

**The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International**  
**Alpha Kappa - Florida**  
**Mission Statement**  
**The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional**  
**and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.**  
**Newsletter March, 2022**  
**Prepared by Connie Lewis**

## **Presidents Message -District I Meeting Summary**



On January 22, 2022, five sisters (Jennifer Guarraia, Monica Hayes, Nancy Rosenbaum, Susan Vinson, and Gale Workman) were able to attend the District 1 Meeting in Port Saint Joe, FL. The theme was RENEW! We were encouraged to **R**emember our founders, **E**ducate ourselves with scholarships and grants, **N**avigate the DKG website, **E**ncourage our sisters, and **W**atch us grow in leadership.

The day started with a wonderful breakfast! During this breakfast, we learned about the new District 1 Facebook page. ALL Alpha Kappa members are encouraged to join this group to stay connected with chapters and sisters in our region! You can access the page by searching, “DKG FL District 1” on Facebook OR by clicking [\*\*HERE\*\*](#). You will be asked to provide a little information before you are accepted into the group, this is just safety protocol.

This year’s district meeting was a little unique due to COVID precautions. Attendees were kept in an auditorium for brief presentations on a variety of topics, with the exception of the incoming presidents’ and treasures’ training. Before workshops began, the election of a new District 1 Director occurred! Sarah Watters from Alpha Lambda Chapter will be our new District 1 Director! Sarah is a member of the State Leadership Committee and has the energy, enthusiasm, and passion to be an extremely successful District 1 director!

Workshops began with the presentation of Founder’s Day by our very own BBCC. If you were unable to attend Founder’s Day last May and would like to view this recorded presentation, please click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#). (You may have to download to view.) The following are updates from other workshop sessions and 2-minute committee reports that were presented:

- Applications for the Jesslyn McBride Leadership Seminar are due March 15th. This year’s leadership seminar will take place in Lake Mary from June 26th-29th.
- Each chapter is being asked to have an Educational Excellence Delegate. This will be a point of contact for the State EEC. If you are interested in serving in this role, please let us know. We need to have this delegate in place by June 30th.
- The membership committee requests that we reach out to members who have become inactive, dropped, or are unable to attend meetings and help them reconnect with DKG.
- The legislative committee has been actively monitoring legislation that is impacting educators. Our District 1 State Legislative Committee representative, Donna Heald, is an excellent resource for bills to watch.

The day ended with a delicious BBQ lunch, quality time with sisters, remarks from Ann Comforter as she concluded her term as District 1 Director, the installation of our new District 1 Director, and of course the infamous basket raffle! Nancy Watson graciously created our chapter’s “Forever and Ever” gift basket. Ann Comforter did a marvelous job welcoming sisters to her hometown and truly provided a wonderful and educational experience for all who participated. We are already looking forward to the next District 1 Meeting in 2024!

**Ann Comforter, District I Director conducts the President's Ceremony.**

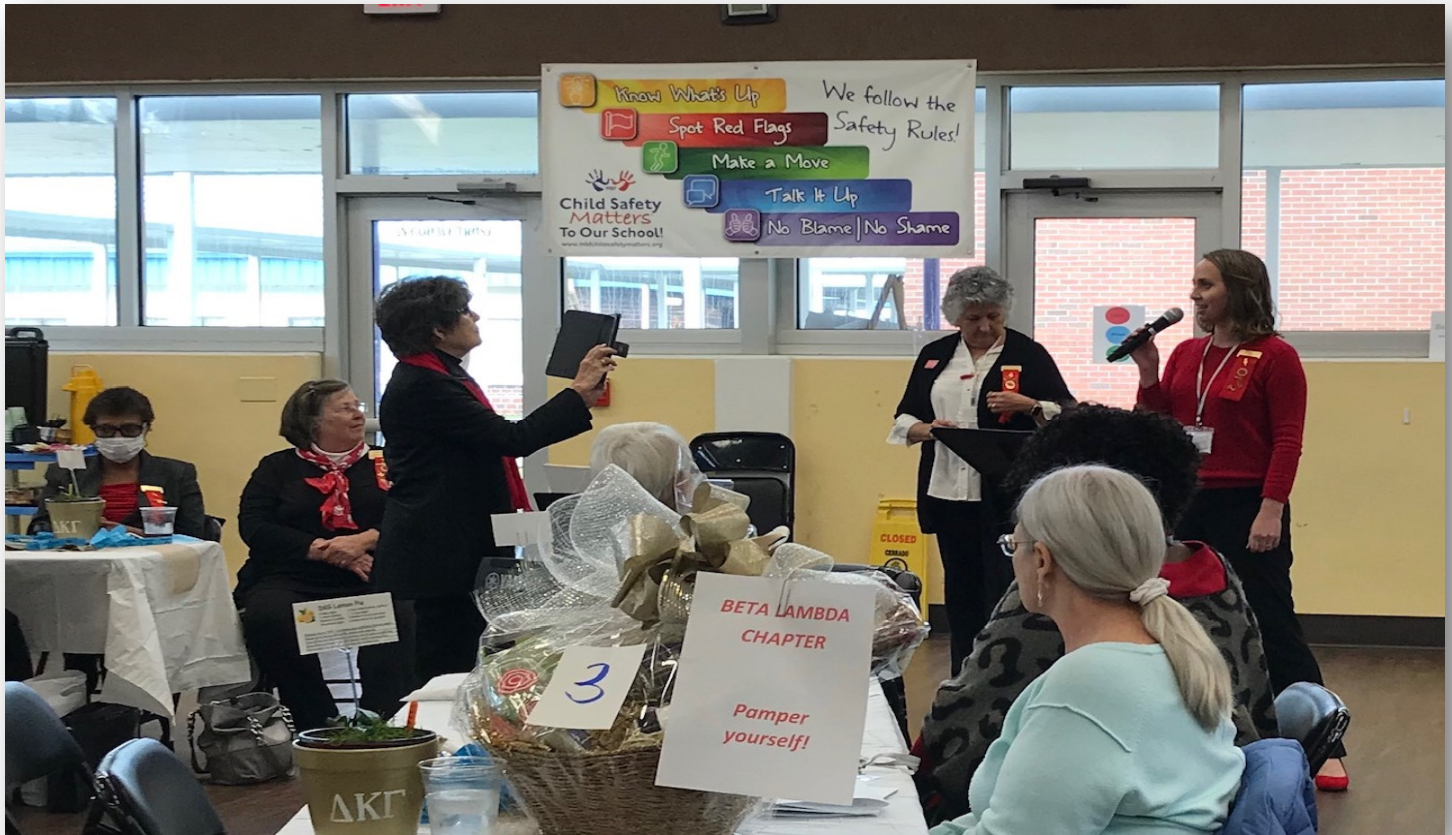


**Alpha Kappa Member Representatives to the District I Meeting in Port St. Joe**





## Business being conducted at the District I Meeting – Lovely Baskets on Display for Raffle



## Congratulations to our President Nancy Rosenbaum

Nancy has been named the Chair of the Educational Excellence Committee (EEC). The EEC is encouraging DKG members to think of GROWTH! Growth does not mean we expand in size, but in how we function in our chapters and state organization. This encompasses how we are inclusive of all our members and work to meet the needs of the communities that we serve.

The role of the EEC is to promote programs and projects for EXCELLENCE in education. This includes programs and projects that support and promote personal well-being, intellectual growth, and global awareness of women educators. With this in mind, we are encouraging each chapter to appoint an Educational Excellence Delegate. This person will be responsible for monitoring your chapter's GROWTH and ensuring that your chapter has an understanding of what educational excellence embodies. EEC State Committee Members will be presenting at each District Meeting to provide more information on how each chapter can promote the goals of our Florida State Organization EEC.



The following is the purpose of EEC according to DKG International to assist chapters in considering the creation of an EEC delegate for their chapters:

This committee shall promote programs and projects for excellence in education. The committee shall identify long-term and short-term programs and projects that focus upon topics adopted by the Society. The committee shall support programs of action that promote the personal well-being, intellectual growth, and global awareness of women educators; encourage a focus on the arts at international conventions, regional conferences, and state organization conventions and develop strategies that will enable chapters to encourage members to become leaders. Note: Nancy and her husband have begun the adoption process which considerable time. In fairness to the EEC, she has resigned to provide someone else the opportunity to fill her position. Congratulations on your decision to adopt!

## **Advocating for DKG Members: The Legislative Committee Meets with Florida Legislator**

During the 2nd virtual "Rally in Tally" on Tuesday, November 30, 2021, the concerns of DKG members were presented to the Florida Legislature by the Florida State Organization Legislative Committee. A full day of interviews with members of both the House and Senate were scheduled, and eleven legislators were interviewed. DKG members, as well as members of several partnering organizations, joined throughout the day to hear these legislators discuss their plans for the 2022 legislative session and their responses to the four Issues of Concern of DKG members.

In addition to hearing from legislators, Rally participants were shown how to navigate the Florida House and Senate websites, locate their elected representatives, and track bills that have been proposed for the next session. Information was presented about the redistricting process that is currently underway, and participants were informed about how to access the redistricting website for information and to post comments.



## **Florida Legislators' Day**

DKG Florida State members met with Florida legislators on Tuesday, February 8th, 2022. Vivian Posey, Chair of the DKG State Legislative Committee and the DKG membership spoke with many Senators and Representatives. The Florida DKG members shared their issues of concern which included:

- School safety for students, faculty and staff during pandemic/endemics.
- Uniform accountability and transparency for all schools that receive public funds.
- Mental health services for staff and students-expand allocation.
- Reinstatement of the traditional defined Pension Plan as the default for new teachers hired in the 2022-2023 school year.

Thanks to all who represented Florida DKG at this meeting.





## Save Your Coins for World Fellowship

Nancy Henning (850-510-2631) and Gale Workman (850-228-1867), our World Fellowship Committee, are reaching out to ask you to join us in support of DKG's international women scholars. (See list attached of this year's scholars.)

Let's save our coins we get each day and put them in a Tupperware-like container. Our small change can affect big change for our DKG World Fellowship Committee. Please bring your coins to an AK meeting or contact Nancy or Gale to pick up your coins when your container is full. AK will collect coins now through May 2022.



Then our chapter will send a check for the total collected to the International World Fellowship Committee. This will allow AK to be eligible for State and International recognitions! BTW ...Nancy "borrowed" this idea from chapters she saw doing it when she was DKG State President.



Please start today. Check your wallet now. Dump those coins into your collection container. These coins weigh down our purses and burden our shoulders and arms. Let's do ourselves a service while helping our World Fellowship Committee.

The "Myrna Santos World Fellowship Award Application for Chapter Recognition" isn't due until March 2023.

## Mark your Calendars



### Early Learning Coalition – Chair, Maria Pouncey

We are confirmed to visit the ELC on Tuesday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:00. We still have time to add to our new book collection for delivery on that day. Currently we have about 100 books. Kacie McGlone, Operations Manager for the ELC will give us a tour and presentation.

## FL DKG Education Foundation Awards Presentation

Jennifer Guarraia and Janie Register will do a presentation on their FL DKG Education Foundation Awards. This meeting will be Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30pm. TBD - meet in-person or virtually.



## *A Tribute to Merle Jones*

Merle Stiller Jones of Chipley, FL was born on September 22nd, 1936 in Washington County, FL and passed from this life on February 8th, 2022 at Flowers Hospital in Dothan, AL.

Merle was a very active member of the Delta Kappa Gamma International Society, the Wausau United Methodist Church, the Wausau Garden Club and the Washington County Friends of the Library.

Her educational experience spanned 38 years, primarily within Washington County School District. She began teaching at Wausau Elementary School before completion of her degree. She taught at Kate M. Smith Elementary School for 20 years. During these years she completed coursework in FSU/UWF Cooperative Doctoral Program.

Subsequently, Merle served as assistant principal at both Kate Smith Elementary and Roulhac Middle School. From 1993 until 1995 she was principal of Vernon Elementary School where she retired. During her educational career Merle also served as an adjunct professor at Chipola, the University of West Florida, and Florida State University. Following her retirement, she served as a volunteer consultant and worked briefly at Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative. Her experience as an educator made her a tireless advocate for legislation that would affect children. Unbeknownst to many, Merle's career also included teaching swimming, summer athletics, Physical Education and Adult Education.

The Florida Delta Kappa Gamma Educational Foundation was dear to Merle who worked hard to have it established during her biennium as State President and served on the board since its founding. She was a member of Delta Theta Chapter, initiated in 1987.

Merle was also dedicated to working on the State Legislative Committee. She participated in the rallies in Tallahassee and the National Legislative Seminars in Washington, DC, to visit legislators in person (once during blinding, blowing sleet, and frigid temperatures) to advocate for funding for traditional public education and the rights of women and children.

Merle's desires were for contributions to be made to the organizations that she supported:

- FLDKG Educational Foundation Contributions: Connie Kostyra, 4195 Sparrow Hawk Road, Melbourne, FL 32934
- FL DKG State Organization Legislative Committee Contributions: Beverly Stagg, 7407 Lillie Lane, Pensacola, FL 32526
- The Shriner's Children Hospital or to the Methodist Children's Hospital.

Note: The AK Board voted to contribute \$50.00 in honor of Merle to FLDKG.



## Calendar of Events 2022

- January 22, District I Meeting AK will staff the Registration Table and Present the Founder's Day Tribute, Port St Joe Elementary School, Florida
- Date CANCELLED, BBC Legislative Day
- March 8, Time TBD. Dinner with SSF Lundquist Ladies
- March 29, 6:00 p.m. Program: Early Learning Coalition Tour and Presentation at ELC
- April 26, 5:30 p.m., Program Meeting - Educational Foundation Awards and Grants, Presenters: Jennifer Guarraia and Janie Register
- May 14, Time TBD, 2022 BBCC Founder's Day

