



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA

Indiana State Organization

*Merry
Christmas!*

Alpha Sigma News

December 2020

A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, JODY ARNDT

Happy Holidays, Alpha Sigma!

While this holiday season is unlike any other, I have faith you will find that the joy and magic of Christmas are still within you. Your family celebration plans may be different, but many of your holiday traditions still endure. May these traditions warm your hearts throughout the season and bring you hope for a wonderful start to the New Year.

As the end of 2020 draws near, I want to take a moment to reflect upon the successes of our chapter the past several months.

- 26 gift bags were filled and presented to new teachers in Fulton, Marshall, and

- Starke County schools this fall in Alpha Sigma's Support for Early Career Educators. Please know that your continued monetary support for this international project is greatly appreciated.
- Alpha Sigma inducted five key women educators to the Society on September 17th. Accepting the invitation to join were Hannah Allender, Madalyn Allender, Christy Hileman, Candice Schilz, and Lauren Tunis.

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Leadership Presentations

The Indiana State Organization is sponsoring a series of leadership presentations in January and February, 2021. These presentations are free of charge and can be accessed via Zoom. Registration is required to acquire a Zoom invitation.

The presentations will run about an hour and will begin at 7:00 PM EST/6:00 PM CST. One PGP will be awarded for each session. You can earn 5 PGPs without leaving your home!

Topics for the sessions are as follows:

Monday, January 18
Strategies for Chapter Leaders;

Monday, January 25
Coaching to Communicate Success;

Monday, February 1
Light and Joy: Igniting Strength and Purpose

Monday, February 8
The Best Chapter Meeting Ever, Again and Again

Monday, February 15
Time Management for Today's Leaders

The presenters are from Virginia, Tennessee, Texas, and Canada.

More information is posted on the Indiana State Organization website (dkgindiana.org) as well as the Alpha Sigma website. A registration form will be emailed to you next week for your convenience.

Relieve the winter doldrums by taking advantage of these PGP opportunities or just to learn some new things!

Hostesses at Swan Lake

The State Convention Steering Committee is looking for hostesses

for the Saturday noon and evening meals. Alpha Sigma members will receive an email in early January requesting their assistance in this endeavor. The email will include attachments detailing the duties of the hostesses.

Look for an electronic sign-up opportunity on our chapter website after the holidays to coincide with the email.

Chapter Dues

Sharon Henderson will be researching the protocol for changing the amount of chapter dues. She will have a proposal for the change of rules ready for discussion at the February meeting. The vote to change the amount of chapter dues will take place at the April meeting.

The chapter dues have not changed for many years. In order to keep up with chapter obligations without requesting additional donations from members, an increase in the dues is needed.

Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.

Nelson Mandela

Poster for State Convention

The Communication Committee is in charge of making the poster for the State Convention. The theme will be our chapter B.o.B. (Bunches of Books) project. Committee Chairman Sheila Akers will contact committee members in the spring to bring the poster project to fruition.

Bake-less Bake Sale

Due to the Covid-19 situation in Indiana, the Alpha Sigma Bake Sale scheduled for early December was canceled. The members attending the November 14 meeting decided to have a bake-less bake sale to fund the chapter's various needs. Members are urged to send a check in the amount they would have spent to make their bake sale items to Chapter Treasurer Kathy Ward. Make the check to DKG/Alpha Sigma.

The donor should designate where the funds should go on the Memo line of the check.

Funds may be designated for

- General Operations
- Grant-in-Aid for HS Senior
- Schools for Africa
- Support for Early Career Educators

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A Note from Our President

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- The *Alpha Sigma News* was once again awarded a 5-Star rating. Our Editor Sheila Akers does a wonderful job; we are indeed grateful for her time and talent.
- "Bunches of Books" were delivered to Kid's Closet in October. The volunteers at the site were extremely appreciative as many families will benefit from this Alpha Sigma project. Thank you for donating your new and gently used books.

- A check for about \$170 was sent last month to UNICEF's Schools for Africa initiative. Your monetary donations for the Society's first official international project helps the most disadvantaged children in Africa to get a quality education. Thank you for your support.
- Alpha Sigma has almost \$2,000 in its Grant-in-Aid fund. Thank you, Sisters, for your fundraising efforts and donations.

It is my hope that the New Year will bring more exciting opportunities for Alpha Sigma. The strength of this chapter comes from its collective passion for education- Smile if you agree!

May we all be filled with joy and hope this holiday season.

Jody

Information Update Requested

By Jody Arndt

While you are online shopping for Christmas presents or taking care of your email and social media accounts, please take a few minutes to bookmark our chapter website at

www.alphasigmaindkg.org.

I included my 6-digit member ID in the bookmark label, so it is "Alpha Sigma -----" Sheila has links to the international and state sites on our home page. You will need to use your 6-digit member ID to log in to the international site, thus the reason I include it in the bookmark. Once you're on the international site, check out MyDKG to update your profile. Some of our members

have landline numbers no longer in use, others have old or mistyped emails listed. Remember, home emails are preferred over school emails. If you cannot find your DKG membership card, Kathy Ward will have that information. Feel free to contact Kathy Ward or me if you need assistance.

Alpha Sigma Member Profile: Lauren Akers, a key woman educator who exemplifies "motivated to make a difference."

Lauren Akers has been a Delta Kappa Gamma member since 2017. She is currently the chapter vice-president. Lauren is my daughter so I've known her all her life. What I most recognized in Lauren at an early age that continues until this day is that she doesn't like people to tell her she can't do something or to imply that she is not capable. Her reply, either silently in her mind or loudly to her "adversaries" has always been, "Oh yeah? Just watch me!" Lauren is extremely organized and usually accomplishes her goals well ahead of schedule; she finished her three-year Master's degree program in two years. Of the many things that I admire about Lauren, her advocacy for the students she teaches touches me the most. I asked Lauren to answer some questions for me via email to find out more about her and how she is motivated to make a difference. Here is our email interview.

Sheila: To what or to whom do you attribute your drive to make a difference?

Lauren: I have to give my parents credit for my drive to make a difference. As far as wanting to be a teacher and to help students, my mother was a wonderful

influence. She taught me patience and understanding, especially with students who need extra support while they are learning the content I am teaching. She also helped me see things from multiple perspectives, which is so important when working with students and their parents.



My dad has always been generous with his time in the community, especially through our church. From him, I get my drive to help people who may be less socioeconomically privileged than I am. I try to help the students and families with whom I work to meet their basic needs of food and clothing so that we can focus on their education.

Sheila: How has your membership in Delta Kappa Gamma influenced the direction of your activities?

Lauren: I am not sure that it has influenced the direction of my activities since I haven't been a member long. I was doing many of the same things before I joined Delta Kappa Gamma that I am doing now. However, when it comes to my students and their families, I know that if I need any support from an amazing group of ladies, all I have to do is ask. It is

cathartic to discuss education issues with women who have gone through it all before and know that someone understands the joys and frustrations of your job.

Sheila: What are your most memorable "adventures" with Delta Kappa Gamma?

The **Delta Kappa Gamma** Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.

Lauren: I haven't been a member long, so the only adventure I've had so far is the trip to the Starke County Historical Society. I learned a lot about the history of the county and had a great lunch with some of the DKG members. Even though I had known everyone at the lunch for many years, I felt that I was able to get to know them better than I had before.

Sheila: What do you feel are your most important contributions to Delta Kappa Gamma, your community and to education?

Keep up with all the DKG news, information, and events...

Visit the State website...

<https://www.dkgindiana.org>

and

the International website...

<https://www.dkg.org>

Lauren: In Delta Kappa Gamma, I have been able to share my

knowledge of teaching English Language Learners with teachers who may not have had the same experiences. I think what I do at school is sometimes overlooked or misunderstood in schools that have ELL programs, or it is completely ignored in schools where an ELL program has not been necessary yet.

In my school community, I volunteer to help students after the school day ends and during the summer. I spent the whole summer working with a student who is struggling with reading. I also make deliveries to families who cannot make it to school to pick up materials that they need.

I feel my most important contribution to education is trying to narrow the achievement gap for my ELL students. I have made it my mission to share instructional strategies and methods with teachers that will allow the content to be accessible to ELL students in their classrooms.

**Coming Events:
State Convention
Swan Lake Resort
Plymouth, IN
April 23-25, 2021**

Sheila: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Lauren: I have taught for 9 years. This is my 7th year at Kankakee Valley. I have 5 teaching licenses: Middle School Math, High School Math, English Language Arts Grades 5-12, Spanish Grades 5-12, and English as a New Language Grades PK-12. My first year of teaching, I taught Middle

School Math in the morning and Spanish and French in the afternoon. You'll notice that I do not have a French license, nor am I able to speak French. It was a learning experience for everyone. Between my first and second years of teaching, I taught Middle School English and Math in summer school. My second year of teaching was High School Math, which was mostly Algebra I. After that, I have been an ELL teacher for 7 years, which means I get to teach all subjects, but I get to do it in Spanglish.

ELL kids are quite possibly the most interesting children I have ever met. I have sad stories, like children who are afraid that our buildings are not secure enough because they are not surrounded by 8 foot walls and armed guards, and I have funny stories, like the kids who thought their teacher ate a frog and now her voice is empty. It's ok. She just had a frog in her throat and lost her voice. (Idioms are hard.) I have kids who want to talk about their experiences in immigration, and kids who are afraid that if the school knows that they were born in another country, we will send them back.

I am a lucky teacher because I get to see my students' progress every year. They are with me until they pass their WIDA tests and no longer get services. I have seen my students progress from "This spelling test is too much for a little girl like me" in second grade (imagine a swoon at the end of that statement) to "Miss Akers, I can do this on my own. Go away." I have a student who thinks I have WIFI in my brain, and she can only function if I stand 3 feet from her so she can get signal to her brain. With COVID, she has had to learn to function on her own. One of my

students learned to say the word "buzzer" from Mel B on America's Got Talent, so she pronounces it "boozah." I haven't corrected that; it makes me laugh every time. What my students understand and what they THINK they understand are two completely different things. So, while we are learning, we can have a few laughs along the way.

**Our next meeting:
Saturday
February 20, 2021
9:00 AM CT**

via Zoom

**Opening thought: Sylvia Dumas
Media Review: Donna Kida
Closing Thought: Carol
Tripenfeldas**

**Program: Starke County
Young Artist Conference**

**Marilyn Lukac
&
Tammy Fletcher**

**"Educating the mind
without educating the
heart is no education at
all."**

Aristotle

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January 1, The Time for New Year's Resolutions

January 1 is the traditional time for making resolutions to do better in some way. Usually people make resolutions about losing weight (been there, done that, not at all successful!) or saving money (much more successful at doing this!).

Since 2020 has been such an unusual year, perhaps we should look at 2021 as an opportunity to resolve to do things that are not traditional, but that may make us happier in the long run.

How about....

...taking pictures of five interesting places and sharing them with your friends. Your interesting places could be during travels or could be around you home or community. Attach a little note with them to share about why and where you took the photo.

...learning a new skill or game and share with your Delta Kappa Gamma sisters. These skills and games can run the gamut from cake decorating to learning how to play Chickapig to play with your children or grandchildren. Perhaps you'd like to perfect a magic trick. There are books that can teach you the basics. Maybe juggling oranges appeals to you. YouTube is great for teaching you how to do anything..knitting, crocheting, all kinds of crafts, basic plumbing and electrical projects, and about a million other things. Try something new!

...making a new friend every month. Reach out to colleagues at school, in church, or in your neighborhood. Someone out there would love to have a new friend and you could be it! Making friends with people with

different personalities and interests from you can be particularly beneficial in helping you to broaden your horizons, explore different sides of your personality and find new ways to get the most out of life.

...making the usual unusual. It's easy to get in a rut, but no matter how comfortable we are with our routine, we can make little changes to make a little difference in our lives. Try a new coffee creamer instead of the one you always use. Wear something you've been saving for a special event. Put on those special earrings or necklaces to watch your favorite TV show. Make your usual day a little more special for yourself.

...doing something nice for others every day. Telephone someone you know can't get out at all. Go visit that one aunt whose politics drive you crazy. Ask your older friends and neighbors if you can pick up some groceries for them while you're making your masked shopping run. Bake cookies and give them to your neighbors.

...cooking or baking a new recipe or making changes to a standard recipe to spice it up. This is the time to experiment. All those things for which you've asked the recipe can now become a part of your repertoire.

There are probably many things that you could do to affect your life in some small way to make you feel just a little better or more interesting or less in a rut. Don't stress yourself out with major life-changing resolutions. Take the time to do little things for yourself and others and your life will be richly rewarding.