



Theta Chapter News

Theta Chapter, Cedar Rapids, Iowa
May 2017

Executive Committee

2016-18

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Please bring your **HyVee receipts** and **Box Tops for Education** to a meeting. We will get them to Grant Wood School. They mean cash for the school.

Upcoming Meetings

Executive Board- Programming meeting

June 28, 2017 @ home of Sue Vogel

By this date, please send suggestions for 2017-18 programs and sites to Ann, Betty Stewart, Sue, or Deanne. Also check your personal information in the current yearbook and send changes to Lori or Deanne.

September 14, 2017 (tentatively) Thursday 4:30-6:30

Site and program TBD

Upcoming Events

June 9-11, 2017 Upsilon State Convention

Music Man Square, Mason City

June 23-24 14th Annual Creative Expressions Retreat

Algona

June 28-July 1, 2017 Northwest Regional Conference

Spearfish, SD

September 16, 2017 Fall Executive Board Meeting

Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines

Celebrate June, July, and August birthdays:

June 5	Rhonda Achenbach
June 25	Barb Taylor
July 9	Lorraine Bomkamp
July 11	Carol Bowen
July 12	Holly Palmersheim
July 16	Sheila Lehman
July 18	Mary Ann Kucera
July 24	Cindy West
July 28	Bridget Castelluccio
July 31	Laura Wheeler
August 1	Janice Jirouch



2017 Student Grants Awarded by Theta Chapter

Theta Chapter presented the 2017 Student Grant awards at our May meeting. Congratulations to this year's recipients!



Elisabeth Jasper (pictured here at our May meeting with Carol Cassells) is graduating from Kennedy High School and will be attending Iowa State University where she plans to major in Mathematics and Computer Engineering. In her essay, Elisabeth wrote, "I formed a team with five other high school students with a goal to teach middle schoolers how to code. We pitched our idea to fifty sixth graders, twenty students expressed interest, and we started teaching them

once a week. Working with short attention spans, developing brains, and finicky school technology opened my eyes to the fulfillment perseverance and teaching can bring. I've reached out to kids who have rough home lives and seen their joy develop while learning how to code. I've seen student's self-confidence and, ironically, humility increase as they've learned that it's necessary to make mistakes, ask questions, and be proud of success to improve. I'm proud of these kids and the skills they're developing. They are the future of the community and the world and the reason I want to be a teacher."

Hanna Saville is graduating from Linn-Mar and will be attending Iowa State University where she plans to major in Spanish Education. In her essay, Hanna wrote, "Today, society is divided, and communication is something that connects people, and brings us together. I'd like to be someone who enables cultural competence and helps close the gap between cultures, by teaching Spanish. I believe that Spanish is not only about learning a language, it is about immersing ourselves in cultures and building bridges between groups of people. It goes far beyond learning vocabulary words, it empowers you to communicate with people, and foster new ideas, which is crucial in today's society. By teaching, I am able to pass this concept on to generations of students. My passion for the Spanish language, and bringing cultures together is why I want to be a Spanish teacher."



News from Upsilon State (Iowa)

Upsilon State News Bulletin editor Nancy Middaugh has informed President Wittkamp that the next biennium will be her last as our state editor. Nancy stated she has been the editor since 1995, served under 12 presidents and published 48 issues! If anyone is interested in being Nancy's successor, please contact Nancy, Karen Dole or Pam Wittkamp.

International Student Grants Awarded

The World Fellowship Committee has selected the four 2017-2018 recipients of our International Student Grants. They are as follows:

- Injung Lee—South Korea
- Analisa Biswas—India
- Seha Bhansali—India
- Luyuan Wan—China

Proposals for Change in the *Standing Rules*

Attendees at the state convention will be asked to act upon the following proposals. The amendments proposed are to *Standing Rule* 4.85 f. and 4.85 g.

1. Amend Standing Rule 4.85 f by striking Fall Executive Board (1) and re-numbering f.(2) and (3) as f. (1) and (2). If adopted, SR 4.85 f. Fall Executive Board would read as follows:

~~(1) At the fall meeting of the State Executive Board, luncheons shall be provided at a uniform cost to all members registered. Part of the luncheon cost shall be assumed by the state organization. The luncheon cost shall be announced in the president's fall newsletter, on the state web page, and printed on the registration form.~~

(1) State committee members shall be paid round-trip mileage if their committees are meeting.

(2) Program presenters who do not qualify for mileage under Rule 4.85 of the *Upsilon State Standing Rules* shall also receive round-trip mileage.

Rationale: Not having to pay a portion of the luncheon cost would allow the state organization more dollars to cover other costs.

Fiscal impact: By adopting this amendment, the state organization would save approximately \$500 annually.

2. Amend Upsilon State Standing Rule 4.85 g. Leadership Development Workshops by striking g. (2) and re-numbering g. 3 as g. 2. If adopted, SR 4.85 g. Leadership Development Workshops would read as follows:

(1) Incoming chapter presidents and incoming chapter membership chairs shall be allocated twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) each for attending all Leadership Development workshops at the Upsilon State Convention.

~~(2) A Friday evening meal shall be provided for incoming chapter presidents, incoming membership chairs, and members of the Leadership Development Committee as designated by the state president.~~

(2) Committee members shall be reimbursed for workshop materials authorized by the state president.

Rationale: This would allow the state organization more dollars for other necessary costs.

Fiscal impact: In even-numbered years, approximately \$800 would be saved.

Submitted by: Pam Wittkamp, Finance Committee Chair

Legislative Update *from Cindy Garlock*

Trump's budget was released recently and contains a number of concerning education cuts.

Department of Education: 14% cut

- Student Loans
 - Eliminates Perkins loans for disadvantaged students
 - Cuts work study programs by half
 - Feds stop subsidizing interest on loans while in school, saves \$1 billion
 - Simplifies undergrad loan repayment - monthly payment capped at 12.5% of discretionary income (formerly 10%). For undergrads, forgiven after 15 years (formerly 20 years).
 - Grad loan repayment 12.5% for 30 years rather than 10% for 25 years
 - Phases out public service loan forgiveness which erases loan after 10 years of employment in government or a qualifying nonprofit
 - Half a million people currently in this program
- Medicaid - \$4 billion cut
 - Special needs student care in schools
 - Vision screening, speech therapy
- School Choice
 - \$1 billion for Title I portability (school choice)
 - \$250 million for vouchers for private schools
 - \$167 million for charter schools
- Eliminates 22 programs, including:
 - teacher training and class size reduction funding
 - after school program funding serving 2 million children
 - literacy program
 - child care for low income parents
 - arts education
 - international and foreign language programs
 - gifted program
 - Special Olympics
- Eliminates federal \$\$ for mental health services, anti-bullying initiatives, PE, Advanced Placement courses, STEM instruction
- \$250 million for "Education Innovation and Research Grants" studying impact of charter schools and private religious schools
- Additional \$158 million for salaries and expenses with Dept of Ed and additional security costs for Betsy DeVos

It is important to contact Congressman Blum and Senators Ernst and Grassley about your concerns:

Congressman Blum Cedar Rapids Office: 319 364-2288 Washington DC Office: 202 225-2911

Senator Grassley Cedar Rapids Office: 319 363-6832 Washington, DC Office: 202 224-3744
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Senator Ernst Cedar Rapids Office: 319 365-4504 Washington, DC Office: 202 224-3254

U.S. FORUM CONNECTION #160, APRIL 2017**TAX CHANGES UNDER CONSIDERATION**

Major changes in the tax law are under consideration. Some of these would affect each person others are of general interest. Those listed below are not all of the changes under consideration, and none of those currently being discussed are certain to be enacted.

Possible Personal Tax Changes--

401k – It has been suggested that there be a lesser income tax deduction which an individual could take for contributions to a 401k retirement plan.

Deductions: Some deductions are being considered for elimination. The deduction for state and federal sales tax may be eliminated. This would impact some states more than others.

Other deductions will probably be kept. These include deduction for mortgage interest and deduction of charitable contributions.

On a positive note increasing the amount of personal deduction for an individual from \$6,000 to as much as \$12,000.

A change which was suggested during the election would be to take away the cap on FICA (payroll) tax which would affect those with incomes over \$127,200 a year. This has not been mentioned recently but would be a way to put Social Security on a sounder financial footing.

Possible Non-personal Tax Changes--

Corporate tax – Currently under consideration is a decrease in the tax rate on corporations from 35 percent to 15 percent. (It should be noted that most large corporations do not pay 35% tax. Instead as a result of tax loop holes, large corporations pay much less or nothing at all.) This might help small businesses where small business owners file business income and expenses as part of their personal/individual income tax which has a lower tax rate.

Border Adjustment Tax (BAT) -- BAT would levy a tax on imports (mainly from Mexico), but it is considered unlikely to be included in the current bill as it would increase prices on imported goods. (This is the problem with any tax on imports as such a tax would simply increase the price consumers pay for imported goods. This tax would disproportionately affect low and middle income families who tend to buy these goods in larger numbers.)

Elimination of the Estate Tax -- Currently a sliding scale tax is paid on estates over \$5.5 million. This recommendation is to simply eliminate this source of revenue. It would affect only the extremely wealthy,

Many of the proposed changes in the tax law are taken from a Heritage Foundation blueprint which was published last year. This blueprint would: repeal Obamacare; change Medicare; change Medicaid to give states greater flexibility in designing benefits and administering the program; and make changes in Social Security.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- It is proposed that the Corporation for Public Broadcasting be privatized and would no longer be subsidized by the federal government. It should be noted that for several years the money for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting
(cont'd on p. 6)

(cont'd from p. 5) has been reduced every year. At this time it is unclear what effect privatization would have on instructional programming such as Sesame Street, News and other programs which are used for instructional purposes in our schools. It is estimated that public television provides over 120,000 free learning tools for teachers and students.

Other Changes: Endowment for the Arts could be eliminated. Major cuts in cabinet departments are being contemplated. Particularly troubling are cuts in medical research. This could impact studies on the effect of various factors on women's health. Because previous studies were conducted wholly or primarily on men most of these studies are not valid in predicting effects on women. An example of this is the emerging fact that heart attacks in women often have entirely different symptoms from those in men and medications can affect women differently than they do men.

It is considered doubtful that infrastructure spending will be included in the expenditures currently being considered. There is talk of block grants to states for a number of programs.

GOVERNMENT TEST

1. How is the chair of a congressional committee determined?
2. Who is the ranking member of a congressional committee?
3. How is the President of the Senate determined?
4. How is the Speaker of the House determined?
5. What are other officials in the Senate and how are they determined?
6. What are other officials in the House and how are they determined?
7. In the event that the U.S. President is unable to serve, what is the order of succession to the Presidency?

ANSWERS TO THE GOVERNMENT TEST

1. Committee chairs are appointed by the Speaker of the House or the President of the Senate. This person is usually the longest serving member of the majority party.
2. The ranking member on a committee is the longest serving member of the minority party.
3. The Vice President of the United States is automatically the President of the Senate.
4. The Speaker of the House is elected by members of the majority party in the House.
5. Other officials in the Senate are the Majority Leader and the Majority Whip each elected, respectively, by members of their party serving in the Senate.
6. Other officials in the House of Representatives are the Majority Leader and the Majority Whip each elected, respectively, by members of their party serving in the House. Additionally there are the Minority Leader and the Minority Whip both elected by minority party members in that body.
7. In 1947 Congress passed into law the order of succession to the presidency in case of some widespread disaster.* The order of succession to the Presidency is Vice President, Speaker of the House, president pro tempore of the Senate (a senator who is elected by the entire senate regardless of party; and then the cabinet secretaries in the order in which their respective cabinet positions were established. Thus this order would be Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of War, Attorney General, Postmaster General, Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary of Commerce, and Secretary of Labor. Some cabinet level positions have been created more recently which could be added to this list of potential presidential successors.