



# Arizona SAHUARO

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International – For Key Women Educators

## Past Omicron State President Remembered

Berneil Drake, Omicron's past state president (1979-81), passed away on April 8, 2015. She had served as International second vice-president and Southwest Regional Director and had chaired or served on numerous international committees. At the state level, she was editor of the *Sahuaro* for thirty years and helped start the Latin American Fund Committee which was formed to lend assistance so that members from Latin American countries could attend regional conferences and international conventions. Ilse Leer from Costa Rica sent the following tribute.



Berneil Drake (Alpha Delta) was the *Sahuaro* editor for thirty years.

### Berneil's ABC

*(to relatives, DKG sisters, and friends with love)*

**A** wonderful person!  
**B**erneil will always be remembered.  
**C**ounseling was her passion;  
**D**rake University had shown her the way.  
**E**nthusiastic and cheerful,  
**F**riendly and caring,  
**G**od gave her many talents.  
**H**eaven opened its doors on April 8, 2015  
**I**nviting a new angel to watch after us all.  
**J**im was there for her, as he had always been.  
**K**ey member of Omicron, Berneil  
**L**eft an indelible path.  
**M**ember of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Phoenix,  
**N**ever lost a moment to help and orient others.  
**O**rganized the Omicron State's unique Latin America Fund Committee.  
**P**hoenix Symphony will always remember her flute, organ, and piano.

**Q**ualified Editor of the DKG Sahuaro for thirty years.  
**R**eceived the highest honor of distinction: The Intl. Achievement Award.  
**S**outhwest Regional Director was another position she held with pride.  
**T**reasurer and a two-term President of All Arizona School Retirees.  
**U**nique, cheerful, and talented, she was a glowing flame for everyone.  
**V**oters were registered by her at the Beatitudes Campus.  
**W**ii bowling at the Campus always gave her remarkable scores.  
**X**L stands for extra-large, and so was her loving heart.  
**Y**oung students' lives were always influenced by her.  
**Z**estful International Second Vice President, she made a difference on the 1992-1994 Board.

*Ilse Leer – Costa Rica*

## Thanks for the memories

Dear Rachel and members of Arizona State Organization,

Thank you for such a wonderful visit to Arizona! Your gracious hospitality and warm spirits made me feel so at home. Not only do I appreciate your gifts, but I appreciate each of you for the phenomenal women you are! I am so impressed with all that Arizona is doing for education, for educators and for DKG.

I enjoyed so much getting to know each of



Nita Scott admires her Arcosanti bell, a gift from the state.

you and hearing about the exciting ways you are working to promote our great Society and reaching out to your communities. And, as I shared when I first thanked you for the beautiful chime: when the South Texas breezes blow across our patio, I will think of you!

Many thanks and warm hugs to you all,

*Nita Scott, Membership Services Administrator*

## Leaders Stepping Into New Biennium

### New State Officers 2015 – 2017

President: Dr. Joye Sterret (Omega)  
 First Vice President: Alice Reule (Alpha Delta)  
 Second Vice President:  
 Kathi Houtcooper (Alpha Iota)  
 Recording Secretary: Carmen Wendt (Chi)  
 Corresponding Secretary:  
 Susan Halliday (Alpha Delta)  
 Treasurer: Marge Threewit (Alpha Beta)  
 Parliamentarian: Diane Sheets (Alpha Beta)

### Nominations Committee

Area I Wally Turner (Eta)  
 Area II Karen Blackstone (Alpha Epsilon)  
 Area III Mary Velia Luera (Zeta)  
 Area IV Gloria Day (Alpha)  
 Area V Denise Crockett (Kappa)



Nita Scott (international guest) congratulates president-elect Joye Sterrett (Omega) and outgoing president Rachel Wear (Alpha Rho).

**AKG**  
 ...promotes personal  
 and professional growth  
 of women educators  
 and excellence in  
 education.



## Stepping Up with Rachel

As I sat before my computer to write my final “Stepping Up With Rachel” column, I closed my eyes and pictured an image of the last two years as if perched on a ladder, with each rung of the ladder representing a goal completed during the 2013-2015 biennium. So, I began taking that journey, as we stepped together up the imaginary ladder striving to shine in the light of success.

It was our members, statewide, who willingly gave their ingenuity, creativity, cooperation and hours of hard work that resulted in successful accomplishments throughout these past two years. I speak of those who accepted leadership roles in their chapters or on state committees,

projects or programs, as well as members who worked tirelessly in supportive positions.

Looking back on the goals I set for this biennium, I am overjoyed that all our chapters remain in tact, and that those facing challenges have plans in place to invigorate their programs, recruitment processes and activities. Much of this is due to the steadfast work of the state Support and KARE teams. I especially enjoyed visiting with most of the Arizona chapters at least once. I believe listening to and sharing with so many members individually has made a definite difference. I am also pleased that many of the chapters have joined together in multi-chapter gatherings where the sharing of ideas, challenges, encouragement and fellowship has helped immensely in building enthusiasm and involvement throughout the entire membership.

It has been said that the ultimate achievement of a goal is less important than the ability to continue working toward it. When a goal is not met, one needs to focus on the changes that need to be made, together with the challenges that need to be met. As we move forward, it cannot be denied that there are challenges we are facing within Omicron State Organization

and throughout our Society as a whole, but I have no doubt that, with the ever-present DKG fortitude, dedication and determination, we will achieve positive results.

I am convinced that the recent survey conducted among fifteen states and the Omicron State members regarding conventions, shorter conferences and leadership training will prove extremely useful as we move forward into a productive future. The key purpose of the survey was to investigate possible areas needing enhancement and to compile the opinions of our members.

Serving as your state president has been an experience beyond my wildest dreams – one which I will always carry in my heart. I thank you for your support, encouragement and friendship. Now we close the door on the 2013 – 2015 biennium and step together into a new biennium, led by a sensational group of officers. I pledge my continuous participation in keeping Omicron State a DKG bright shining star.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Southwest Regional Conference in Wichita, Kansas, in July, and at our own Fall Workshop in October.

## Omicron State conducts survey

In a multi-level organization the size of DKG – over 60 state-level units – examining the “big picture” is wise on occasion. President Rachel Wear focused on the “big picture” when she asked Kathy Green (Alpha Delta), Shelley Smith (Lambda), and Karen Carney (Alpha Alpha) to survey selected state presidents and Omicron State chapters on conventions, leadership training, and conferences.

The committee emailed a survey to 15 state presidents (11 responded) and 28 Omicron chapters (27 responded) to learn how Arizona compares to other states and how Omicron State members view the three areas of concern. Results indicate that Arizona is keeping pace with the states surveyed in terms of events and activities Omicron State sponsors and that formats, offerings, speakers, etc. are similar.

Feedback with the state recommended continued use of Metro Tech for the Fall Workshop, inclusion of Northern Arizona in the rotation for state events, and expansion of space and time for the Rose Boutique. The question of yearly vs. alternate-year conventions still exists. While most state presidents indicated they hold annual conventions, a majority of Arizona chapters indicated a preference for alternate-year conventions.

On leadership training state presidents split 6/5 on whether to combine training with state conventions or hold it separately. Some states open the training to all members and include broader topics such as conflict resolution. State members prefer leadership training at conventions but suggest offering it at a time other than Friday evening. Arizona members appreciate efficient use of time during all state events to allow attendance at as many workshop sessions as possible.

This survey lays the foundation for further state discussion, review, and planning of Omicron State events. After all, we want to continue deserving the praise delivered in April by International Representative Nita Scott (Membership Services Administrator) about our convention’s success and the active participation of our members.

*Kathy Green, Alpha Delta*

## White Roses

*"A Moment to Remember...  
A Lifetime to Honor"*

<b>Marion Triem</b> Tucson, AZ	Nu March 6, 2015
<b>Berneil Drake</b> Phoenix, AZ	Alpha Delta April 8, 2015
<b>Sandra Parker</b> Green Valley, AZ	Alpha Rho April 18, 2015
<b>Elvera Winn</b> Lubbock, TX	Upsilon February 13, 2015
<b>Pamela Faye Sanders</b> Bisbee, AZ	Upsilon May 7, 2015

## *The way we were...*

January, 1940 (75 years ago) – Anne Rogers and Mary Maroney prepared and dressed a doll representing Sister Monica, the first woman teacher in Arizona, to be sent for display at the National Convention.

May, 1965 (50 years ago) – Alpha Alpha and Alpha Beta, the 25th and 26th chapters of Omicron State were formed.

May, 1990 (25 years ago) – Chapters were asked to make quilt blocks representing the countries of the 1989 World Fellowship recipients.

### USE THESE WEBSITES

#### Omicron State

<http://www.deltakappagamma.org/AZ/>

**DKG Arizona**  
Facebook

**DKG**  
[www.dkg.org](http://www.dkg.org)

**DKG Foundation**  
[www.dkgef.org/](http://www.dkgef.org/)

# The SPOTLIGHT Shines on Seven Members

Seven individuals were recognized for their contributions to the community or to the field of education at the Omicron State Conference luncheon on April 25, 2015. Each of these professional women were honored with a special certificate and were featured in a PowerPoint presentation.

**Marilyn Jenkins (Eta)** has volunteered with Yavapai County Tech Prep Consortium, American Lutheran Church and with community projects such as Dress a Child, Prescott Community Cupboard Food Drive, Habitat for Humanity, and the Prescott Zoo.

**Carol Hullihen (Alpha Alpha)** is a volunteer for DUET which stands for Partners in Health and Aging. She has also volunteered at a woman's resale boutique which provides professional

clothing at no cost to women entering or reentering the work force and is active at Orangewood Presbyterian Church

**Virginia Ptuyac (Rho)** has volunteered at Beatitude's Gift Shop. She has served as Vice-President of the Northwest Unit for the All-Arizona Schools Retirees Association, served on the Board of Directors for the Washington Education Foundation and has been President of the Questers.

**Nancy Jones (Upsilon)** was recognized for her vast accomplishments in working with students, teachers, and parents in the Tucson Unified School District. She has been active with the Tucson Chapter of Christ Child Society, a national charity devoted to needy children.

**Shirley Johnson (Omega)** was recognized for her volunteer time as a "navigator" at the

Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport. She is also a tour guide and volunteer at the Arizona Capitol Museum and at the Museum Gift Shop

**Mary Chernoski (Alpha Rho)** has served as the President of the Sahuarita Education Enrichment Foundation. She volunteers as the Outreach Coordinator at the Employer Support of Guard and Reserve which is under the Department of Defense.

**Susie Heintz (Nu Chapter)** supports "Bag It" which is an organization providing cancer support. She is a docent, mentor and presenter at the Tucson Museum of Art. She also volunteers at *Friday at the Fort* at the Presidio Museum which reenacts life in early Tucson for fourth grade students.

Renate Krompasky, Nu



Several state members have been honored recently for their teaching expertise. **Dayna Burke (Alpha Rho)** was one of the top five for the 2014 Arizona Teacher of the Year. The following members have been named by their schools as Teacher of the Year:

<b>Marcy Wagner</b>	Alpha Rho	Sahuarita Intermediate School
<b>Courtney Brown</b>	Alpha Rho	Sahuarita Middle School
<b>Mary McGraw</b>	Alpha Rho	Anza Trail K-8 School
<b>Kara Myrick</b>	Nu	Walter Douglas Elementary School
<b>Jessica Howell</b>	Nu	Hendricks Elementary School
<b>Jessica Jaeger</b>	Nu	Sam Hughes Elementary School

**Linda Spellman's (Eta)** article entitled "The Truth about Common Core Standards" was recently published in the Verde Valley Independent.

**Tracey Antista (Xi)** was awarded the AZCEC (AZ Council for Exceptional Children) Samuel Kirk Outstanding Special Education Teacher of the Year Award. She teaches at Hendricks Elementary School in Tucson.

**Carolyn Warner (Alpha Alpha Honorary Chapter and State Member)**, has published a new book entitled *"The Last Word, A Treasury of Women's Quotes"*.

**Sherry Alimi, (Eta)** recently traveled to Guatemala and was able to contact two of our DKG sisters, Carmen Beatriz de Mejia, State Organization President and Claudia Estrada who took her on a tour of their school.

**Kim Covington, 2013 Media Award Winner**, has left Channel 12 News and is now the principal partner of The Covington Companies, LLC. where she consults, collaborates, writes and speaks on critical education and community issues. Covington is also a featured editorialist for the Arizona Republic.

**Laurie Romanelli (Alpha Rho)** is the author of *"Cheating Ifooloo"*, her captivating and acclaimed first published novel, set in the South in the 1700's. It is available from Amazon.com in paperback and for immediate download as an eBook.

**Sherry Baca (Eta)** recently coordinated a Yavapai County Mathematics and Science Day entitled "Soaring to New Heights With Math and Science." Baca is one of only 20 educators in the nation to have secured a \$1,000 grant to assist with this event. From morning until afternoon, students from all across the county were able to test their brains individually and in teams on practical math and science applications.

The Tucson Coordinating Council awarded \$1000 grants to **Alexa Capanna, Shelby Empens** and **Devin Merrick**. All are entering their final year at the University of Arizona.

**Brianna Mazon** from Prescott Valley, Arizona, has received a Cornet Professional Development Award in the amount of \$1489. She plans to use her award to attend the 2015 National Conference on Differentiated Instruction.

## CONVENTION STATISTICS

### Chapter Awards

- Most Members in Attendance (Area)  
Nu (17)
- Most Members (Outside Area):  
Chi (8)
- Greatest % in Attendance (Area):  
Lambda & Nu tied - 44%
- Greatest % (Outside Area):  
Beta - 35%

### First Timers (10 chapters represented)

1. Molly Harris, Nu
2. Laraine Hawkins, Alpha Rho
3. Jessica Jaeger, Nu
4. Katherine Lackey, Nu
5. Vanessa Luera, Zeta
6. Sue Mueller, Alpha Delta
7. Kara Myrick, Nu
8. Sylvia Payne, Lambda
9. Marian Qashu, Xi
10. Annette Winfield, Alpha Alpha
11. Deltrina Grimes, Iota
12. Sue Reeves, Alpha Zeta
13. Ada Hatch, Tau
14. Esther Witt-Moreno, Nu

5 by '15

(brought in a minimum of 5 new members, including transfers, reinstatements or honorary during the 2013-2015 biennium)

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Alpha      | 7. Alpha Delta  |
| 2. Zeta       | 8. Alpha Zeta   |
| 3. Eta        | 9. Alpha Xi     |
| 4. Nu         | 10. Alpha Rho   |
| 5. Omega      | 11. Alpha Sigma |
| 6. Alpha Beta | 12. Alpha Chi   |

## Alpha Alpha

Celebrating their 50th Chapter Anniversary, Alpha Alpha Chapter culminated their year by initiating two new members, Edith Roberts and Diana Doyle. A slide show of Chapter Memories was presented and a special birthday re-commitment ceremony was held.

Other activities during the year included an annual Yard Sale with proceeds going to support grant-in-aid funds, a talk with Omicron State Treasurer Marge Threewit (Alpha Beta) about her experiences volunteering at Adobe Mountain Juvenile Facility, and a joint meeting with Alpha Beta Chapter for brunch. Members also joined with Alpha Beta to make more than 20 dresses to be sent to Africa.

*Karen Carney, Alpha Alpha*

## Alpha Beta

Alpha Beta Chapter celebrated its 50th Anniversary, May 1, 2015, with an "Uno de Mayo" Mexican buffet dinner. Presidents Beverly Combs and Diane Sheets hosted the fiesta at the home of Carolyn Miller. Phyllis Gendreau and Diane Sheets presented a "trip down memory lane" in a PowerPoint depicting the history of Alpha Beta, including many marvelous photographs. Charter and 50 year member, Nancy Frank was the special honoree. Frank was the chapter's first president.

## Alpha Rho

Sandy Parker past president of Alpha Rho Chapter knew the value of ideas. Thinking out of the box, Sandy proposed the idea that prospective members should be invited to a brunch each year where they could learn "The Seven Purposes of Delta Kappa Gamma Society International" and listen to members in attendance speak of the benefits and the positive influence of membership. Sandy served on the state membership committee and created a PowerPoint presentation on the use of her idea that many chapters throughout the state have used. A successful event, the brunch has helped increase membership which is vital in keeping Omicron State strong. Sandy shared her creativity at the Arts' Retreat, was a willing mentor to others, and volunteered when needed with a ready smile. This is the legacy Sandy Parker left to Alpha Rho Chapter and Omicron State. The chapter remembered her at the May meeting and sent her family a plaque honoring her.



Sandy Parker

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*Gail Gentry, Alpha Rho*



PHOTO BY KAREN BLACKSTONE

Alpha Epsilon members celebrate Willie Lou Bengtson's (center) 101<sup>st</sup> birthday.

## Alpha Epsilon

Alpha Epsilon chapter members invited Omicron State President Rachel Wear to attend their May meeting as they celebrated Willie Lou Bengtson's 101st birthday with a surprise luncheon at The Citadel Retirement Center in Mesa, where she resides. Another honored guest was May Anderson, who lives in a Gilbert private care home and will turn 92 in June. Due to health challenges, the two Alpha Epsilon members last attended a chapter meeting during the 2010-2012 biennium so this provided a great opportunity for their reunion. When first entering the room, Bengtson exclaimed, "I don't know what to say!"

As one of the chapter's projects, members visit them periodically to keep them aware of all Delta Kappa Gamma activities and to let them know that they are missed and loved. Willie Lou's first response when she entered the room was, "I don't know what to say!" The idea for the luncheon came during a recent visit by two chapter members to see Bengtson. The retirement center offered the use of an activity room where cake and beverages were provided. Chapter members brought sandwiches, salads, and other lunch items. Bengtson said, "I will remember this day for the rest of my life." So will the other members in attendance.

*Karen Blackstone, Alpha Epsilon*

## Thank you to three 50-year members

At the 2015 Omicron State Convention, three 50-year members were honored. They are Nancy Frank (Alpha Beta), Elberta Sandal (Nu) and Becky Shields (Eta).

Nancy Frank taught 35 years, 31 years in Phoenix and four years in South Bend, Indiana. She became the first president of Alpha Beta Chapter and has served in many leadership positions at the state and chapter levels. In 1999, she received the Omicron State Achievement Award. She also received the National Retired teacher's Association "Award for the Good" for tutoring students and teaching adults to become tutors.

Elberta Sandal started her teaching career in Globe, Arizona, and later taught in Escondido, California. She joined DKG in 1965. In 1974, she began working with the visually impaired students at the Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind in Tucson, retiring in 1998.

Becky Shields is a Phoenix native. Her teaching career spread from San Bernardino, California, to Glendale, and then to Prescott where she taught kindergarten until her retirement. Shields is a pillar of the American Lutheran Church where she has devoted her time and energy. She serves the "least of these" promoting the first purpose of our Society.

*Alice Reule, Alpha Delta*

## Congratulations to our 25-year members

Mary Levine, Alpha Alpha  
Sharon Willy, Alpha Beta  
Renee Horowitz, Beta  
Anne Palazzo, Chi  
Roberta Paeper, Epsilon

Anita Nordbrock, Eta  
Suzanne Crumrine, Gamma  
Julie Foree, Gamma  
Peggy Moon, Kappa  
Rhond Sears, Kappa

## New group in town works to prevent gun violence

Jocelyn Strauss of Tucson's gun violence protection group *Everytown for Gun Safety* offered important information at Omicron State's April Convention. She was the past regional manager for *Moms Demand Action for Gun Safety*. Alpha Chapter member Pam Simon who was injured in the January, 2011, shooting in Tucson currently serves on the staff. The organization works to press for change in Washington, including comprehensive background checks for gun purchases and enhanced protections for the victims of domestic violence. One tip should remain prominent in every parent's mind. Prior to a child or an adolescent spending time at a friend's home, parents should inquire if there are weapons in the home, and if there are, whether or not they have been properly secured. Parents must be vigilant in these matters. The program appears to have been modeled after the program, MADD (Mother's Against Drunk Driving).

Charlotte Kraus, Alpha Epsilon



Jessica Jaeger (Nu) receives gifts from Dr. Clement.



Joye Sterett (Omega), Marilyn Duerback (Alpha Iota), Suellen Brahs (Rho), Rep Meyer, Susan Halliday (Alpha Delta), Lori Good (Alpha Alpha) in Phoenix. Photo from Lori Good

## Minority Leader is Friend of Education

Omicron State has selected Representative Eric Meyer of Legislative District 28 as the 2015 Friend of Education. This award recognizes a legislator who understands and supports education in Arizona, supports children's issues, and has shown respect for public education and the professional educator.

Meyer, an emergency room physician in his fourth and final term in the Arizona House of Representatives, currently serves as the house minority leader. Dr. Meyer also is a member of The Children's Museum of Phoenix Board of Directors and past member of the Scottsdale School District's Governing Board.

Consistently supporting public education, Dr. Meyer has proposed bills to prohibit new charter schools within five miles of performing public schools, require schools to post the percentage of fully immunized students, and identify whether a health professional is present on campus. He advocates for restoring educational funding and works in a bipartisan way to enact sensible legislation for Arizona.

At Omicron State's 2015 Legislative Day at the Capitol, Dr. Meyer was a guest speaker, listened to members' concerns, answered questions, and expressed his views on educational funding cuts, school immunization records, and private prisons.

Representative Meyer accepted the Friend of Education Award plaque at his office in May. At the presentation he also received the check representing Omicron State's Collaborative Connections hours.

Susan Halliday, Alpha Delta

## Luncheon speaker shares experiences

Dr. Nicholas Clement was the keynote speaker at Omicron State's Birthday Luncheon. Currently, he is the Ernest W. McFarland Citizen's chair in Education at Northern Arizona University. He has been a Special Education teacher, principal and recently retired as Superintendent of the Flowing Wells School District.

Dr. Clement spoke of "Legendary Teachers" he worked with throughout his life. His stories

were both poignant, inspirational and entertaining. He has written his first book titled "*How to Catch a Swamp Frog*". It is comprised of stories of some of the teachers he has had the honor to know.

The proceeds of this book go to a foundation where teachers can apply to receive small grants to fund classroom projects, activities and field trips which they often fund from their

own pockets. To apply for a grant, go to [www.legendaryteacher.com](http://www.legendaryteacher.com) for more information and access to an on-line grant application. Jessica Jaeger (Nu) received a grant and other gifts from Dr. Clement at the convention.

Dr. Clement can be reached at [Nicholas.clement@nau.edu](mailto:Nicholas.clement@nau.edu).

Dana Jaeger, Alpha Iota

## Matisse: The Magnificent Master of Color

"What two color combinations affect you emotionally?" was the question that captured the attention of the DKG women who attended the Omicron State Convention in Tucson. Master teacher and docent at the Tucson Museum of Art, Susie Heintz (Nu) shared her expertise on "Matisse: The Magnificent Master of Color."

Matisse was born on the last day of 1869, in Le Cateau, a textile town in northern France. The patterns intrigued Henri so much that he carried a textile piece in his pocket. A brilliant blue morpho butterfly crossed Henri's path and was forever etched in his mind. These past memories are replicated throughout his work.

Matisse was an apprentice for George Seurat. Paul Cezanne was a good friend and mentor. From those experiences Matisse developed his own style. His non-traditional color combinations, use of curved lines (arabesque), and color blocking were chosen to stimulate emotions and give the sense that colors jump off the canvas.

Heintz's Picasso versus Matisse challenge was fascinating. Although great friends, they were intense rivals. She compared this artistic period as "one giant chess game." Showing a painting done by Matisse, then sharing Picasso's work chronologically, made it clear that Picasso created a "bigger, better" version. The greatest compliment Picasso paid to Matisse was never verbalized. Matisse's *Basket of Oranges*, 1912 was purchased from a gallery. Curious as to who made the investment, Matisse discovered it was Pablo Picasso.

Not only did the audience leave with a new found respect and understanding for this artist's incredible six decade span of work, Susie handed out Matisse cards to the lucky women occupying a chair with a morpho blue sticker.

*Denise Durazo, Lambda*



Susie Heintz (Nu) presented a workshop on Matisse.

## LORI GOOD RECEIVES HIGHEST HONOR

The Achievement Award winner for 2015 is Lori Good, who is the epitome of Delta Kappa Gamma's mission statement of promoting professional growth and excellence in education for women educators. She is extremely active in Omicron State activities. Our president Rachel Wear's convention theme has been "Step up and Shine" and Lori Good certainly let her light shine. She has been a presenter at Omicron State conventions, Fall Workshops and at the Creative Arts Retreat.



Lori Good, Achievement Award winner for 2015.

In the last ten years she has attended four Delta Kappa Gamma International Conventions and three Southwest Regional Conferences. She has been Omicron State's committee chairman of Communications and Publicity and worked tirelessly to expand our public relations by promoting the media award.

She has assisted the Sahuaro editor by gathering articles and contributing photographs.

Good has also served as State Legislative chairman. She has continued on the Legislative Committee sharing her knowledge for the last four years. She has represented Omicron State as a presenter at two U.S. Forum Workshops and served as the business manager for one of our State Conventions.

A member of Alpha Alpha chapter, she has served as president and vice-president and worked on a variety of committees.

Lori Good constantly strives to increase membership and is always available to assist members. Congratulations and thank you, Lori Good.

*Mercedes Korn, Alpha Iota*



## FIRST THINGS FIRST Supports New Parents

**First Things First** (FTF) was started from a statewide voter-enacted initiative to help more children arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed. DKG members learned of the ways that First Thing First meets the needs for early literacy in all children and provides support and resources for parents and caregivers of young children through community partnerships. Presenter Lisette Demars, FTF Community Outreach Coordinator, explained the differences in brain development in children who receive custodial care as infants and preschoolers and those who receive quality childcare. In an interactive workshop, Demars led participants through a story-listening activity with a ball of yarn. She gave selected participants a word that they were to listen for as she read a story. Each time that the specific word was read, the participant would hold onto the strand of yarn as the ball was unwound and passed from person to person around the room. The intricate web of yarn that was created by the group represented the connections that are made in a young child's brain during quality early literacy education. One of the resources that Demars shared with us is the parent kit that new mothers receive at birthing centers.

*Linda Lucas, Alpha Chapter*

## Presidio San Agustin lives on

Jean Baxter, education director and docent at Presidio San Agustin del Tucson, shared her program, "Friday at the Fort." Tucson's Spanish Colonial history is replicated for school-age children with hands-on activities. As many as eighty children can be accommodated at one time and are divided into smaller groups led by 35 volunteers at different stations, which include blacksmithing, weaving, marching with soldiers, preparing foods, playing children's games, or doing chores, i.e., washing clothes on rocks. Baxter transported the audience to May 1, 1792, as she told the story of the Apache raid on the Fort. She described events from the perspective of a mother who had to run to the Fort from the field with her children when the Apaches were seen approaching. The Spanish were the predominant culture from 1775-1821, and the Mexicans from 1822-1854. The American period began thereafter. There is a Native American village beneath the Presidio, which has never been excavated.

*Charlotte Krause, Alpha Epsilon*

## Nita Scott offers membership advantages and challenges

At the Rose Banquet keynote speaker Nita R. Scott, Membership Services Administrator, emphasized that membership begins and ends with the chapters. In its 85-year history our society has included some of the most progressive educators in the world.

As she commented on the value of membership, Scott focused on professional development, personal growth, DKG's impact on education and the community. She explained that membership offers leadership roles, training, and skills within a safe environment. This occurs within chapter, state, and international opportunities, including participation in the Golden Gift Seminar.

Members may seek scholarships for studies beyond bachelor degrees. For those wanting post baccalaureate degrees and PhD's, scholarships of \$6,000 and \$10,000 respectively are available.

Scott stressed other advantages of membership. One of the most philanthropic organizations, DKG has donated more than \$2,000,000 per year to educational activities. Members also find publishing opportunities through the Bulletin and Collegial Exchange. DKG's online Fine Arts Gallery allows writers and artists to display their creations.

With declining membership Scott reported that over 65% of former members surveyed after leaving DKG would return if asked. Most often these former members left because no one asked them to do anything. Yet, she stated that, as DKG, "the core of who we are is very attractive." We need to find out and communicate the benefits of membership.

She challenged us to examine how we use multiple methods of communication, engage our busy members in impactful projects, share DKG with our communities, and seek new members. Members need awareness of networking opportunities within DKG – all generations of members.

*Julie Berkel, Chi*

## Using New Strategies to Teach Mathematics

At the 2015 Omicron State Convention Tabitha Finchum, a fourth grade teacher in the Flowing Wells School District, presented an informative workshop "A Teacher's Toolbox." The workshop enlightened attendees about the differences between direct instruction and problem-based learning while teaching mathematics.

Participants had the opportunity to watch Finchum in action through a videoed lesson using problem-based learning in her classroom. As she guided her students with questions that facilitated student and group work, the system's strategy became clear. The teacher provides support and guidance while

scaffolding instruction. Students generate the answers to problems, justify their answers, and have ownership of the skill for life-long retention and implementation. Collaboration of students in deriving answers is an integral part of the process.



Nancy Arnold discusses her books with DKG members.

Although problem-based learning is not the only way of guiding students toward success, it offers an excellent approach to meeting the rigor and criteria presented in the Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards.

*Shelly Lizardi, Alpha Rho*

## History comes alive

Martha Washington was at the 2015 Omicron State Convention. In her period costume, Nancy Arnold makes colonial life reality as she tells about living in the beautiful home at Mount Vernon and life on the plantation. She also speaks of conditions during the Revolutionary war and the harsh winter at Valley Forge living in a stone hut.

Arnold has written two children's books in rhyme. Patriotic Pets tells the story of a litter of George Washington's beagles who went to live with people like Betsy Ross and Paul Revere.

Using more dogs, Pioneer Pets tells the story of Arnold's ancestors who went from Iowa to Texas by covered wagon. Both books are available on Amazon.

*Virginia Mountain, Chi*

## OMICRON STATE ANNOUNCES 2015 MEDIA AWARD WINNER

Sarah Garrecht Gassen is the 2015 Omicron State Media Award Winner. She is an editorial writer and columnist for the Arizona Daily Star Newspaper in Tucson, where she has worked since 1996. She has a Master's Degree in Journalism from the University of Arizona, where she also teaches.

She has covered public education, health care, social services, government and general assignments for the Star's news, features and editorial pages.

She received the award at the Omicron State convention for the positive articles she has written about education. She immersed herself in the school culture at Walter Douglas School in



Lori Good (Alpha Alpha) presents Sarah Garrecht Gassen with the state Media Award.

the Flowing Wells School District in Tucson to contribute to the school and gain insight for her articles.

*Lori Good, Alpha Alpha*

## Workshop is a "Fiesta"

Who could pass up a session with the word "fiesta" in its title? At Omicron State's April Convention, Cindy Self (Alpha Epsilon) began the session sharing her experiences and adventures in Costa Rica which included delivery of greatly appreciated school supplies. Presenter Linda Perl (Chi) informed attendees that Costa Rica is far more than beautiful beaches with a delightful climate. It is a Latin American country which continues to prosper and provide stability. A sovereign country without a military unit, its focus is on education which is guaranteed within the constitution. The literacy rate is 96.3%. That is music to a teacher's ears. The demand for higher education continues

to grow and is seen as an avenue for social mobility. Costa Rica continues to rank high on the Human Development Index as it decreases inequality and grows its diversified economy. Protecting its environment, Costa Rica has met all five criteria to measure environmental sustainability and the government is developing plans to make it carbon neutral. Costa Rica has reasons to celebrate!

The session ended with a game of Lotteria which provided an opportunity amidst smiles, to increase one's Spanish vocabulary. With a margarita glass souvenir, galletas and "Hasta luego," the Fiesta Latin America came to an end.

*Gail Gentry, Alpha Rho*

**Delta Kappa Gamma-Omicron State**  
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## Memorial Ceremony Honors Members

The 2015 Omicron State Convention's Ceremony of Remembrance held on Sunday morning paid special tribute to Kathryn Whalen, Past State President (1983-1985). Her daughter, Susan Irby, was in attendance.

Following a Musical Prelude, Darby Downs and Lisa Baker Di Giacomo (both from Alpha Rho) performed a Prayer Dance, as the Choir sang "Riversong". After a tribute, written and read by close friend, Donna Reynolds (Epsilon), the poem, "A Golden Gift" was read in memory of Kathryn, with permission from the author, Dr. Judith Merz, of Nevada. The Choir followed with a rendition of "The Rose", directed by Gloria Day (Alpha). "Let the School Bells Ring", a meaningful poem

written for last year's ceremony by Regina Olson (Alpha Chi) was read. This was followed by the reading of the names of the fifteen departed sisters as a school bell was rung, and a wood rose was placed in a vase for each member. A short tribute was also read for each member, including a special one for Berneil Drake (Alpha Delta), Past State President (1979-1981) Drake will be remembered in a special tribute next year.

Another special guest in attendance was Joan Auza (Iota), the daughter of Betsy Cary (Alpha Delta). Omicron members were pleased to have both Susan and Joan attend this special ceremony to honor their mothers.

*Karen Blackstone, Alpha Epsilon*



PHOTO BY LORI GOOD

## Life-Experience Committee offers Pre-Convention Tour

The special Friday afternoon tour of the Philabaum Glass Factory and Gallery was well attended and proved to be quite remarkable. The glass blowers provided a very interesting demonstration as we watched a beautiful glass vase being produced, from "start to finish". As the artists continued to work, time was provided for many questions and answers.

*Karen Blackstone, Alpha Epsilon*

## SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS RECEIVE AWARDS

Omicron State presented scholarships at the state convention on April 25, 2015. The Phyllis Steinmann "Wings" Endowment went to Annette Winfield (Alpha Alpha). Shelly Lizardi (Alpha Rho) received the Helen Brown Keeling State Founders Scholarship and Cindy Percy received the Evelyn Jones Kirmse State Founders Scholarship.

Winfield lives in Phoenix and will use her award for the Arizona Department of Education Language Essential for Teachers of Reading and Spelling Training. She teaches the Deaf/Hard of Hearing at Washington Elementary School District in Phoenix. She has served as co-membership chairman in her chapter and serves in many volunteer organizations.

Lizardi resides in Sahuarita and expects to complete a Master's Degree for a Principal Certificate by May 2015 at Northern Arizona University. She currently serves in multiple positions in the Sahuarita Unified School District including Professional Development Trainer, Assistant to the Principal at Sahuarita Primary School, teacher of ESL and Kindergarten Reading Specialist. She volunteers for many community organizations.

From Holbrook, Percy is completing a Master's in Educational Administration at Grand Canyon University. Currently she is the guidance counselor at Holbrook High School. Prior to moving to Arizona she held teaching or counseling positions in Michigan, Florida, and South Dakota. She has a long history of leadership offices in community organizations. Her goal is to find an administrative position for the 2015-2016 school year.



Shelly Lizardi Annette Winfield Cindy Percy

Delta Kappa Gamma is proud of these ladies' contributions to education and the organizations in which they serve. If you are considering pursuing further education, please consider applying for a scholarship. Check the website and submit your application form by February 1, 2016 to the current scholarship committee chairman.

*Patsy Bock, Alpha Chi*

### THE ARIZONA SAHUARO

#### Publication Deadlines

Fall Issue	August 15, 2015
Winter Issue	January 15, 2016
Spring Issue	May 15, 2016

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## Dates to Remember

**July 19-24, 2015**

Southwest Regional Conference  
Hyatt Regency  
Wichita, Kansas

**October 24, 2015**

Omicron State Fall Workshop  
Metro Tech High School  
1900 West Thomas Road  
Phoenix, Arizona

**April 22-24, 2016**

Omicron State Convention  
Embassy Suites Hotel  
2577 W. Greenway Rd. • Phoenix, Arizona

**July 5-9, 2016**

International Conference  
Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center  
Nashville, Tennessee