the society through their work on their committees. They have not let me down.
- Leadership Development Committee- What a powerful group of ladies who helped to organize the Leadership Development Conference and are working diligently on the future training sessions
- The members of Alpha Beta State- the commitment to the organization is awesome. I hope that I inspire them to continue their membership and build on our successes.

I am so impressed with the vision and direction of this organization. I know several educators and will be sure to inform them of DKG. Together, we will build those membership numbers.
Warmest regards to you

Person on the street