DKG International Society for Key Women Educators
Hawai'i State Organization

Aloha i ke Akea

SEPTEMBER 2026

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President's Message

Ellen Tanoura, President



26-28 Biennium Officers

Welcome and congratulations to our 2026–2028 Chapter Presidents/Co-Presidents and the rest of the Chapter Executive Boards! Thank you for your willingness to serve, lead your chapters, and be "leaders" in Hawai`i State DKG. Whether you are a returning officer or a first-timer, your leadership counts as you review past practices and incorporate new ideas. With the changes occurring at the international level, I hope you will all see this biennium as a way to revitalize your chapters to renewed heights.

26-28 Newly Elected International President & Southwest Regional Director

The two major players at the international level are International President Connie Rensink and Southwest Regional Director Patricia (Patti) Belknap. The Hawai`i contingency connected with them during the International Convention, and transparency was clearly evident. That was followed by a Zoom meeting titled "Inside International" with the president in August; a Southwest regional Zoom meeting will occur in September. Seeing them virtually makes connecting at conferences easier. Patti has already reached out to Hawai`i State by phone—hurrah! We are no longer out in the Pacific by ourselves.

HI State Representatives at the International Convention 2026

Hawai`i State was represented with pride, aloha, and intentionality by attendees **Cindy Asato-Kochi (Gamma), Sharon Inamine (Mu), Kathy Sakuda (Iota), Mollie Sperry (Mu), Donna Shiroma (Kappa), Fay Toyama (Theta), and Ellen Tanoura (Mu)**. Not only did everyone attend sessions to gain a deeper understanding of issues and participate in voting on the revised bylaws, but we also witnessed creativity and innovations in breakout sessions and during the general assembly. Of course, we connected with old friends and gained new ones from across the nation and the world. Deeply felt were the decisions made to appreciate the global nature of DKG by having various countries use their native languages in song and sharing. How powerful it was! The conference was truly packed with learning and fun.

Resource: *The Energy of Belonging* by Wendy Gates Corbett

This powerful book has been part of the International Visionary Network discussions (attended last year by **Cindy Asato-Kochi, Gamma, and Fay Toyama, Theta**; another session begins this month). Hawai`i State chapter presidents and state executive officers have received—or will receive—a copy on September 12 at the OCC meeting. The book offers core ideas for our growth and sustenance.

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Continuation - President's Message

Whether you are teaching or working in an educationally connected institution, I wish you a good year. Despite your busyness with work, with family, and/or with caregiving, make every effort to save a corner of your life for HI State DKG and your sisters, who will always make you feel that you belong and that you are connected. "Belonging… is a multiplier of engagement, productivity, and creativity…" (*The Energy of Belonging)* and will provide you, "The Moment of Lift" (*The Moment of Lift)* that will energize you without you realizing its power. Good luck, and thank you for all that you do!

HI State Master Calendar

What color did your chapter choose? We have a statewide calendar with events color-coded differently by each chapter. The matrix is operational, so chapters may upload the calendar and insert their meeting and event dates at any time. Let's make what we do known by others! Curious about another chapter's event? Contact them and find out.

DKG Hawai'i State Master Calendar of Meetings and Events 2026-28 for International, and Hawai'i State Chapters

State officers/committee chairs, chapter presidents, please keep activities updated by clicking on the link above.

Primary Purpose:

1) To have Hawai'i State's Events at all levels visible to members;
2) To lessen conflicts in scheduling & encourage inter-chapter events

Color Legend:
International
STATE (red in CAPS) OCC
Delta Chapter Iota Theta Kappa Mu
Gamma Lambda

SEPTEMBER 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 OCC @Fisher 11-1 1ST HOUR–JOINT ZOOM/FTF UPDATE BY STATE PRES GammaArts- 10am - 1pm UH-MC
13	14 Mu General Member Mtg.	15 -Arts & Humanities Submissions -ISF Applications Due	16	17	18	19 Eta-General Member Mtg. 11-1pm (Kauai)
20 Theta Planning meeting Fisher 12-2:45pm	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 LAST DAY TO CLEAR UNBILLED	Sept/Oct- Iota Meeting #1 TBD		

DKG Presidents 2026 -2028



Alpha: Kara Ono



Beta: Robin Awa



Delta: Tammy Ogata & Mindy Nakashima-Inouye



Epsilon: Christine Putzulu



Eta: Mary Lardizabal



Gamma: Teri Evagelista & Alison Uyehara



Iota: Katherine Sakuda & Mary Miura-Aguinaldo



Kappa: Ann Takazono



Lambda: Ann Mahi



Mu: Karen Ueyama



Rho: Nancy Jadaliah



Theta: Peggy Pavao & Fay Toyama



Zeta: Charlene Miyashiro

State Committee Reports



Submitted by **Cindy Asato-Kochi**, Membership Committee Chair

Mu Chapter has built a strong tradition of welcoming new members, consistently growing its membership year after year. What is the secret to that success—and what keeps members engaged and connected once they join? We asked Mu members to share what makes their chapter special and what they believe contributes to its success. While no recruitment and retention plan is foolproof, their responses point to a simple but intentional approach: **make people feel welcomed, valued, connected, and needed.**

Recruitment

Mu Chapter has developed an approach to membership that begins long before someone officially joins. Prospective members are invited to attend meetings, celebrations, professional development sessions, and special events—sometimes for an entire year—so they can experience the chapter and get a genuine "feel" for what it means to be a Mu sister. In the spirit of ho'okipa, prospective members are welcomed, included in communications, and encouraged to build relationships with members.

The chapter also recognizes that joining an organization can feel intimidating. Mu's approach is personal: a designated member(s) serves as a guide, answers questions, stays in touch, and helps a prospective member feel comfortable. One member noted that veteran members take turns at different opportunities to sit with prospective and new members to get to know them and share information about DKG, including its benefits and expectations.

Retaining

Once someone joins, Mu Chapter works to make sure that person quickly feels like part of the group. Members take time to learn one another's interests, talents, and professional roles and then look for opportunities to involve them in the chapter's work. New members may be invited to participate in committees or small groups where they can contribute their strengths while developing relationships. As one member explained, becoming part of a small group can help someone feel "comfortable and accepted."

Connection is at the heart of Mu's retention efforts. Members repeatedly described the chapter as friendly, warm, supportive, welcoming, and encouraging. Meetings are not simply about conducting business. Mu has intentionally reduced the amount of time spent on announcements by moving information into written communications, creating more time during meetings for members to hear

one another's voices, share ideas, and strengthen relationships. A chapter survey helped them understand members' interests and preferences, including an overwhelming desire for more opportunities to socialize and deepen relationships.

That emphasis on fellowship is evident in the simple things Mu members do: eating together, talking story, laughing at meetings, celebrating members' accomplishments, carpooling, planning in small groups, and making an effort to attend meetings. Meeting dates are established early in the year, helping members plan ahead and participate.

Mu members also make a deliberate effort to notice when someone is missing. Rather than simply sending a text or making a phone call, members may invite an absent sister out for coffee to check in and see how she is doing. For older members, transportation assistance helps remove that barrier to participation.

Perhaps one of Mu Chapter's greatest strengths is its diversity of experience and expertise, with educators ranging from kindergarten through college and kupuna, representing schools, universities, nonprofits, and other organizations. This broad perspective creates opportunities for members to share their knowledge and participate in relevant professional development, from AI in the classroom to navigation tools, each designed to be relevant regardless of where a member is in her career.

The chapter also values the leadership contributions of both seasoned and newer members. All members are encouraged to "take risks and step up" to leadership, with opportunities to take turns leading the chapter. Members specifically noted that "senior sisters" continue to participate actively in leadership and have not allowed technological challenges to prevent them from contributing—an example that inspires others.

One particularly meaningful Mu Chapter experience came from an ad hoc committee focused on community service and leadership. The discussion broadened the definition of service beyond volunteering for an outside organization, recognizing that service begins at home, continues at school, and extends into the wider community.

Reinstatement

Mu Chapter understands that staying connected with former members can open the door for them to return when the time is right. Working educators may struggle to balance family demands and busy work schedules, while retired members may be busy with grandchildren or caring for aging parents. Rather than letting these circumstances end the connection, Mu sisters continue to invite former members to activities and encourage them to return when they are ready.

One member who rejoined after ten years was "grateful to reconnect with the camaraderie and professional roots she had missed—and felt as though she had barely left." Another shared that, "instead of judgment, my guilt was met with pure grace, deep understanding, and a warm, open door for whenever I was ready to return."

This sentiment captured it perfectly: " 'Once a sister, always a sister' is more than just a phrase here. It is a promise. Stepping back is meant returning to a community whose support never wavered. We all need a safe place like that to land."

A Sisterhood

Underlying all of these efforts is a strong sense of sisterhood. Mu members describe taking off their professional titles and embracing one another as friends - a sisterhood. They celebrate together in times of happiness and support one another through difficult times. They mentor one another, "hold each other's hand," and create what members describe as a safe space for sharing and connecting with like-minded educators.

Mu's intentional efforts offer a valuable reminder to all DKG chapters: membership growth does not begin with asking someone to join. It begins with an invitation to belong. By welcoming guests, making personal connections, recognizing individual talents, creating meaningful opportunities to participate, and nurturing genuine friendships, Mu Chapter has built a culture where members—new and longtime, younger and seasoned—feel that they truly matter.



Membership Toolkit



Submitted by **Cindy Asato-Kochi**, Membership Committee Chair

The new DKG year is a great time to do a chapter survey or chapter review! Here's some links for pre-made tools that you can customize for your chapter

Chapter Survey: **https://bit.ly/muchptsurveysample** (Thank you to Mu Chapter for sharing theirs!)

Chapter Survey from DKG International Website: **https://bit.ly/dkgsamplesurvey**

Or maybe you are looking for a list of ideas to pick and choose from?

Check out this list of "Strategies for a Positive Chapter Environment" from DKG International: **https://bit.ly/dkgpositiveenvironment**

State Supporting Early Career Educators (SEE) Fall Report

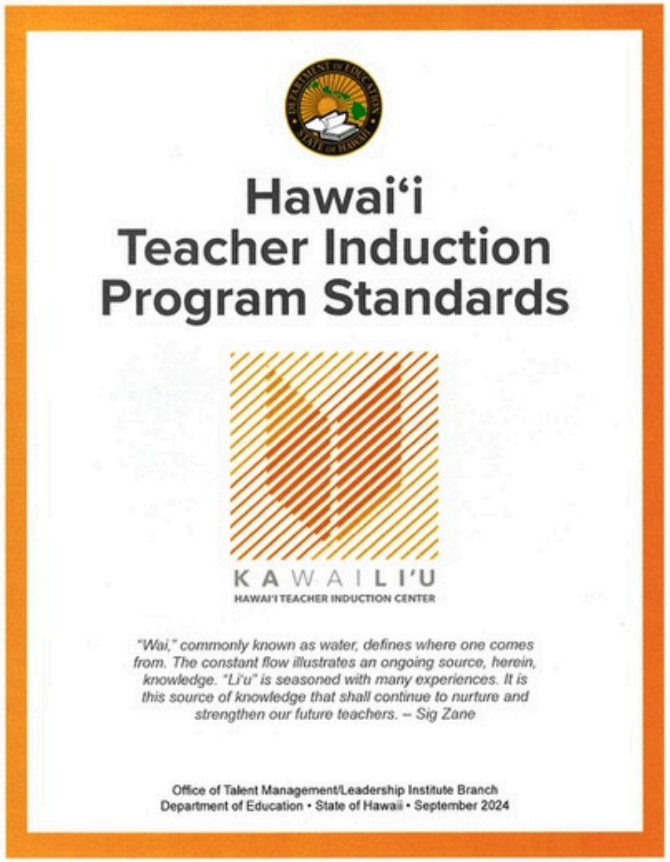
Submitted by **Karen Koles & Gale Ikeda**, SEE Committee Co-chairs

State Coordinator of the Hawai`i Teacher Induction Center, Kristen Brummel, met with us early this summer. This meeting answered many questions regarding how DKG can get involved with early-career educators to ease their transition into teaching in Hawai`i public schools. Chapters can contact any of the 15 complex coordinators, as well as Kristen Brummel (808-784-6999, kristen.brummel@k12.hi.us).

Below are fliers and the cover of a booklet that the induction center shared with us. It gives a picture of the purpose, function, and some data for the center.

Help can come in many forms, and it is up to each chapter as to how they can get involved. We know that there are some chapters already involved with specific area complexes and others who are continuing with programs that they established in previous years. Through your first vice presidents, please keep the State SEE up to date on what your chapter is doing, and also send articles and photos to *Aloha i ke Akea* of your good works.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to this SEE initiative.





Key Induction & Mentoring Program Features







- **Instructional Mentoring:** Year 1 and 2 teachers receive 180 minutes per month of dedicated support from a trained instructional mentor.
- **Evidence-Based Mentoring Cycles:** Use of research-based processes - including lesson planning, analysis of student learning, and focused observation cycles - to bridge the gap between theory and practice.
- **Comprehensive Onboarding:** Beginning teachers participate in complex and school-level onboarding, including integrated cultural induction experiences
- **Mentor Training & Support:** Mentors participate in foundational training followed by ongoing quarterly Mentor Forums and coaching to refine their instructional mentorship skills.
- **Professional Learning Communities:** Beginning teachers engage in quarterly Professional Learning Communities that focus on high-interest and essential topics critical for growth and success.

The Impact

Working with a mentor positively influenced:	Beginning Teachers	Mentors	Principals	Induction Program Coordinators
Teaching Practice	97%	95%	95%	100%
Student Learning	96%	95%	94%	100%

Data reflects results from the 2025 Teacher Induction Program Quality Survey

"As a Special Education teacher, having someone who can break down complex content and help me make it accessible for my students has been essential... Because of this support, I've seen a direct positive impact on my classroom. I feel more confident in the strategies I use, which has helped me create a more structured, inclusive, and supportive learning environment. My students are more engaged, and I'm better able to meet their individual needs thanks to the tools and guidance I've received through the program."

Beginning Teachers reporting they will remain in teaching next school year: 95%



For more information on Teacher Induction, contact:
Kristen Brummel
808-784-6999
kristen.brummel@k12.hi.us



UPLIFTING EARLY CAREER EDUCATORS AT NANAKULI AND WAIANAE SCHOOLS

Submitted by **Ronnie Kopp**, Lambda Chapter

Lambda Chapter successfully completed its flagship Supporting Early Career Educator (SEE) project for the 2025–2026 school year. Recognizing that beginning teachers face steep learning curves, resource shortages, and high-pressure transitions along O'ahu's Leeward Coast, organizers provided critical encouragement and seasonal makana (gifts) at key intervals through a vital corporate alliance with ALTRES Staffing and a strategic partnership with the Nānakuli-Wai'anae Induction and Mentoring Program. In addition, Lambda participated in the McKinley High School Band and Orchestra Craft Fair in December 2025 to raise funds for the project.



Wing Kan Hui and **Sandy Shimabukuro** pose with team members of the Nānakuli-Wai'anae Induction and Mentoring Program.

SEE PROJECT – DELTA CHAPTER

Submitted by **Mindy Nakashima-Inouye**, Delta Chapter Co-President

Delta Chapter—with coordination assistance from Educational Specialist in Induction and Mentoring (and former Delta sister) Kristin Brummel—collaborated with Campbell-Kapolei Induction and Mentoring Lead Coordinator Charles "Chuck" DeVille, General Education Induction and Mentoring Lead Cynthia Nagamine, and Special Education Induction and Mentoring Leads Shana Kikiloi and Kayla Ota to plan and execute a breakfast refreshment bar. The spread included coffee, breakfast bars, fruit, assorted snacks, and homemade treats like banana bread, mango bread, coffee cake, and corn bread with honey butter. In addition to hosting the breakfast bar for the beginning teachers, **Karen Koles** introduced Delta Kappa Gamma and Delta Chapter, and facilitated a "Talk Story" session about ways Delta Chapter can support them as they begin their first year as official DOE teachers. Several Delta sisters participated in the icebreaker activities and table discussions, providing valuable information to help the beginning teachers connect to resources, problem-solve, and feel at ease as they start the new school year.

It was a productive two days: July 16 at Ho'okele Elementary for Special Education beginning teachers, and July 17 at Ewa Makai Middle School for General Education beginning teachers. The Delta sisters in attendance were State SEE chairpersons **Karen Koles** and **Gale Ikeda**, along

Cont'd - Lambda Chapter



Lambda members **Kaye Kroehler** and **Sandy Shimabukuro** join early career educators at the May 2026 Teacher Appreciation Week and End-of-Year Celebration sponsored by the Nānakuli-Waiʻanae Induction and Mentoring Program.



Cynthia Azama talks story with an early career educator at the Nānakuli-Waiʻanae December 2025 Winter Holiday Celebration.

Delivery of the Spring Makana during Teacher Appreciation Week in May 2026.



Cont'd - Delta Chapter

with **Linda Andersen, Doris Ching, Melvina Kurashige, Mindy Nakashima-Inouye, Debra Okumura, Lynn Shoji, and Melvina Terao.** It was a wonderful way to kick off the SEE project and give it an inspiring start









Strategic Vision and Role Clarity Define the 2026 Leadership Development Workshop

Submitted by **Mary Miura-Aguinaldo**, LDW Committee

On June 6, 2026, approximately 60 sisters representing 13 Hawai`i State chapters gathered via Zoom for a morning dedicated to officer-specific training for the new biennium. The workshop successfully blended practical role instruction with high-level strategic planning, ensuring leaders left with a clear understanding of their impact. Detailed breakouts provided role-specific guidance, from recording secretaries mastering concise documentation to chapter treasurers reinforcing specific protocols for accurate accounting. Moving beyond operations, attendees learned to harness SMART goals, Strategic Action Plans (SAPs), and the EEC (How and Why) framework to create effective plans for their chapters.

A vital outcome of the morning was the powerful sense of shared community and collaboration fostered among participants. Officers openly exchanged ideas and mutually relevant challenges, concluding that "everyone is in the same boat" when it comes to navigating organizational leadership. The workshop also ensured strong alignment with the broader DKG mission, providing necessary context and purpose for their chapter planning efforts.

The workshop concluded with excitement over possibilities and an action-oriented outlook. This incoming cohort of elected officers expressed strong motivation to support their chapters and left the virtual session eager to implement their SAP strategies and set concrete goals for the upcoming biennium. This successful training event has not only prepared the current cohort of leaders but has also laid a definitive foundation for sustained chapter growth and vibrant engagement across the entire organization.

Snack Donations for Kahauiki Village

Submitted by **Sharon Inamine** & **Ellen Tanoura**, Committee Co-chairs



The Summer Children's Program put out a plea for healthy snacks for the children at Kahauiki Village. In early June, they requested individually wrapped healthy snacks, and our DKG sisters rose to the challenge! Mahalo to these generous sisters:

- BETA: **Claudia Kuniyuki** and **Beatrice Pace**
- KAPPA: **Vickie Kajioka, Donna Shiroma, Adele Wada** and the chapter's donation of $100 gift certificate
- MU: **Ruby Hiraishi, Sharon Inamine, LaVerne Tada,** and **Ellen Tanoura**

Nominations for Hawai'i State Organization Officers for the 2027-2029 Biennium

Submitted by **Lori Furoyama**, Nominations Committee Chair

Leadership is the heartbeat of our Hawai'i State Organization. The Nominations Committee invites enthusiastic, motivated members to step forward for the upcoming 2027-2029 slate of officers. State officers have the unique opportunity to serve our sisterhood within a collegial, highly supportive community at the state and international levels. Please consider stepping into a role yourself or nominating your sisters for one of the following positions:

- President
- First Vice President
- Second Vice President
- Secretary

More information will be forthcoming via the *Aloha i ke Akea* newsletter and emails to chapter presidents

Applications for the 2027 Hawai'i State DKG Scholarships will open soon!

Hawai'i State DKG is pleased to announce the availability of three annual scholarships for 2027. We are proud to continue our mission of supporting the educational pursuits of both aspiring teachers and current DKG members with valuable financial assistance for education, professional development, or community projects. Watch for full details and application links in the Winter issue of *Aloha I ke Akea*.

Available Scholarships:

- **Lucille Hodgins Scholarship** (Up to $1,000; two grants available): For college students pursuing a career in education. It covers tuition and educational expenses.
- **Josephine E. Day Perpetual Scholarship Fund** (Up to $1,000): For active DKG members in the Hawai'i State Organization. It funds the pursuit of National Board Certification.
- **Eva Phillip Curry State Scholarship** (Up to $500): For active DKG members in the Hawai'i State Organization. It funds special certification, professional improvement, or a school, state, or community project.

Accessing Applications: Official application forms and complete eligibility requirements will be available on the state website in January 2027: https://dkghawaii.org.

Chapter News

Beta Chapter News

Submitted by **Robin Awa**, Beta Chapter President

Officer Installation and Chapter Meeting – May 2026 Beta Chapter welcomed a returning executive board serving its second biennium together!



Pictured (L–R): **Claudia Kaneyuki, Anne Marie Matsuzaki, Lisa Kuwasaki-Kim, Jandi Nagasawa, Elsie Gushiken,** and **Robin Awa** (missing: **Zoe Green and Colleen Tano**).



Pictured above are Beta Chapter meeting attendees

"The best teachers are those who show you where to look, but don't tell you what to see." —Alexandra K. Trenfor

Eta's New Officers

Submitted by **Sara Iha**, Eta Chapter

Eta Chapter proudly installed its newest officers for the 2026–2028 biennium. We look forward to two years of leadership, service, fellowship, and growth together!



From left to right: Treasurer **Dr. Rebecca Fries,** Parliamentarian **Maryanne Kusaka**; President **Mary Lardizaba**l; Co-1st Vice **President Cherish Mexia**; Co-1st Vice President **Lisa Tomita**; Secretary **Mindy Ching**, and 2nd Vice President **Sarah Iha**.

Eta Chapter's Scholarship Awardees

Submitted by **Sara Iha**, Eta Chapter

Congratulations to Eta Chapter's scholarship awardees! These educators are ready to make a difference for students, and Eta Chapter was happy to be a part of their journey.



From left to right: Eta Chapter President **Roberta Zarbaugh**; Scholarship recipients: Tiare Morita, Taylee Yamamoto, Catherine Hurd, Monica Kauakahi, and Eta Chapter Scholarship Committee representative, **Nancy Graf**.

Welcoming Gamma's Newest Inductees

Submitted by **Cindy Asato-Kochi**, Gamma Chapter



Left to right: **Teri Evangelista,** Co-President; **Judith Hook**, Recording Secretary; **Alison Uyehara**, Co-President; **Mandi Kamalii,** Newly Inducted Member; **Kaylee Amaral**, Newly Inducted Member; **Kim Uyehara,** Treasurer; **Cindy Asato-Kochi**, 1st Vice President.

Benefits of DKG Membership

DKG Members are eligible for many discounts through the DKG International website, DKG.org. One of the benefits is savings of $50-100 for tours with **Collette Tours**, a reliable tour company favored by university alumni groups and lifelong learning organizations. Use the offer code: **DKGSAVE** when booking tours through Collette.

Here is the QR code to the DKG International website that describes the benefits of DKG membership when you book with Collette Tours.

Mu's Initiation of New Members

Submitted by **Phyllis Unebasami**, Mu Chapter

Strengthening Our Circle: Mu Chapter Welcomes Michele Okimura and Leila Fujinaka

Mu Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma is thrilled to announce the initiation of two exceptional new members: **Michele Okimura** (founder and executive director of *Releasing Generations*) and **Leila Fujinaka** (founder and executive director of *Impact Change Hawaii*) **.** Their initiation marks a meaningful step forward in how our chapter defines and experiences educational leadership.

While DKG has long been a home for classroom teachers and school administrators, our latest expansion reminds us that education extends far beyond traditional school walls. Leaders like Michele and Leila bring crucial perspectives from the broader educational ecosystem, including community advocacy, non-profit leadership, and specialized programming.

Broadening our circle to include leaders from varied fields enriches our chapter and deepens our collective professional growth. Connecting school-based educators with non-profit and community leaders creates a well-rounded perspective on student support and educational policy. It also grants our members access to diverse career pathways and specialized skill sets, opening new avenues for mentorship, skill-sharing, and leadership development. Ultimately, partnering with leaders across these different sectors allows Mu Chapter to extend its reach, strengthen its advocacy, and make a greater impact in the community.

We celebrate the fresh energy and vision Michele and Leila bring to our sisterhood. By embracing varied pathways of educational leadership, Mu Chapter continues to deepen its commitment to personal and professional excellence. Please join us in giving Michele and Leila a warm Mu Chapter welcome!



Michele Okimura



Leila Fujinaka

Red Roses



Gamma Chapter Celebrates Dr. Françoise Bell

Gamma Chapter proudly congratulates **Dr. Françoise Bell** on earning her PhD in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Dr. Bell's dissertation, *For Trans and Gender Creative Youth of Color, the Mo'olelo of Indigenous Policies and Practices in Hawaiian-Focused Charter Schools that Support Native Language, Gender Identity and Racial Equality,* reflects her dedication to advancing educational equity and exploring how Indigenous knowledge and practices can foster inclusive learning environments for all students.

Her achievement represents years of scholarship, perseverance, and commitment to educational leadership. She is grateful to DKG for the $10,000 scholarship she received during her studies and to her DKG sisters across Hawai'i and the continent for cheering her on and inspiring her throughout her doctoral journey. Gamma Chapter is proud to celebrate this significant milestone and extend its warmest congratulations to Dr. Bell on this outstanding accomplishment.

White Roses

Violet "Vye" Hara

Submitted by **Mindy Nakashima-Inouye**, Delta Chapter

Delta Chapter mourns the loss of beloved sister, **Violet Hara,** who recently passed away on July 7 at 100 years of age. Many of us have wonderful memories of "Vye" as she was affectionately referred to. Vye and our beloved late sister **Leilani Oliveira**—who preceded her in passing—were inseparable. They would often go to Manoa Marketplace for lunch, car pool to Delta Chapter meetings and just enjoyed spending time together. Lei and Vye were also Chairpersons of our Scholarship Committee for many years and enjoyed going to the award ceremony and luncheon. They both represented Delta Chapter with grace, humbleness and strength. Vye was initiated into Delta Sister on February 1, 1979.



Photo: **Leilani Oliveira (left)** and **Violet Hara (right)** working their shift at the Marketplace for Southwest Regional Conference at Sheraton Waikiki in 2017.

White Roses - Cont'd



Naomi Yamamoto

Submitted by **Sara Iha,** Eta Chapter

Eta Chapter member Naomi Yamamoto passed away on June 26, 2026. Naomi was one of our newest members and was enthusiastic about engaging with our chapter. She was a fixture in the Kaua'i educational community and served as the SPED Department Head at her alma mater, Kapa'a High School, specializing in special education instruction and student support. We will miss our beloved sister.



Anne Marie Duca

Submitted by **Cynthia Choy**, Lambda Chapter

It is with deep sadness that we share the passing of our dear sister, Anne Marie Duca, who joined the angels on April 26, 2026, after a brave battle with cancer.

Anne Marie was a dedicated, 32-year member of the DKG Lambda Chapter, serving locally as President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. At the state level, she made a lasting impact as Hawai`i State DKG Treasurer for 8 years and Chair of the State Leadership Development Committee for 4 years.

Professionally, Anne Marie dedicated her life to education with the Hawai`i DOE, retiring after a distinguished career as an AP English Teacher at Kaiser High School, and principal at Benjamin Parker Elementary and Ahuimanu Elementary schools. In retirement, she continued her legacy of leadership by mentoring new administrators in the State DOE leadership development program.

Her enthusiasm, warmth, and generous spirit will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

"A good teacher is like a candle—it consumes itself to light the way for others." — Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

Reflections from the International Convention

Energized by the DKG Visionary Network Leaders and Sessions

Submitted by **Fay Toyama,** Theta Chapter



Hawai`i delegates to the DKG International Convention in Aurora, Colorado, had the pleasure of having dinner with Dr. Elizabeth Tarner at the Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center. For the past year, Dr. Tarner and a group of like-minded colleagues facilitated the "DKG Global Task Force on Unity and Belonging," an online monthly session coordinated by the DKG Visionary Network that began two years ago as part of DKGIEF. Among the resources they used was The Energy of Belonging: 75 Ideas to Spark Workplace Community by Wendy Gates Corbett. Their ad hoc committee was also tasked with embedding the values of "connect, respect, and protect" throughout the convention, and it was evident every day!

For example, every morning, the inspirational message was spoken in another language—such as Finnish, Norwegian, or Spanish—and the English translation was projected on the screens. As the members debated hot topics, each made an effort to be inclusive, especially regarding diversity issues, and avoid offending anyone. At the end of the convention, we sang the Delta Kappa Gamma song in Spanish!

You can join the 2024–2026 DKG Global Task Force on Unity and Belonging to participate in their monthly Saturday morning sessions (6:30 a.m. HST) by emailing liztarner@aol.com. Check out other topics on the DKG website as well.

Many of the breakout sessions were presentations by participants from the Visionary Network. "The Power of Connections" featured a partnership formed in 2023 between Pia Nyman from Finland and Tia Neal and April Dunnehoo from Alabama, who wanted to learn about Finnish success factors. A proposal was approved to support a study, including a visit to Finland to collect data, which resulted in a mini-dissertation and an article published in the May 2025 *Collegial Exchange*.

Cont'd: Fay Toyama - International Convention

Katlan Latimer gave practical advice on "Moving from Bystander to Upstander" by exploring conflict competence. Conflict competence is "about noticing what is happening, considering multiple perspectives, and taking thoughtful action that preserves relationships while creating a culture where everyone feels respected, included, and able to contribute." This is a way to "protect" and model the daily practice of the energy of belonging.

Attending the DKG International Convention was a very rich learning experience in a truly invigorating environment.

Here are a few other memorable highlights from the International Convention



Hawai'i delegation, **Mollie Sperry, Fay Toyama, Ellen Tanoura**, newly elected International President **Connie Rensink, Donna Shiroma, Sharon Inamine, Cindy Asato-Kochi,** and **Kathy Sakuda.**

Newly elected 2026-2028 DKG International President, **Connie Rensink,** from Texas, thanked HSO for attending and for the gifts she received. **Mollie Sperry** of Mu Chapter, who lives in Colorado for part of the year was also able to join her Hawai`i sisters for one day. She is also the US Forum chair for HSO. As First Vice President, Connie Rensink helped launch the DKG Visionary Network. She shared her focus: "My vision is bold yet attainable: a DKG where leadership is cultivated at every level, every member feels a sense of belonging, and our programs and connections together spark lasting impact."

"Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress." — Kofi Annan

Cont'd: Fay Toyama - International Convention

Former Theta Chapter member, **Flordeliza Linda Cadiz Marks**, was recognized for receiving her EdD from Marymount University in Virginia. She is now a member of Upsilon Chapter in Virginia. She joined HSO for a group photo and was reconnected with **Fay Toyama** of Theta Chapter.









HSO members attended the DKGIEF fundraiser "All Shook Up" Thursday evening, dressed in the 1950s plantation clothing worn by Hawai'i's plantation laborers. We were a hit! We were asked about our unique clothing and were able to share a bit of our unique immigrant history. Sharon was the luna's daughter who had department store clothes. Ellen dressed in a Kahala shirt with coconut shell buttons from the M. McInerny store. Aunty Donna was a visitor from Japan in a hand-woven and hand-sewn kasuri kimono. Kathy had the most authentic women's costume with a bonnet, rice bag kerchief, *kasuri* shirt, denim apron, *tesashi, tabi,* and *waraji zori.* Fay wore a denim shirt with the monogram of Union Supply Co., Ltd. on the back, and a bongo on a chain around her neck. She was holding a bleached rice bag with a bento. We were so popular, other members dressed in "Elvis"-style costumes took photos with us!

The DKGIEF raises funds throughout the year to provide scholarships, educational projects, international speakers, emergency funds, seminars, world fellowships, and other causes that promote the 7 Purposes. The UNICEF Girls Fund has been expanded to the "Every Child Fund" with a broader vision and a deeper impact: "When we invest in every child, we strengthen the future for all."

Kiss the Sky: Experiences at Colorado DKG 2026 International Convention

Submitted by **Cindy Asato-Kochi**, Gamma Chapter



We've all heard it: "You need to experience at least one DKG International Conference." They're not mistaken—and Aurora, Colorado, did not disappoint. From inspiring keynote speakers and informative breakout sessions to meaningful connections with fellow members, I returned home feeling supported, rejuvenated, and motivated to share what I learned.

As only my second conference, I was especially impressed by the smooth process of reviewing, amending, and voting on the new DKG Bylaws. International President Dr. Beverly Hall-Maughan masterfully guided the proceedings, following Robert's Rules of Order with grace, humor, and poise. Seeing the final document receive a majority vote after four days of deliberations gave me an even greater appreciation for the time and effort so many people invested before the convention to create the best draft possible for us to review.

My most personal takeaway came from keynote speaker Amy Wells, a former special education teacher and "dream pursuer." Her message was simple: dreams matter. She encouraged us to support the dreams of our family, friends, students, and colleagues—and not hesitate to ask for help pursuing our own. Wells shared *Kiss the Sky* by Maren Morris, a song she now uses to start her day. I've added it to my playlist and hope you'll take a few minutes to listen. Perhaps it will resonate with you, too, or inspire you to share it with someone who needs to hear its message.

www.bit.ly/kisstheskymm - click on "continue to destination" and skip the ad if needed :)



Thoughts . . .

Submitted by **Donna Shiroma,** Kappa Chapter

Sisterhood. Attending the DKG International Convention is about sisterhood and belonging.

Hawai`i sisters spread "aloha" wherever we go. We shared gifts of aloha with International officers and headquarters staff, and we presented lei to International members and friends we've connected with in the past. Kathy Sakuda sewed beautiful three-strand pikake lei made from cotton cording. One of the special people we presented a lei to was the International Parliamentarian, Helen Popovich, who wore it from the moment we gave it to her right through the end of the convention!

I reconnected with old friends—past state presidents who served alongside me—and met new ones, like the Colorado Executive Secretary whom I met at the airport a few years back. I also enjoyed connecting with sisters during general sessions, meals, and breakout sessions. DKG truly is about sisterhood and a sense of belonging. Past International President Debbie LeBlanc even greeted us with squeals and hugs like the long-lost friends/sisters we are!

Why DKG Makes a Difference — I think this slide says it all



Slide from SOLT 2.0 (State Organization Leadership Training for State Presidents and Executive Secretaries) Mid-Point Check-in

"If you have to put someone on a pedestal, put teachers. They are society's heroes." — Guy Kawasaki

Mollie Sperry's Report

Submitted by **Mollie Sperry**, Mu Chapter

For me, the International Convention was a unique and powerful experience, revealing the strength and depth of Delta Kappa Gamma. I was especially interested in the efforts our dear sisters are making across the United States to support congressional resolutions that promote the quality of education, care for our children, and equity for women educators. This year, the assemblage voted to support a resolution addressing food insecurity by utilizing research to secure meals for schoolchildren. There was a palpable feeling of working together to make a difference. The Hawai`i group was inspired to ramp up our Society's endeavors to influence our legislators.

Spreading the Word about DKG in Colorado

Submitted by **Peggy Pavao**, Theta Chapter



I found myself in Monte Vista, Colorado, at the end of May to attend my grandniece's high school graduation. Found a little bit of heaven in the countryside. My niece took the whole gang, 4 adults and 4 children ages 2-13, to the hot springs resort. I would call it a local swimming pool with many options but it is fed by hot springs.

I headed for the adults only section to relax a bit before my turn at supervising our group of kids. As I checked in, I met a lovely young lady who took my money and made recommendations to all the features of the area. I enjoyed the facilities until a question popped into my head, I can't remember what it was, but I went back to her and she addressed it. We started talking and I talked about loving the freedom retirement offered me to travel, even though I still worked supervising/mentoring new teachers with *iteachHawaii*. She shared that she had just finished her first year of teaching 1st grade. OK, that got my attention and my heart. We chatted about education. She was such a vibrant young lady with such a positive attitude. I walked out to the area we had piled all our stuff, dug around to find my purse and pulled some cash from it. I took it back to her and told her that this was not a tip but an aloha offering for her classroom next year. Then an idea popped into my head... I went back to the purse and pulled one of my cards and wrote on the back DKG. **Delta Kappa Gamma Society International**. I returned to her and explained what DKG was and why it was important for her to contact to the state organization. I recognized in her the attributes of a leader, with the necessary mentoring and opportunities the DKG could provide, she would flourish. I told her to ask around her school and district to see if there were any other members of DKG.

Lauren, I think that was her name, looked at me with tears in her eyes. She commented, "I have never been treated so kindly. I am so touched by your generosity." I replied "You just felt the aloha spirit!"

DKG International News

Submitted by **Fay Toyama**, Ambassador

Are you looking to advance your professional development, request an international speaker, or support educational foundation initiatives? If you are considering a Delta Kappa Gamma International Educators Foundation (DKGIEF) opportunity, now is the time to plan ahead. Below is a summary of upcoming grant deadlines and year-end giving campaigns to help you stay organized and make the most of what DKG and DKGIEF have to offer

Upcoming Deadlines & Key Dates

- 🗓️ **November 1**
- **Cornetet Individual Professional Development (CIPD)**
  - Action: Submit application (available on the CIPD web page).
- **Cornetet Seminar Professional Development (CSPD)**
  - Action: Submit application (available on the CSPD web page).
- **International Speaker Request**
  - *Action:* State organization presidents must submit the *Request for an ISF Speaker* form.

Fundraising & Giving Opportunities

- **Giving Tuesday** *(Tuesday after Thanksgiving)*
  - **How to participate:** Make online donations to the fund of your choice.
  - **Where to find info:** Watch the DKG & DKGIEF website rotators and social media pages for updates leading up to the day.
- **Virtual Envelope Campaign**
  - **Details:** Published in *Collegial Exchange* to encourage end-of-year, tax-deductible online donations.

ATTENTION HAWAI`I: DKG Educational Foundation Emergency Fund



If you or your home experienced damage during the recent storms, financial aid is available through the DKG Educational Foundation Emergency Fund.

How to Apply: Visit the [International Website] and go to the DKGIEF Emergency Fund section to submit your application Join a supportive community where ideas grow, friendships flourish, and leadership is inspired.

GET INVOLVED. STAY CONNECTED.
MAKE AN IMPACT.

DKG Website

SCAN ME

DKG VISIONARY NETWORK

VIRTUAL GROUPS



Email List

Scan me

2024-2026 Statistical Data
Facilitators: Seates per Region
Europe 2 of 8 = 25%
Northeast 7 of 21 = 25%
Northwest 5 of 16 = 35%
Southeast 5 of 11 = 45%
Southwest 5 of 21 = 24%

DKG Visionary Network Submission Cycles Dates are subject to change	Date: Feb-May	Date: June-Sept	2026 Only: Convention June 30 - July 4	Date: Oct-Jan
Submit a PROPOSAL	Feb 1 - Mar 1	June 1 - July 1	June 20 - July 20	Oct 1 - Nov 1
REGISTER for a Group	Mar 15 - April 15	July 15 - Aug 15	July 30 - Aug 30	Nov 15 - Dec 15
Interest Meetings	1st Week of May	1st Week of Sept	2nd Week of Sept	1st Week of Jan
Groups Launch	By May 15	By Sept 15	By Sept 20	By Jan 15

2024-2026 Statistical Data
Regional Participation
Europe 2 of 8 = 25%
Northeast 15 of 21 = 71%
Northwest 9 of 16 = 56%
Southeast 11 of 11 = 100%
Southwest 17 of 21 = 81%
Total States 54 of 77 = 70%

18 Personal groups
Served 226 members

9 Professional groups
Served 148 members

2 Society Business groups
Served 31 members

Current Active Groups

- Tech Savvy Sisters
- Friendship Quilts
- Challenges & Successes in SPED
- Navigating the Challenges of Writing a Dissertation
- Triumph Over Tragedy The Art of Zentangle
- Helpful Tips for Exec. Sec. or Editor
- Travel Tips, Tricks, & Treasures
- Authors in Bloom
- Simple Crafts
- Handling Change Along Our Life Journey
- Authenticity Through Wellness
- Exploring Visionary SEE
- AI for Education and DKG Sustainability
- Cultivating a Sense of Belonging

BUILDING CONNECTIONS. SHARING KNOWLEDGE. EMPOWERING WOMEN.

Join a supportive community where ideas grow, friendships flourish, and leadership is inspired.

GET INVOLVED. STAY CONNECTED. MAKE AN IMPACT.

Fall 2026 DKG Art Gallery Submissions Now Open

The DKG Art Gallery showcases the exceptional creativity and artistic talents of our members. Featuring original works across a variety of media, the Gallery provides a wonderful opportunity to share artistic expressions and inspire one another.

- **Submission Window: Aug 15 – Sep 15, 2026**
- **Guidelines & Rubrics:** Available on dkg.org (Navigate to: MyDKG → Apply/Submit → Art Gallery Submissions)

Ongoing Bulletin Submissions

Share your professional expertise, innovative ideas, and creativity through The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin. Submissions are accepted year-round via dkg.org (Navigate to: MyDKG → Apply/Submit → Bulletin Submissions).

Upcoming Deadlines:

- **Journal**: Oct 01, 2026 (Note: Previous 2026 deadlines were Mar 01 and May 15)
- **Collegial Exchange:** Dec 15, 2026 (*Note: The Aug 01 deadline has passed)*

Celebrating Local Talent

Last year, three standout Hawai`i DKG members had their artwork selected and featured in the International Art Gallery:

- **Joyce Ono** (Kappa Chapter)
- **Soo Boo Tan** (Mu Chapter)
- **Cindy Asato-Kochi** (Gamma Chapter)



Kulia i ka nu'u: Strive for the summit.

Strive for the very top of the mountain, strive for excellence. This was the motto of Hawaii's Queen Kapi'olani who did so much for her people.--- traditional Hawaiian proverbs gathered by Mary Kawena Pukui, *'Olelo No'eau*, Bishop Museum Press

SNAPSHOTS!

Snapshots from the International DKG Conference



Debbie LaBlanc former International President spent time with Hawai'i DKG. She visited Kochi on their 10th anniversary.



A friendly moment as old friends chat.



Sharon, Kathy, & Ellen enjoy the US flags in front of Bass Pro Colorado on 4th of July.



Ellen & Sharon sharing Hawai'i State's Kahauiki project at a breakout session.

"Teachers can change lives with just the right mix of chalk and challenges." — Joyce Meyer


Bill Staples
DKG Headquarters
Austin, TX. 78759

07/2026

Dear Ms. Tanoura and Members of the Hawaiian Delegation,

Please forgive the tardiness of this note. It has taken a few weeks to wrap up the loose ends from the convention.

Thank you so much for making the effort to attend the 2026 DKG International convention in Colorado. It says a great deal about your dedication to DKG.

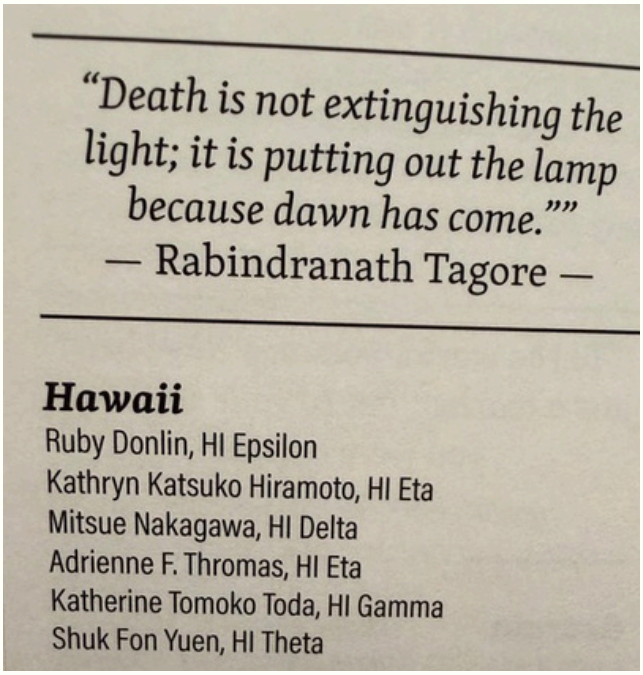
Not only did you travel such a great distance to attend the convention, but you also brought gifts for the DKG staff. The leis were beautiful, and we felt so special wearing them during convention. Every bite of the macadamia pineapple shortbread was a delicious taste of Hawaii. What a wonderful treat!

If I can be of assistance in the future, please do not hesitate to contact me. I hope you have a wonderful rest of the summer.

Warmly,
Bill Staples

Note from staff member, Bill, who attends the conference and always helps out.


Donna Shiroma's creation of crocheted hibiscus was a hit at the convention.


"Death is not extinguishing the light; it is putting out the lamp because dawn has come.""
— Rabindranath Tagore —

Hawaii
Ruby Donlin, HI Epsilon
Kathryn Katsuko Hiramoto, HI Eta
Mitsue Nakagawa, HI Delta
Adrienne F. Thromas, HI Eta
Katherine Tomoko Toda, HI Gamma
Shuk Fon Yuen, HI Theta

Hawai`i's White Roses



"The best teachers teach from the heart, not from the book." — Unknown

Kappa's Beginning Day at the Arcadia was full of fun and sharing of our lovely Raku pendants.





More photos of Mu's initiation











Editors' Corner
from the *Aloha i ke Ākea* Staff

Submitted by **Lena Kanemori, Joyce Ono, & Carole Mitsuyoshi-Sugai**

A big mahalo to everyone who shared articles, photos, and captions for our 2025–2026 publications! Your creativity, dedication, and willingness to share your chapter's moments are what make our publication so special. If we have inadvertently missed including your article please email the *Aloha i ke Akea* team and we will assure you that it will be included in the Winter issue.

Why Every Chapter Matters

As we put each issue together, we are reminded of just how important every single chapter is to our DKG family. When each chapter sends in photos and news, it gives us a true picture of the incredible work happening across our state. No chapter is too small, and every voice matters. Your photos do so much more than fill a page—they showcase our unique programs, contributions to the community, and connection in action.

A Special Thanks for Early Submissions

We also want to send an extra-special thank you to those who turned in materials early! Getting your articles and photos ahead of the deadline makes a huge difference for our editing team. It gives us the time to review, format, and layout everything with care—making the process smoother and stress-free for everyone. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and teamwork!

Quick Tip:

If you have not already, save Lena's phone number (**808-277-3993**) to your contact list! That way, you can easily text photos to her during or right after your chapter's events.

Thank you again for your hard work, enthusiasm, and ongoing support. We truly could not do this without you, and we can not wait for you to see the upcoming issues.

With deepest gratitude!

Carole Mitsuyoshi-Sugai, Lena Kanemori and **Joyce Ono**

