

# THETA STATE NEWS

New Mexico

December 2017

Message from the President

Key Women Educators,

Really? The holiday season is here? My school year has been very busy, and Theta State has been busy, too. I have visited with several chapters, State convention planning is moving ahead full steam, the Revitalization meeting was well attended, and fall meeting has come and gone.

After the September 9th meeting with International 2nd VP, Becky Sadowski, Pat Graff and I had a chance to meet; and we identified four areas that we are calling Task Forces. It was after the 83rd Birthday luncheon that members were able to choose which Task Force they would like to participate. If you are not on a Task Force and want to be, please let Pat or me know. The participation in these groups will be done by email, go-to-meeting and phone calls, no travel necessary. You do not have to be a chapter officer, or on a State committee to be a part of this revitalization plan. We want all members to participate. We all have a stake in growing Theta State membership.

Fall Meeting was simply wonderful! C.C.C., thank you for hosting the 83rd Birthday luncheon and bringing in the guest speaker, Peggy Sanchez Mills. There were many members in attendance and some new faces in the audience. The by-laws committee was charged with several new tasks, and we will hear from them at State convention. You can find all committee reports on the website. Exciting news from Amanda Matray, Technology Chair: Theta State will soon be visible on social media! Our state project was decided on during a brain storming session at Leadership and voted on at Fall Meeting. Jeannette Vigil is chair of that committee and was instrumental in getting our guest speaker as well as workshop presenters all addressing Girl Scouts. I wanted a state project that individual chapters could adopt and adapt to fit their chapter and still be a part of the whole. The DKG Girl Scout patch creates a natural connection between a chapter and their community, a chapter of leading women educators and young girls learning to be leaders. A sample curriculum, available by email from Nita Scott at Society Headquarters, can be adapted to meet the needs of the troop in your local community. [nitas@dkg.org](mailto:nitas@dkg.org)

I previously shared two challenges from International President Carolyn Pittman: one is to do "something" to enhance your membership. My question to you is "What are you doing?" I would like to hear from you, E-mail me and/or write your actions down and let them be published in TS News for all to celebrate, learn from you and be encouraged. The second challenge was to secure two (2) new members. Do you have two new members in mind? I met three ladies at Fall Meeting, who were "new" to me. So, new members or new friends, let's encourage each other to attend chapter meetings and State convention. Keep it simple, Sisters. We are leading women educators impacting education in New Mexico.

I can't believe I'm saying this: Merry Christmas! Have a blessed time with family, friends and loved ones.

With love and respect,

Ella



Theta State DKG  
2017-2019  
Keep It Simple, S



## In This Issue

- Retirement Tips
- Chapter News
- Committee Updates
- Red Roses
- White Roses

# DKGNext Committee Looks at Membership for DKG International

It looks like DKG International is considering many of the same issues New Mexico is currently tackling with regards to membership recruitment and sustainability.

A committee of a dozen DKG members met this fall and proposed possible ways to meet this goal. Their recommendations are more fully shared on page 3 of the November/December 2017 issue of the DKG News. This group is called the “Think Tank” and will continue to work on these initiatives for the next few years.



Some of their suggestions which might also be considered by chapter leaders include the following:

- \* expand option for growing membership
- \* simplify the Constitution and Standing Rules for conciseness and clarity
- \* explore the creation of hybrid and virtual chapter
- \* emphasize the need to be multicultural, multigenerational, and more inclusive
- \* consider online professional development, event sponsors, and Ted-like talks on DKG and education

As Theta State’s Membership Recruitment and Retention efforts continue, leaders and members will continue to consider these and other recommendations in the work in New Mexico.

**Submitted By Pat Graff**

---

The B. June West Recruitment Grant is supported by individual and chapter contributions and administered by Professional Affairs Subcommittee.

This grant is awarded to a woman (non-member) to advance educational studies and will be awarded at State Convention. You will find the application on the website, print it off and encourage a women in your area that is pursuing her educational degree to apply.

The deadline for submission is March 1, 2018 and needs to be sent to Lavon Hamblin, Professional Affairs Chair.

Lavon Hamblin  
1421 Hwy 170  
La Plata, NM 87418

Theta State Convention 2018 Las Cruces April 20-22  
SAVE the DATE  
Check the Theta State Website for details coming soon!

## Theta State Scholarship

Submitted by Jane Williams

Are you or a TS sister seeking to advance educationally by pursuing a license endorsement or graduate degree? \$1250.00 has been approved for the Theta State Scholarship recipient in May 2018. The deadline to apply is March 1, 2018. The application form can be found on the Theta State website page <https://thetastatenmdkg.weebly.com/report-forms-convention-registration-scholarship-guidelines-and-application-yearbook-rubric-website-standards.html> under Scholarship Guidelines and Application.

Please see quick facts below for more information.

### Scholarship Quick Facts

One benefit to Delta Kappa Gamma members is scholarship monies. There are international scholarships and the state scholarship available to you. The international scholarships annually award up to thirty (30) \$6,000 international scholarships to members for study at the master's degree and \$10,000 for work at the doctorate level.

Are you or a chapter sister pursuing a dossier, masters, doctorate, or National Boards?

The DKG Theta State Scholarship is available to:

A DKG Active member in good standing for the last three years

A person with excellent academic, ethical and professional standards

A person seeking to advance educationally by pursuing a license endorsement or graduate degree

A person enrolled in a graduate program of a nationally accredited institution of higher education

The scholarship funds are the interest generated by the Theta State: Birdie Adams Scholarship, the Emma H. Foree scholarship, the Travel/Study Scholarships and scholarship fees required from membership.

The application is available at <http://thetastatenmdkg.weebly.com/> . Scroll down the left side to "Report Forms/ convention Registration, Scholarship guidelines and Application."

The application is due to Committee Chair Jane Williams by March 1, 2018.

# **Do you plan to retire with benefits?**

## **Submitted by Mignon Simitz For Personal Growth and Services Committee**

I must preface this article with the caveat that I am not, have not, and never will be a financial advisor or a representative of the New Mexico Education Retirement Board.

### **What are the requirements for retirement?**

There is only one requirement to receive a full benefit at retirement for a NM public school employee; a 25 or 30 year work history in a public school in New Mexico. Participants may also receive full benefits if work history years plus age at retirement equals 72 or 75 years. However, benefits may be negatively impacted if the age at retirement is less than 60 unless a tax advisor helps you to fill out necessary paperwork to avoid this taxation. Requirements were modified a few years ago so participants need to contact the NM Education Retirement Board to determine their personal work history requirements. An employee may withdraw his/her contributions at any time, while forfeiting the corresponding work history years, though it will cost much more to “buy back” those contributions or the employee will have to work longer. One more year of work can add substantially to the retirement benefit but one more year when a participant wants to be at the end of his/her career may not be desired!

### **How are benefits determined?**

A public education retirement participant's benefit is based on the average of the five highest year's income. Earning a Level III Licensure will bring that average up and add up over the course of a career. Working summer school or doing additional work that earns a stipend is added to the yearly income. Teaching summer school for five years can make the highest 5 year average income appreciably more than the yearly salary. Currently, a retiree must work about 42 years to receive a 100% benefit at retirement. Fortunately, most retirements are usually at 80%-85% of salary so retirees do not need to work that long! In preparation for retirement, people begin to downsize to adjust for the predicted decrease in monthly income. Potential retirees get ready by paying off mortgages, car payments, and credit cards. They determine what they will need each month to live comfortably. Participants can and should request a “benefit estimate” from the ERB two years before the expected retirement date so that the potential retiree can determine whether the retirement benefit will fit the expected retiree budget. Some people plan to retire at the 25 or 30 years and begin another career. More years working yields a higher retirement benefit. And, at 60 something years of age, most retirees can start collecting Social Security.

### **Questions to consider**

Will you be able to live on the retirement benefit alone? Are you going to need to purchase NM Retiree Health? Will you need to collect Social Security soon after you retire to make ends meet? Will the retirement benefit be enough for a few years until you can collect Social Security? Are you going to need to supplement your income with another job? If so, another year of work would bring up that monthly retirement benefit.

(Continued on next page)

Continued story...

### **Can a retiree return to work?**

If an employee comes out of retirement, he/she will have retirement withheld from his/her salary, but no years added to the work history, keeping the retirement benefit the same. This is called “double dipping” and the participant collects a salary and retirement. Over the long run, a participant will earn more money working more years, rather than retiring and “double dipping.” A retiree may earn \$15,000 a year working in the public schools without affecting the retirement benefit. Social Security benefits are suspended if a retiree returns to work and earns more in a month than his/her monthly Social Security benefit. So, if a retiree is planning to do long-term sub jobs, he/she should delay filing for Social Security benefits and should be mindful of the annual gross earnings.

### **Steps to start planning for retirement!**

These are steps presented by NM Education Retirement Board representatives at a retirement training held at the NM Military Institute, Roswell, NM on January 11, 2017.

+Go to [www.nm.org](http://www.nm.org) and create a Member Self-Service Login

+Close to two years before your desired retirement date, estimate your benefits by using the benefits calculator on the above website

+Twelve months before estimated retirement date, request an Estimation of Benefits from the New Mexico Educational Retirement Board

+Begin gathering necessary documents for retirement, including: Social Security Card, Birth Certificate, Marriage License(s), and Divorce Decree(s)

+Review your personal finances and speak to your local Social Security Office, New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority (if applicable), and a tax advisor (Federal and State Taxes can be withheld from each monthly benefit if requested.).

+Finalize all purchases of withdrawals or allowed service credit (This is the “buy back” that is mentioned above.)

+Eight to twelve months before your estimated retirement date, submit your Retirement Documents to your employer’s HR office.

## PSI Chapter News

Marlene Chavez-Toivanen received her Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Educational Leadership and Administration from New Mexico State University on December 8th. She successfully defended her dissertation titled "The effect of online learning on degree completion for minority students" on September 8th. She plans to continue to work with her dissertation and strives to publish an abbreviated version in different scholarly journals. She was the recipient of the Delta Kappa Gamma International Eunah Temple Holden Scholarship. Pictured is Ina Jean Barnes presenting Marlene with her Delta Kappa Gamma Honor Chords at the October Psi Chapter meeting.

Story and Photo Submitted by Jane Williams

### Summary of Research by Marlene Chavez-Toivanen

According to national data, in the fall of 2013 over 5.2 million students in the United States took at least one online course (Allen & Seaman, 2015) and these data suggest that online learning will only continue to grow. This growth offers students of all backgrounds and geographic locations the opportunity to pursue a college education especially students from rural community colleges. As online learning continues to grow at post-secondary institutions across the United States, many question its effectiveness, especially for underserved student populations. The purpose of this study was to determine whether there was a difference in three variables between rural community college minority students who took online classes in their first semester and those that did not. The variables were first semester grade point average, persistence to the next semester, and lastly completion of a certificate or degree within three

years of initial enrollment. The study utilized archival data which was analyzed with SPSS software. Inferential statistics (t-test and chi-square distribution test) were computed and analyzed regarding minority students' first semester GPA, persistence from the first semester to the second semester, and, ultimately, certificate or degree completion. The findings of the study indicate that there were no statistically significant differences in GPA, persistence, or degree completion for rural minority students who did not take online classes as compared to rural minority students who did take online courses.



---

## GAMMA CHAPTER

---

Gamma Chapter in Albuquerque will have a holiday brunch on Dec. 9. **Ella Kelly**, State President, will be the featured speaker. The event will be 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. at Vick's Vittles, near Wyoming and Central NE.

Other activities will include a silent auction to build Gamma's scholarship fund, and a service project for Silver Horizons. Members are bringing \$5 and \$10 gift cards for food and necessities to distribute to seniors in need through Silver Horizon's work.

Gamma members were involved in planning for the Theta State fall meeting in November. **Dianna Valdez** ably chaired the event as chair of the Central Coordinating Council. **Jeannette Vigil** and **Pat Graff** did support work as well.

Gamma is currently working on eight potential new members. An orientation dinner and program will be offered in the next few weeks and initiations will be held soon if all goes well.

Gamma will be offering a \$500 scholarship to a chapter member for professional development this spring. Applications are due March 1. Dorothy Wilkinson is the chair of the Scholarship Committee and has more information.

---

## LET IT POP! LET IT POP! LET IT POP!

Your Non-Dues Revenue Committee is looking for ways to raise funds to support our Theta State activities without putting more financial burden on our members. We anticipate that the new State Project working with the Girl Scouts of America could require extra funds for patches, chapter activities in support of the girls, receptions to support their award ceremonies, etc. The Special Project Committee outlines what will be needed or supported by Theta State, but we want to be able to help.

The committee moved that chapters be asked to sell Walker's Flavored Popcorn to support the Non-Dues Revenue account. The motion passed. The flavors are yummy: Red Chili Chocolate, Green Chili Cheddar, Pecan Toffee; and Black Cherry Chocolate. Eleven chapters at the Board meeting took a box of 14 bags to be sold for \$4.00 per bag. Thank you to those chapters for giving the fund raiser a try.

The popcorn money is to be sent to Theta State by January 15, 2018. The popcorn sales money is to be made out to Theta State and sent to the state treasurer. Unsold bags can be sent to Dianna Valdez at PO Box 1071 Corrales, NM 87048, or the chapter can purchase the unsold bags to sell as they can. Mailing costs will be returned to the Chapter.

So far Omega has already sold their box. Way to go! Gamma has sold their box and the 3 boxes that were left. There have been requests for 2 more boxes to sell. E-mail Dianna at [valdez@aps.edu](mailto:valdez@aps.edu) if your chapter would like more boxes.

# Membership Initiative Task Forces Begin Work

By Pat Graff

More than 20 Theta State members have volunteered to develop ideas and recommendations to help the state organization recruit, retain, and support members in the next few years.

Following a meeting in Albuquerque this past September facilitated by Becky Sadowski, DKG International's second vice-president, a number of ideas and possibilities were generated. Ella Kelly, Theta State president, and Pat Graff, Theta State vice-president, categorized the ideas into five specific task forces to generate further discussion and actionable recommendations:

A- Recruiting New Members/ Orientation and Initiation Procedures

B- Retaining Members & Communication/ Advocacy

C- Sustaining and Supporting Chapters

D- Theta State Activities To Build Teacher Leadership Skills

E- Membership Incentives and Programs

Each Task Force has 8-12 members on it who are now starting conversations about their specific areas of interest via email. Those task force volunteers will develop recommendations and send them to the Theta State officers by Jan. 15. From there the officers will formulate possible actions and proposals.

"Our primary purpose for this membership initiative is to build a sustainable membership action plan to keep Delta Kappa Gamma in New Mexico a relevant and active voice for leading women educators for many years to come," said Graff.

More information will be coming soon in this newsletter and at the state convention in April.

---

## Red Roses

Congratulations to Robin Cook, she was awarded New Mexico Administrator of the Year. She accepted her award in Washington DC. She is the Principal at Cloudcroft Elementary and Middle School. Robin served as Theta State Treasurer and Kappa Chapter Treasurer.

Lucile Cornetet Individual Professional Development Award from the Education Foundation

Susan Swope received the award to attend the National Association of Agriculture Educators National Conference in Nashville. The conference was the first week in December. She joined over 750 Career Tech Educators who could choose from 85 different workshops and sessions. In addition to workshops, there are regional meetings, awards dinners and general business sessions.

The next deadline for applications is February 1, 2018. Details on the [dkg.org](http://dkg.org) website under the Education Foundation tab.



## Northwest Council Meeting Highlights

Ella's theme for her biennium is Keep It Simple, Sisters. She acknowledged the good discussions at the Leadership Training in June, and received her official training for her new position in Hawaii in July.

Giving support to new teachers and giving teachers an honorable place in society are goals for this new leadership. We are Key Women Educators!

Challenges are to maintain and build membership at the local levels. She would also like to see a matrix for Committee Chairs at the state level to better fulfill their duties.

At the revitalization meeting in Albuquerque, Sept. 9, Ella could feel the support of the members present. Membership, Communication and Leadership are the 3 main areas of concern during her biennium.

Some announcements from Ella:

Amanda Matray is working on a Facebook page for Theta State.

Kay Hannum is Leadership Chair

The President's Page is available online for any member

Upcoming dates: Nov. 4, 2017, TS Birthday Luncheon in Albuquerque

April 20-22, 2018, TS Convention in Las Cruces

June, 2018, Leadership training for any TS member

July 16-20, 2018, Int'l Conference in Austin, Texas

Ina Jean stressed the fact that we all have something to give, and shared her experiences and accomplishments serving on Int'l Committees.

Other information that Ina shared: Int'l meetings is where business takes place; new Int'l officers will be elected in July in Austin; new members should be mentored for 5 years; next Northwest Council meeting will be 3rd Sat. of March in Farmington.

Submitted by Secretary, Gladys Hielkema Upsilon Chapter.



## ALPHA IOTA – Winter, 2017, TSN Article

Eight members of Alpha Iota attended the Theta State 83<sup>rd</sup> Birthday Luncheon, which was held at St. John's Methodist Church in Albuquerque: Marilyn Ortman, Mary Beavis, Karen Carlson, Diane Bonnell, Donna Moore, Alyce Cummins, Jean Leonard and Marjorie Kendrick. Alpha Iota members were given credit for their help with making the arrangements for the event. The luncheon speaker, Peggy Sanchez Mills, who is Chief Executive Officer of the Girl Scouts of NM Trails, spoke about the importance of women acting as mentors, role models, and teachers to enable young girls to have a greater impact on our world and a more satisfying life experience for themselves.

On October 28, several members of Alpha Iota stepped back in time to the early 1900's by visiting the Harvey House Museum located in Belen, NM. The museum features the history of Belen and Valencia County, the railroad in New Mexico and the Fred Harvey Company. The dorms and lives of the famous Harvey Girls are also featured.

Our next meeting will be held at the home of Diane Bonnell on December 16. A potluck lunch and Christmas sing-along will welcome in the holidays. Members are asked to bring purses filled with necessary items for women in shelters.

Submitted by Alyce Cummins



Left to right: Jane Kight, Diane Bonnell, Judy Allman, Lillian Moon, Kandace Dickinson, and Ann Calderwood.

# WHITE ROSES

Pat Graff, Theta State second vice-president has received notice of the death of two Theta State members:

**Laverne Chaffin**, Lambda Chapter, died June 14, 2017. She was a Delta Kappa Gamma member since 1981 and served as her chapter's secretary for two terms.

**Caroline Nelson**, Alpha Delta Chapter, died July 30, 2017. She was a Delta Kappa Gamma member since 1986 and served her chapter as president and treasurer. Most recently she served as the treasurer for the 2017 Theta State convention.

We will deeply miss both of these amazing women. Each will be honored at the Necrology Service at the Theta State convention in Las Cruces on April 22, 2018.

Chapter presidents are reminded to complete the "Death of a Member," Form 6, when needed and send a copy to Pat Graff, Theta State second vice-president. It can be send via email to [PGraff@aol.com](mailto:PGraff@aol.com) as an attachment, or sent through the US Mail to Pat Graff, 8101 Krim NE, ABQ, NM 87109.

## Enjoy an Alaskan Glacier Cruise

Join me and DKG Friends aboard

The Celebrity Solstice

August 29 – September 8, 2018

Check it out via

[Alaskacruisedkg.grouptoursite.com](http://Alaskacruisedkg.grouptoursite.com)

Or call 1.800.438.7672

Cruise out of Seattle to Alaska

See towering blue glaciers, spot whales,

View totem poles in Ketchikan

Join the DKG Alaskan Glacier Cruise

Aboard the Celebrity Solstice

August 29 – September 8, 2018

Bring a spouse, a friend, a colleague

Tour the Seattle Fish Market,

Pass through a 20-mile fjord,

Learn about the 1800 Gold Rush,

Have fun!

For more information contact [Carolyn@rants.net](mailto:Carolyn@rants.net)

Or

[alaskacruisedkg.grouptoursite.com](http://alaskacruisedkg.grouptoursite.com)

International  
Society Representative  
For the State Convention  
Will be  
Nita Scott  
Please join us  
In April in Las Cruces  
Where she will bring  
Information about  
Changes and news  
From International