

President's message

Ellen Tanoura, President

Dear DKG Sisters across Hawaii,

Thank you for allowing me to lead you during the biennium 2025-27. I feel that "duty ere upon [me] calling"; therefore, I will uphold this office with pride and professionalism. I am thankful for all the officers who will serve with me, and I thank the committee chairs who did not refuse when I asked them to help me. I also thank those of you who have had the courage in the past and present to serve in some capacity on behalf of DKG Hawaii State.

THEME: The theme I have chosen, "The Moment of Lift," is the title of Melinda Gates' book, *The Moment of Lift: How Empowering Women Changes the World*. Imagine the earth rumbling and shaking before a rocket lifts off. This was Melinda Gates' childhood memory of the concept of "lift." Later in life, as she did years of philanthropic work with women and girls in Africa through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Melinda felt the lift. She tells a story of a woman in her "class" who refused to walk 12 miles daily to get water, insisting her husband do it so she could care for their baby and have him live. Despite being mocked, her husband gets the water, fearing his wife would leave him. Soon, other women did the same. That woman's "moment of lift" gave her the courage to take action. It changed her life. Simultaneously, though, and unknowingly, Melinda states that these women of poverty gave "this wealthy, city woman" a lift as well.

LIFT DKG: DKG has been and will continue to provide that "moment" for you. We may think that it is "too much for me," but reach out a little to your chapter projects, reach out to the HI State projects, and reach out to resources at the International level—invite a new member (a relative, a new teacher, a friend); help reach the 100 new member goal by 2029, the 100th Anniversary of DKG; write an article about a chapter or classroom event in the Collegial Exchange; help with

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YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Important Note--Action Recommended

At the recent International Conference in New Orleans Presidents' Training, a question was asked about the liability of chapters as related to potluck events. This is the response from Headquarters: **'After consulting with legal counsel, here is what was advised.'**

- **General liability or special event insurance can cover incidents such as food-related illness claims and more. Some policies can cover all organization-hosted events throughout the year.**
- **While not always enforceable, you may consider including a simple written disclaimer at potluck events, such as: "Food served at this event is prepared by volunteers; enjoy at your discretion." This type of statement may not be enforceable but it could help set expectations and may provide an extra layer of deterrence against claims.'**

Hawaii State is following suit and recommends that you consider inserting the statement in red on all agendas beginning September 1, 2025.

— By Ellen Tanoura, Mu Chapter

Continuation - President's Message

the Kahauiki Village tutoring program, volunteer to be an officer or a co-officer—your wealth of knowledge is valued. Then, too, seek ways to bring back absent members.

FORWARD THINKING: Emphasized at the President's and Executive Secretary training was to be forward thinking—who will be the next President and other officers so that individuals being considered can "observe, learn and note" what the serving officers do; the other was to keep a thumb drive—albeit, a more innovative technology—of all your work to pass on to the next officer—a valuable documentary of your time and journey as an officer. It is a powerful tool that just might give the next chairperson or officer considered the confidence to say "Sure!" Share, communicate, and mentor! This is what will give us that "moment of lift."



2025 Fall Forum INVITATION

"The Moment of Lift"

By Karen Tanaka, Delta Chapter

Aloha! We invite you to the upcoming 2025 DKG Hawaii State Organization's Fall Forum, taking place on October 11, 2025, at Windward Community College. This year's theme is "The Moment of Lift."

The Fall Forum will feature a dynamic keynote speaker, **Dr. Barbara Hong**, who is an influential professor in education and author of *Failing Up: A Professor's Odyssey of Flunking, Determination, and Hope*. Breakout sessions will offer engaging experiences for you to choose from!

Continuation - 2025 Fall Forum Invitation

The Marketplace (known as the Country Store) will feature homemade food items, handcrafted items, and more! Bring your checkbooks! No cash will be accepted. Please feel free to donate sale items. **See below for information on donations.

We encourage you to **RSVP by September 12, 2025**, to save on your registration fee. The last day to RSVP is September 19, 2025. Please sign up and be part of the 2025 DKG HSO's Fall Forum - "The Moment of Lift." We look forward to your participation!

**Delta Chapter is seeking donated items for The Marketplace:

- Homemade baked goods or food items: please include all ingredients on packaging
- Handcrafted items
- Plants
- White Elephant items: please limit to new pre-owned items

Please price everything to the nearest dollar. With your donation, we would appreciate including an inventory list of the items you are donating with the following information: quantity and price, along with your name and chapter. Donated items may be dropped off at The Marketplace prior to or after picking up your packet.

Click here to access the [Fall Forum Tentative Agenda and Registration](#).

**You can make a difference!
Provide feedback on the last
page of Aloha i ke Akea!**





Meet Your State Committees



State Committee, *Aloha i ke Akea*

By Carole Mitsuyoshi-Sugai and Lena Kanemori



As we begin this new biennium, the *Aloha i ke Akea* newsletter will be spearheaded by a team from Kappa Chapter, with co-

editors (L- R) **Lena Kanemori** and **Carole Mitsuyoshi-Sugai**, and technical expertise provided by **Joyce Ono**. Carole has been an active Kappa member for 30+ years and Lena for 21 years. They have served in various positions, but their most rewarding experience was tutoring ladies at Kahauiki Village. We were thrilled to welcome Dr. Joyce Ono to the Kappa chapter in May, bringing with her a wealth of experience as a retired, emeritus biology professor from Cal State Fullerton and a passion for sharing knowledge with others through watercolor painting and technology classes. The committee's primary goals are to design a newsletter that captivates members and inspires them to eagerly anticipate the next issue. Additionally, the team would like to include in *Aloha i ke Akea* newsletters valuable insights/ideas to enhance the chapter's programs and strategies for growing membership.

When submitting articles, the committee would appreciate it if you submit them by the designated due date, include photograph(s) attached to your email, and include a caption. Through collaboration and working together, we hope to publish a newsletter that we can ALL be proud of. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to **Carli Miyashiro** for her outstanding dedication to publishing *Aloha i ke Akea*, laying the groundwork for our publications.



DKG Hawaii State Website Committee



By Christine Putzulu and Jennifer Koike



Christine Putzulu (L-R) and **Jennifer Koike** serve as the state webmasters. Christine, a dedicated DKG member since 2011, leads the Epsilon

Chapter as its president. Over the years, Christine has served in numerous roles including World Fellowship

Continuation - Committee Reports

Committee Chair (2012), presenter at the Convention Maui Campus (2015), Epsilon Chapter President (2016), chapter host for the DKG Spring Convention (2017), and member of the Decoration Committee for DKG's 70th Birthday Celebration (2019). Her leadership continues to inspire as she pursues new goals for 2025-2026 focused on growing membership and fostering strong connections with the community to support future educators. Joining her in this mission is Jennifer Koike, an enthusiastic DKG member since 2014, who has served as chapter secretary, co-president, and currently as the state's web co-person. Jennifer brings excitement to her new statewide role, eager to develop her skills while updating the organization's website. United, Christine and Jennifer strive to enhance communication across all DKG levels, with the shared vision of nurturing membership growth and community engagement in support of tomorrow's educators.

Important Dates

FALL FORUM 2025
OCTOBER 11, 2025

7:30 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
HALE 'AKOAKOA, WINDWARD
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
"THE MOMENT OF LIFT"
[LINK TO TENTATIVE AGENDA](#)

SPRING CONVENTION
BIG ISLAND
APRIL 18, 2026

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOP
JUNE 6, 2026

Red Roses



Delta Chapter member **Dr. Doris Ching** was awarded the Outstanding Contribution to Higher Education National Award in March 2025 in New Orleans by NASPA (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators).

Doris was recognized for her ongoing, dedicated service, advocacy, and outstanding leadership to the entire higher education community at the national or international level, and for her meaningful contribution to the issues and concerns affecting higher education over a significant period of time. Doris is Emeritus University of Hawai'i (UH) Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA) and former UH-West O'ahu Interim Chancellor. She held leadership positions for over five decades. As VPSA, she elevated the stature and respect of student affairs professionals. Advocating for educational achievement for all students, she initiated numerous major programs to support students' educational success. In 1999, Doris was the first Asian American and first woman of color to be elected president of NASPA in its then 81 years of existence.

Submitted by Karen Koles, Delta Chapter



The Mid-Pacific Institute (MPI) Alumni Association awarded the Wa'ahila Award to Delta Chapter member **Karen Koles**, MPI Class of 1963. She received this award in recognition of her extensive hours of service as a board member and her volunteer work with the Mid Pacific Alumni Association for many decades.

As described on the Mid-Pacific

website, Karen was honored at the recent Alumni pa'ina on Saturday, July 19, 2025.

Submitted by Tammy Ogata, Delta Chapter

White Roses



Mitsue (Mitzi) Nakagawa had been a valued member of Delta chapter for more than forty-nine years when she passed away on September 16, 2024. Her teaching career included assignments at Nānāikapono Elementary, Pearl Harbor Kai Elementary, and Palolo Elementary. Mitzi was instrumental in motivating students, such as Nathan Murata, to continue past college with postgraduate work. Today, Dr. Murata is the Dean of the UHM College of Education. Mitzi served as Delta Chapter's treasurer for numerous bienniums. She will be missed but not forgotten and will live on in our memories.

Submitted by Karen Koles, Delta Chapter



Adrienne "Renee" Fernandes Thronas passed away on July 14, 2025. She was a distinguished music teacher at Kapaa High School for more than 35 years and spent over 50 years as a beloved Eta chapter sister.

Submitted by Sarah Iha, Eta Chapter



Chapter Updates

Eta Chapter Initiates Two New Members



The Eta Chapter initiated two new members, **Shantell Carvalho-Toloai** and **Naomi Yamamoto**, at their May meeting. Pictured with the Eta Officers are (L-R): 2nd Vice President **Sarah Iha**, **Shantell Carvalho-Toloai**, President **Roberta Zarbaugh**, **Naomi Yamamoto**, 1st Vice President **Mary Lardizabal**, Secretary **Sue Meyer**, and Treasurer **Janice Nitta**.

Kappa Chapter Welcomes Two New Members



Kappa Chapter is pleased to announce the addition of two new members, **Tamayo Matsumoto** (left) and Professor **Joyce Ono**, Emerita (right), who were initiated in May at the Arcadia Retirement Residence. Their membership will add fresh perspectives and diverse expertise to Kappa's programs.

Save the Date

2025 Fall Forum - October 11

Reports from Attendees of the 2025 International DKG Conference



Standing in front of the DKG backdrop are L-R: **Kathy Sakuda** (Iota), **Cindy Asato-Kochi** (Gamma), **Sharon Inamine** (Mu), **Vivian Hee** (Mu), **Ellen Tanoura** (Mu), and **Donna Shiroma** (Kappa). 2025 DKG International Conference attendees in New Orleans, Louisiana, Cindy, Ellen, and Donna also attended the SOLT leadership training.

The Unyielding Spirit: A Principal's Journey of Triumph and Return, an Inspirational Story of Resilience, Leadership, and Hope

By Sharon Inamine, Mu Chapter



Merlyna Valentine was the keynote speaker at the 2025 International Conference

In the heart of a small, bustling town stood St. Rose Elementary, outside of New Orleans, a school known for its laughter-filled halls and community spirit. At the helm was Principal **Merlyna Valentine**, a figure beloved by students and staff alike. Merlyna, with her warm smile and unwavering belief in every child's potential, was a pillar of strength and inspiration. But one day, Merlyna's life changed in ways no one could have imagined,

ultimately becoming a testament to courage, resilience, and the power of hope. What seemed like a small health problem, a kidney stone, turned into a major problem of sepsis and near-death. As a result, her four limbs were amputated over a period of time. However, that did not get her down. *Cont'd page 6*

Continuation of DKG International Conference Reports

Cont'd, Keynote Speaker, Merlyna Valentina's presentation:

As a positive thinker, she wanted to prove what's possible. She believed in possibilities, challenges, perseverance, resilience, and perspective, seeing the big picture!

Her presentation was the inspirational story of her fight to get back to normal. For Merlyna, it was being a school principal! The doctors all thought she would not be able to do her old job. With the help of hard work and determination, different therapists, a loving husband who became her makeup artist and hairdresser, she proved the doctors wrong! In two years, with a few adjustments, she returned to her former position at the same school as principal. Think of what you gain, not what you have to give up! Focus on people who believe in you, not the naysayers. Be grateful! Be joyful!" These are some of the guiding principles that helped her overcome adversities.

You can read her book, *Living Life without Limbs: A Story of How to Embrace Change, Persevere Tough Times, and Live Life to the Fullest!*



Japan State at the DKG International Conference

By Donna Shiroma, Kappa Chapter

Thirteen DKG Japan State Organization members and their family/assistants flew from Kochi and Hiroshima to New Orleans to attend and address the 2025 DKG International Conference. They conducted a total of four breakout sessions, all of which were well attended. Hawai'i State sisters were in full force, supporting their Japanese

Cont'd, Donna Shiroma's account

sisters and answering questions. The first breakout was titled "Dialogical Drawing," which can be used to foster children's self-esteem through active listening and appreciation of their art. It was amazing to see the growth in the children's art using this method in a very short time. "Peace Message of A-bomb Survivor and a Japanese Calligrapher" and "The Story of an A-Bomb Victim" made a powerful impact on the attendees. Stories of the *hibakusha* (people affected by the atomic bombing of Hiroshima) brought tears to our eyes and moved one DKG sister to apologize for the bombing. At the second "Peace Message" presentation, Calligrapher Taeko Ogawa presented a "peace calligraphy" to International President Beverly Hall-Maughan.



Attitude Counts

By Vivian Hee, Mu Chapter

At the conference, our main speaker spoke about attitude. It certainly was true, as it took us two days to get to this conference. Our driving route was from Aina Haina, Hawaii Kai, Makiki, then Honolulu airport to pick up our colleagues. We got to witness what would happen in a crisis situation of an upcoming tsunami. We left Aina Haina at 4:00 and didn't get to the airport until 6:30 p.m. Upon arrival, hundreds of passengers were already crowded together, waiting for departure news and where we would go if the tsunami hit Oahu. No airline personnel were there. Two hours later, the tsunami alert was over, and the kiosks were now usable to check ourselves in. It was an unorganized mess as we waited another half hour to check our luggage in. Our flight was to leave at 11:30 but got cancelled due to the flight crew being stuck in Waikiki. We were told to pick up our luggage and return tomorrow. At 2:30 a.m., we rebooked our flight and slept at the airport. At 6 a.m., we got into the Delta Club for breakfast, then went to the gate, only to find out that the flight got delayed again until 3:00 p.m. and to a different destination. Finally, two days later, we landed in New

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Continuation of DKG International Conference Reports

Cont'd., Vivian Hee's account

Orleans just in time for the start of the conference. Was it worth all the effort? **YOU BET IT WAS!** The speakers, seeing old and meeting new sisters, was worth it! The possibilities of doing new things, enduring conflicts, and knowing what we can do in a crisis situation make us resilient to face anything. We met our Japanese sisters again and heard about the WWII bombing in Hiroshima. We heard from a survivor who was an unborn child in her mother's womb when the atomic bomb occurred. Many years later, she is now affected with various illnesses. Personally, I had just visited last month and saw the entire Peace Park, so it was really dear to my heart. At this conference, I learned of the possibilities and endurance of what a person can do, and it just depends on you. It depends on your **attitude**, and as DKG sisters, **we can accomplish anything.**



From IMPOSSIBLE to ~~Im~~POSSIBLE -- You Can't Control the Uncontrollable and We Can Choose to BE THERE and LEAD!

By Katherine Sakuda, Iota Chapter

As one of the trio that braved travel to New Orleans despite the impending tsunami, which ultimately shut down the entire Daniel K Inouye Honolulu Airport for almost 24 hours, the cheerful warmth of the DKG sisterhood in New Orleans was something to look forward to. Like a beacon, the anticipation of meeting the Japan sisters and other DKG friends kept us hopeful that we would arrive in time for the opening session. We finally made it to the Sheraton on Canal Street in time to check in, register, and get to the session! Although cancelled flights and numerous re-routings dampened our enthusiasm, the smiling faces and warm hugs from our Hawaii, Japan, and international sisters more than made up for the disappointing travel beginning. We all assisted each other at breakout sessions, participated in Passion Projects, wiped away tears from the moving messages of the keynote speakers, enjoyed the "onolicious" beans and rice, gumbo, banana foster cheesecake, and the Paddle Wheeler, Creole Queen, Mississippi river cruise because we chose to **BE THERE** to participate and lead in whatever way we can. You, too, can **BE THERE** for your

Cont'd., Katherine Sakuda's account: chapter and DKG Hawaii Organization, for you are encouraged to participate and be engaged in the DKG Hawaii activities, enjoying the spirit of sisterhood and camaraderie, as these are well worth whatever travel or obstacle woes we might face.



First Timer's Impressions

By Cindy Asato-Koichi, Gamma Chapter



*Cindy presenting
her message at a
Morning General
Session
Conference*

Attending the DKG International Conference and State Office Leadership Training for the very first time was both inspiring and energizing! As 2nd VP/Membership Committee Chair, I gained a clearer understanding of my responsibilities and acquired tools to support each chapter. A key takeaway was the Centennial Challenge - our membership state goal to pursue in honor of DKG's 100-year legacy. Let's join forces to grow our state membership by 100 members by 2029! I also gained insight into the organization's renewed focus on membership: recruiting, reinstating, and retaining members; recognizing contributions at all levels; celebrating chapter work; and fostering relationships that help all members - new and seasoned - understand and share the value of DKG. I'm excited to share what I've learned and help others feel that same sense of belonging and purpose!

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Continuation of DKG International Conference Reports

Cont'd Cindy Asato-Koichi's first impressions:
Overall, I especially enjoyed meeting our DKG sisters from Japan State (whom I had heard so much about), connecting with fellow Membership Chairs, and forming new friendships with sisters from across the nation and around the world Click [HERE](#) to read the message that Cindy presented.



From DKG International: by Ellen Tanoura

Strategic Action Plan: Items to be aware of as you revise your documents

- Schools for Africa is replaced with UNICEF's Girls Initiative to Revitalize Learning and Success (**GIRLS**) project. This project provides educational support for girls in Africa.
- Supporting Early Career Educators (**SEE**) will remain the same.

Membership: In celebration of the 100th Anniversary of DKG, each state is challenged to increase their state membership by 100 members by May 11, 2029 (anniversary date).



Donate \$19.29: In honor of DKG Founder's Day, every member is asked to contribute to the DKG Centennial Celebration Fund. You may make your donation at Dkg.org and select [DKG Centennial Celebration](#).

Collegial Exchange: Call for Submissions

Try your hand at writing about the important work you are doing in your chapters or classrooms. To submit your applications go to DKG.org, select "MYDKG", "Apply/Submit", and "List of All".



YOUR INPUT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!
[CLICK HERE](#) TO PROVIDE A COMMENT OR QUESTION CONCERNING ANY OF THE ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE. MAHALO!



100 NEW MEMBERS

WE CAN DO IT!