A Brief History of Alpha Gamma State by Karen Martin

Kentucky became the 25th state to join the ranks with the Delta Kappa Gamma Society on March 24, 1937 at the Brown Hotel in Louisville.  Following the initiation ceremony, led by national president, Miss Mamie Bastian, of Austin Texas, founders    return to their homes and began planning to organize chapters, finding "key women educators" near where they lived.  We began with two chapters in 1937-Alpha Chapter in Louisville, and Beta Chapter in Lexington.  Members began seeking out other candidates for membership and began forming new chapters.

By 1956, Alpha Gamma State was comprised of 10 chapters.  By 1971, 20 chapters began to fill the state, and by 1986, Alpha Gamma State had grown to 30 chapters.  We continued growing, and by 1986 Alpha Gamma State had grown to 30 chapters.  We continued growing, and by the mid-1990's, there were 37 working chapters in Kentucky.  Each chapter was comprised of women who had been invited to membership by peers who recognized their leadership qualities and considered them to be "key women educators."  Theses outstanding women met in chapters where there was a warm, rich fellowship and they provided support for each other, their schools and their communities.  Their work and commitment helped assure educational advantages to Kentucky's students in every corner of the Commonwealth.

On May 5-6, 1978, El Salvador State and its first chapter, Alpha, were installed in San Salvador, the capital city.  Kentucky sponsored El Salvador's addition to the International Society as part of our 40th Birthday Celebration.  State President, Ann Chambers, attended the festivities in San Salvador.  Alpha Gamma State and El Salvador have enjoyed a warm friendship over the years.

As time passed, Alpha Gamma State members have been active in legislative matters. They have approached local. State, and national legislators in matters regarding equality for male and female educators, based on qualifications, not gender. This has also been true on the matter of retirement benefits. They have requested that women/members be allowed to serve on state committees and commissions dealing with educational matters.

Summer 1992 found Alpha Gamma State members rolling out the red carpet to welcome women from around the globe attending the International Convention. Over 2000 members gathered at the Galt House in Louisville for a week of learning, fellowship and fun. Kentucky’s members worked diligently to make our visitors feel our “Southern hospitality.”

In April 2003, at the State Convention in Elizabethtown, members voted to request that Kentucky be moved from the Northeast Region to the Southeast Region. A letter was sent to International President, Jean Gray, advising her of our unanimous vote. At the 2004 International Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, it was voted to allow Kentucky to move to the Southeast Region.

This action led the Kentucky delegation to attend our first SER in Williamsburg, Virginia, in the summer of 2005. Their warm welcome made the Kentucky delegation feel right at home.

Discussions among members of the Executive Board led Alpha Gamma State to issue an invitation to Kentucky for the 2011 SER. In July, 2008, in Chicago, Kentucky issued its “official” invitation to the state for the 2011 SER. In Chicago we also began hosting a Kentucky reception at International Conventions and Regional Conferences. Invitations are cherished, and through these receptions, Kentucky’s hospitality had become well-known.

A venue was secured, contracts signed, lists made, menus planned, favors made and bought, and so the planning went. Under the expert guidance of Susan Cross, Kentucky members threw themselves into the planning of a SER. Members from all over the stat contributed to make the conference a success for all. In the summer of 2011, we put on our best smiles and welcomed members from the eleven stated of the SER, along with friends from International Headquarters in Austin, Texas. All went well and members enjoyed their stay in the Bluegrass State.