



# Theta State News

The Delta Kappa Gamma International Society for  
Key Women Educators in New Mexico

## Sheri Williams Receives TS Achievement Award

Sheri Williams (Alpha Lambda) started her career as an accountant. Little did she know that she would be the 2017 recipient of the Theta State Achievement Award!

Sheri teaches English at Hobbs High School. She is a frequent world traveler and has a "heart of gold".

When Sheri was deciding her path in life, both her pastor and mother told her she would make a great teacher. Well, that is exactly what happened. Sheri said, "I can do this," and she did. Sheri is actively involved with her students in and out of the classroom. Sheri's mentor was Connie Webb Gilbraith. Sheri followed Connie as a teacher, member of Delta Kappa Gamma, Theta State President, and now as a Theta State Achievement award recipient.

Sheri received a Bachelor of Business Administration from Angelo State University in 1982, certification in education from College of the Southwest in 1992, and a Masters of Science in Educational Administration from College of the Southwest in 2001. Her professional associations include National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT), National Education Association (NEA), and the American Chinese Fellowship (ACE). Sheri has also attended College Board AP conferences.



"Gracious" is the term most often used in describing Sheri. In her volunteer activities (youth sponsor for Taylor Memorial Baptist Church, Manna Outreach, American Chinese Fellowship, Hobbs HS Student Council sponsor, FK Educational Student Tours sponsor) Sheri does an excellent job. According to a DKG member, "her home is open for gatherings, and she has delicious refreshments". Another member informed the Awards Committee, "[I encouraged] Sheri to use her talents

for our good and the betterment of DKG. She has not disappointed! My chapter and our state organization have benefitted from her kind and giving nature and her wise leadership."

Sheri's honors include National Board Certification (2006), Golden Apple Award Finalist, DKG Leadership Management recipient of the Golden gift (2010). In 2010, Sheri served as a floor page at the DKG International Convention. "Sheri has always been a dedicated and exemplary teacher." Theta State is privileged to have a role model and *willing woman working* such as Sheri!

The TS Editor is disappointed to inform the members of Theta State that her camera experienced a catastrophic failure during the convention. The pictures (that had been checked when taken) were missing 0's and 1's at the end of the .jpeg extension. If you understand this, you will know that the pictures (500) cannot be opened. She is sorry for this failure and wishes you to know that the camera has been exiled.

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## Women Teachers to the Calling . . .



Susan Swope  
Theta State President 2015-2017

*A letter, not a phone call, from the president:*

Dear Sisters of Theta State,

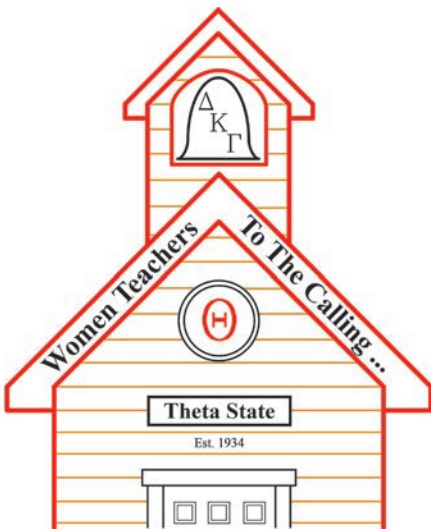
Let me begin by telling you once more what an honor it has been to serve as Theta State President. I have learned so much from this experience, and I look forward to using what I have learned in the future, as I continue to serve. I have enjoyed our visits, meetings, and workshops. I embraced the challenges we faced, and I sincerely hope that, as we look forward, you will support Ella just as you have supported me.

I became a member of Pi chapter as soon as I was eligible for membership and was asked. Dee Dee Baker taught across the hall from me and was instrumental in having me invited to join. It is a decision that I have never regretted. I was told to go to state convention in Las Cruces, and that I could go with Allie Bryant and Enda McClung. This was an eye-opening experience. I saw many opportunities for leadership and service outside of my local group. Soon after, I was again told I needed to go to the Southwest Regional Conference, which, luckily, was being held in Albuquerque. Once more I was welcomed, guided, and encouraged not just by my Pi sisters but my friends from across the state. I have so many stories from trips across this great state and into a few others - all in service to Delta Kappa Gamma. Why am I sharing these memories? I want to challenge and encourage each sister to find that one sister who just needs a little support to become a part of the great organization that has so many opportunities for members if they just seek them out.

I want to thank each sister who has told me I could do it, and helped guide me on a path that I believe has been successful. I have a long list of sisters who have made a positive impact on my career, my life, and my future. Thank you! Please continue to be positive, encouraging and inviting to other sisters.

May each of you, throughout the New Mexico, have a wonderful summer. I look forward to the coming biennium with the new officers, committee chairs, and others who have answered the call to serve Theta state.

Susie



### *Ella Kelly is the President-elect*



Ella Kelly, of Alpha Epsilon Chapter (Farmington area), is the newly elected president of Theta State. Ella earned a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from New Mexico State University (NMSU) and a Masters of Arts in Curriculum

and Instruction from NMSU, as well. She spent 33 years in the classroom 20 years teaching K - 2, 12 years as a Title 1 reading coach (K - 8), and is now an Instructional Facilitator. Ella is endorsed in TESOL and Reading.

In Alpha Epsilon chapter, Ella has served two terms as chapter president. She has served Theta State as its Recording Secretary, Communications Committee chair, World Fellowship Committee chair, Awards Committee chair, and most recently as Second Vice-President.

Ella is active in her church and loves gardening, crafting, and essential oils. She and her husband have two adult children.

### *Shawna Denney Elected First-Vice*



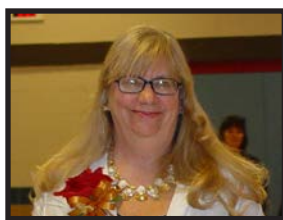
Shawna Denney, of Kappa Chapter (Alamogordo), will serve Theta State as its first vice-present for the 2017-2019 biennium. Shawna is the department chair of Alamogordo School's music department. She

is the music teacher at Chaparral Middle School in Alamogordo, and is an active member of the New Mexico Music Educators Association. Shawna earned received her Bachelors degree in Music Education from New Mexico State University. She also holds a Masters degree in School Administration.

In Kappa chapter, Shawna is serving her second term as president. She has also served Kappa as its recording secretary. At the state level, Shawna has served Theta State as recording secretary for 2 biennia.

Although Shawna teaches in Alamogordo, she lives in Cloudcroft, NM, where she is an active member of the community. Shawna's two daughters attend school in Cloudcroft. The Denney family is involved in Trinity Baptist Church in High Rolls, NM (just down the hill from Cloudcroft).

### *Pat Graf Elected Second Vice-President*



Pat Graff, of Gamma chapter (Albuquerque), will serve Theta State as its second vice-president for the 2017-2019 biennium. She is retired from teaching Journalism and

World History. Pat earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Oklahoma, and a Master of Arts from the University of New Mexico.

In Gamma chapter, Pat has served as the chapter president. She has been the Central Coordinating Council secretary. She has served Theta State as Special Projects Committee chair, obtaining a Cornetet grant for early educator workshops.

Pat is a busy woman. She is involved in Girl Scouts of America, has been a NM Teacher of the Year, received the Governor's Award as an Outstanding NM Woman, serves on the National Council of Teachers of English nominations committee, and is a Milken recipient. Pat designed dossier workshops when NM first implemented the dossiers. She created and coordinated the NM English Expo (a competition for high school students). Finally, Pat is a National Board Certified teacher.

Pat is married and considers her grandchildren a hobby. She also loves music.

## *Officers Elected for 2017-2019*

At the 2017 Theta State Convention, the general membership elected the TS officers for the 2017-2019 biennium:

President - Ella Kelly (Alpha Epsilon)	SE Nominations - Gwen Hamilton (Alpha Theta)
First Vice-president - Shawna Denney (Kappa)	SW Nominations - Barb McKee (Epsilon)
Second Vice-president - Pat Graff (Gamma)	
Recording Secretary - Joe Clarkson (Alpha Lambda)	NE - Finance -
Corresponding Secretary - Ina Jean Barnes (Psi)	C - Finance - Karen Clarkson
Treasurer - Yvette Moore (Omega)	SW Finance - Karina Bustillos
Editor - Susan Swope (Pi)	
Webmaster - Terri Garvey (Alpha Theta)	

**Congratulations! We know that you will serve Theta State well.**

## *Merit Awards Given at Convention*

The following received merit awards for distinguished service to Theta State at the 2017 TS Convention:

Dianna Valdez (Gamma)	Ina Jean Barnes (Psi)	Barbara Shirrod (Alpha Iota)
Dorothy Wilkinson (Gamma)	Yvette Moore (Omega)	Betty Begeal (Alpha Iota)
Evelyn Sanchez (Gamma)	Amanda Matray (Alpha Delta)	Karen Carlson (Alpha Iota)
Kathlyn Graham (Gamma)	Carmen Pennington (Alpha Delta)	Joe Clarkson (Alpha Lambda)
Laura Sullivan-Gallegos (Gamma)	Carmen Tapia (Alpha Delta)	Kay Hannum (Alpha Lambda)
Mary Gallemore (Gamma)	Caroline Nelson (Alpha Delta)	Sheri Williams (Alpha Lambda)
Pat Graff (Gamma)	Priscilla Brower (Alpha Delta)	Cathy Everitt (Alpha Theta)
Peggy Jackson (Gamma)	Sharon Wilson (Alpha Delta)	Gwen Hamilton (Alpha Theta)
Shawna Denney (Kappa)	Ella Kelly (Alpha Epsilon)	Pat Burnett (Alpha Theta)
Susan Swope (Pi)	Ann Calderwood (Alpha Iota)	

## *Longevity Awards Given at Convention*

45 Years - Wilma Brooks (Alpha Lambda)	40 Years - Nancy Lou Canty (Gamma)
45 Years - Dorothy Pye (Alpha Lambda)	40 Years - Karen Ransom (Alpha Epsilon)
40 Years - Rolene Barnett (Alpha Delta)	40 Years - Iris Johnson (Phi)

## *Business Conducted at Convention*

- Members of Phi, Sigma and Alpha Beta were dropped for non-payment of dues. The chapters have not written TS requesting dissolution.
- The Executive Board authorized a debit card for the Theta State Treasurer to conduct the business of Theta State.
- A new travel reimbursement was approved. TS Standing Rules were amended to reflect the change.

## Awards Given for Excellence in Many Areas

### Editor's Award

Alpha Epsilon

### Theta State Scholarship

Cheryl Martinez

### B. June West

#### Recruitment Grant

Katherine Dickinson

### Educator's Recognition

Amanda De Bell

Pamela Wheeldon

Iris Johnson

Ina Jean Barnes

Caroline Nelson

Hena Torrez

Amy Lauer

Raquel Reedy

Gay Keman

Wilma Brooks

## Behind the Scene of the 2017 Theta State Convention

### The 2017 Theta State Steering committee and contributors to the convention were:

Jeannette Vigil, Chairman; Caroline Nelson, Treasurer; Sharon Wilson, Registrar; Dianna Valdez, Program/Workshops Chairman; Betty Begeal, and Ann Calderwood, Donations/Sponsorship Chairmen; Priscilla Brower, Vendor Chairman; Mary Gallemore, Resource Room Chairman; Carmen J. Pennington, Facilities/Decorations Chairman; Kat Graham, Promotion Chairman; and Central Coordinating Council Chapters, Gamma, Alpha Iota, and Alpha Delta who took care of Hospitality/ Registration Bags and Snack Bags to Go. Contributing to the convention was the International 1st VP, Becky Sadowski; also, guest speakers, presenters, facilitators, and entertainers.

The 2017 Theta State Steering Committee and CCC wishes to Thank all the guest speakers, presenters, facilitators, sponsors, entertainers and all Theta State Sisters who attended the 2017 Theta State Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

*Submitted by Carmen Pennington  
Alpha Delta/2017 Convention Steering committee*

## Extra Information About the Presenters

At the workshops, requests were made to get contact and resource information. Here is the information gathered for you.

**AVID** – Look in Website : AVID program in New Mexico. AVID Programs are in Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Belen, Espanola Valley, McCurdy, Pueblo Laguna, Mora, Pojoaque Valley, and Rio Rancho. For additional information about AVID contact Denise Campbell, NM, State Director, [dcampbell@avid.org](mailto:dcampbell@avid.org) for Secondary; Pamela Good [pgood@avid.org](mailto:pgood@avid.org) for Elementary, or AVID Center Western Division, (303) 436-2200 or [westerndivision@avid.org](mailto:westerndivision@avid.org).

**MATH** – Financial Fitness for Life, Grades 3 – 12 and even a Guide for Parents. The publications contain Decision Making, Banking, Credit, Resources and Money Management etc., Teacher Guides, and Workbooks can be found in the National Council on Economic Education's website: [www.ncee.net](http://www.ncee.net), or [econed@ncee.net](mailto:econed@ncee.net), or call: (212) 730-1793 (Free Resources)

**STEM** – Web Search: STEM Program in New Mexico. 1.) Then go to STEM program in New Mexico/ARMAS in Education Center 2.) Go to NMPED Math and Science Bureau 3.) Go to NM STEM Resources. This gives you a Resource Association to work with.

**GOOD-bye ADHD** – Naturally – “How Can I Learn Kids Focus or Help a Child?” by Marcia Lee. Kids Focus Workshops are available on-site at schools and organizations. Public workshops are available for parents, teachers, counselors, social workers, and mental health professionals. For Information or to schedule an appointment: Call Marcia Lee Cell (949) 468-9841 or Email: [Marcia.lee@kidsfocususa.com](mailto:Marcia.lee@kidsfocususa.com) ( Note: Some Elementary and Middle schools are signing up for workshops before the beginning of school for teachers in Albuquerque.)

## Special "Thank You" to All That Attended

A special *Thank You* to all involved in attending and working on this year's Theta State Convention. This includes our International Representative, DKG 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President **Becky Sadowski**; 2015-2017 TS President **Susie Swope**; 2015-2017 TS 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President **Gwen Hamilton**; 2015-2017 TS 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President **Ella Kelly**; as well as **Terri Garvey** and **Joe Clarkson** who handled our technology needs. I also want to thank the Convention Steering Committee (**Dianna Valdez, Pat Graff, Mary Gallemore, Kat Graham, Andrea Fletcher, Carmen Pennington, Priscilla Brower, Caroline Nelson, Sharon Wilson, Betty Begeal, Ann Calderwood and Barbara Shirrod**) who worked so hard during the past year to make sure a good time was had by all. Their dedication was truly remarkable. A great big pat on the back to the CCC Chapters (Gamma, Alpha Delta & Alpha Iota) who helped make this year's convention a success. *Thank You* so much for all my Theta State Sisters who joined us making this convention a positive experience.

*Jeannette Vigil, Convention Chair*



Amanda DeBell receives education award



Nancy Conty receives longevity award



Pam Wheedon receives education award



Table for Necrology service



Ina Jean Barnes remembering Fern Thigpen

## Wanted: Members to attend International Convention

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Attend an International Convention!

Approve the proposed election amendments to the governing documents!

As a Convention Attendee in 2020 you would be able to cast YOUR vote for international officers.

As a result of a motion at the Nashville International Convention, President Carolyn Pittman appointed an ad hoc committee to review the work of the 2012-2014 Ad Hoc Election Process Committee and propose amendments to the Constitution and International Standing Rules to enable convention attendees to vote for officers.

In order for attendees to vote for the officers in 2020, the governing documents must be amended at the upcoming 2018 convention in Austin, Texas.

Attend a workshop about the election process at your regional conference!

Learn the difference between Delegate, General Election and Convention Election options.

**Cast your vote for the proposed amendments! (2018 in Austin)**

## Get Your US Forum Update Here:

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.

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. This would affect those with incomes over \$127,200 a year. This has not been mentioned recently, but it 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 than 35% tax 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 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.

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 is not all 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.

## Chapter News

### Gamma Chapter News (Albuquerque)

Gamma Chapter in Albuquerque continues to host interesting programs and recruit new members.

In March, the chapter met at the Shark Reef Café at the ABQ BioPark where members enjoyed a nice meal at the aquarium. Members from the other local chapters in the Central Coordinating Council were also invited, and it was a wonderful evening. A special thank you to Gamma President **Evelyn Sanchez** who arranged this excursion with the help of her daughter **Shannon**, who works at the BioPark.

Many Gamma members were involved in the recent Theta State convention at the ABQ Marriott. Thanks to all who helped with program, hostessing, registration, vendors, and so many other responsibilities. Special thanks to **Jeannette Vigil**, who chaired the entire convention and coordinated all our work.

On May 13, two new members will be initiated into Delta Kappa Gamma as members of Gamma Chapter. **Jaime Montoya** is a National Board Certified Teacher who works at Edward Gonzales Elementary. **Sonya Romero-Smith** is an elementary teacher and local union vice-president who teaches at Lew Wallace Elementary. We are excited to welcome these newest members to our society! The event on May 13 is our end-of-the-year program with plenty of time to visit and celebrate.

*Pat Graff, Gamma Chapter*

### Alpha Iota News (Albuquerque)

The Central Coordinating Council, consisting of chapters Gamma, Alpha Delta and Alpha Iota, was responsible for planning the Theta State Convention this year. It was held at the Marriott Hotel Uptown in Albuquerque on June 28-30. **Ann Calderwood** and **Betty Begeal** were on the Convention Steering Committee obtaining donations and sponsorships, **Diane Bonnell** was acknowledged for her assistance with the door prizes, **Lillian Moon**, AI President, held a bag stuffing event at her home so those attending the convention would have mementoes and information to take home. During the convention, several members of AI spent time as hostesses in the hospitality room. **Jean Leonard**, former Theta State President, gave the invocation at the luncheon.

When asked what part of the convention she considered outstanding, **Diane Bonnell** responded, "I thought the Resource Room was a very nice idea with interesting displays that were relevant to our members. I hope that can be expanded in the future". The Resource Room was shared by **Loretta Hall**, books and bookings; Ronald McDonald House, available services and needs; Osteo Strong, **Gaelan de Wolf**; Nusenda – Personal financial information, **Hena Torres**; and DKG, who are we, and what do we do?

**Lillian Moon** reported that the speakers and break-out conferences she attended were outstanding. She was especially impressed by the monologue about Georgia O'Keefe. The speaker became Georgia O'Keefe and explained the thoughts and background of many of her more famous paintings. She also gave some insight into why Georgia O'Keefe came to New Mexico. The luncheon speaker enlightened us about the New Mexico women who are involved in the space program.

**Lillian** continued with her appraisal of the conferences: "The homeland security detective made us aware of the human trafficking that is taking place in Albuquerque. Trish Hoffman, APD detective, enlightened us of the various ways to be safe in our environments. Ron Hidalgo, Silver Horizons, told us of the various ways the program helps senior adults with food, utilities, firewood, propane and home repairs and retrofits. **Lillian** concluded that this is a program Alpha Iota should become involved with.

The exciting news from the convention is that, at the Awards Breakfast, **Katie**, the daughter of AI member **Kandy Dickinson**, was awarded the B. June West Scholarship. She is working toward a degree in Education. Congratulations, **Katie**!!

*Alyce Cummins*



## Red Roses

**Jeannette Vigil** ably chaired the Theta State Convention April 28-30 at the ABQ Marriott Hotel. Her leadership in this endeavor was truly impressive!

**Evelyn Sanchez** is now the site coordinator for the New Mexico Network To Transform Teaching grant, a \$1 million grant from the U.S., Department of Education, through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The grant is designed to build teacher leadership and improve schools while capitalizing on the knowledge and skills of National Board Certified Teachers in New Mexico. In addition, Gamma members **Pat Gardner**, **Kat Graham**, and **Ritamarie Theiler** serve on the leadership team for this grant.

**Andrea Fletcher**, Gamma member, teaches at the Metro Detention Center. Recently she organized an extensive art exhibition and reception featuring works by the inmate students which was open to the public. A great way to support positive work!

In Theta State, **Dianna Valdez** was recognized for her four years serving as the state treasurer. **Jeannette Vigil** is busy planning this summer's leadership training for Theta State officers and committee chairs. **Pat Graff** was elected as the state second vice-president for the next biennium.

**Yvette Moore** was selected as the outstanding member of the Las Cruces Association of Educational Retirees.

**Wilma Brooks** was recognized for her work educating students about respecting and honoring "our senior citizen community in local Hobbs, NM Newspaper. (Article to follow)

## THETA STATE GOLD DRIVE

Sisters,

Do you have broken chains of gold (either color, any karat)? Do you have single precious metal earrings? Are you wanting to discard these items, but don't know how?

You can donate them to Theta State! In order to have Achievement Award pins made with "as much gold as possible," we can provide the gold (or silver, or platinum) and the jeweler will only charge us for the labor. If your metal is not gold, he will credit us for the amount of the other metals.

You can send your broken chains, earrings, etc., to:

Yvette Moore  
3040 Cheyenne Drive  
Las Cruces, NM 88011

*You will receive a receipt for your donation. THANK YOU!*

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

DEADLINES:  
Fall - August 10  
Winter - November 10  
Spring - February 10  
Summer - May 10

RETURN ADDRESS:  
Yvette Moore  
3040 Cheyenne Drive  
Las Cruces, NM 88011-5269  
Delta Kappa Gamma Society International  
Theta State News

**Coming Soon . . .**

**K.I.S.S.**

**(Keep It Simple, Sisters)**