

# Eta Mu Musings

AUGUST 2023 VOLUME LVI, No. 1

NEWS OF ETA MU CHAPTER AREA XVII DKG CA

*DKG CA - We Rise by Lifting Others*

**DELTA KAPPA GAMMA  
SOCIETY  
INTERNATIONAL**

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



Vision Statement:  
Leading Women Educators  
Impacting Education  
Worldwide

A "TOP TEN" DKG CA NEWSLETTER 2021



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## Welcoming Words from Our Presidents



**Hello, Eta Mu Sisters!**



Hello, Eta Mu's sisters. We hope you're enjoying the summer break despite the 100+ degree days we've had lately! Those are the times to plan an escape to the coast, jump in the pool, or just stay inside reading a good book.

Your Executive Board and other members met recently to plan an exciting 2023-24 Eta Mu year for you, filled with the three Fs: Fun, Food, and Fellowship. There also will be several "service to community" opportunities throughout the year. The planning committee will have more details for you on the new Calendar of Events and the information will also be updated on our Eta Mu website.

As always, carpooling will be available for every Eta Mu meeting or activity. Our Eta Mu community gains its strength from gathering together and supporting one another, so we want to make it as easy as possible for you to join us.

Judy Trask and Linda Chrabas, Eta Mu Co-Presidents

**DKG California: Educational – Professional - Making an Impact**

## CURRENT NEWS AND EVENTS



### ✿ A Note from the Editor ✿

I am looking for a co-editor, one who not only will proof the copy but help with the design. Please let me know if you are interested. Since I am still Area Director this biennium and am on the State Nominations Committee, I find I have less time and energy to devote to this newsletter. So, if you use Word, and like to design layouts let me know.

## ETA MU EVENTS PAST AND UPCOMING

### A JUNE GARDEN PARTY TO CELEBRATE ETA MU'S 2022-23 YEAR

A lovely garden party was held at Dawn's beautiful home. We appreciate Dawn's husband's and son's help to have everything ready. Attending the garden party were Adele, Dawn, Heather, Janice, Linda, Kathleen, Pat, Theresa, Trudi, Wendy, Wendy's Mom, Gwen Bruce, and Dr. Lisa Cooper-Wilkins.



After a delicious brunch, Dr. Lisa Cooper-Wilkins shared her presentation Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Lisa began her presentation by sharing her *I Am* poem. Lisa's presentation included guidelines for dialogue, why DEI matters to DKG, and the path to DEI for DKG CA.





Members enjoying fellowship in Dawn's backyard.



### Kickoff Breakfast to Begin 2023-24

Mark your calendar for Eta Mu's Kickoff Breakfast on Saturday, September 9, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. A delicious breakfast will be catered by The Local Chef 209. We will meet at Marla Rucobo's home, 2008 Shaddox Ave., Modesto. In addition to tasty food and a fun time to catch up with each other, we will have a Welcoming Ceremony (formerly called Induction). We have amazing key women educators to welcome.



To be part of this wonderful Kickoff, please write a check for \$20, payable to Eta Mu, and mail it to Theresa Foote, 1412 Citrus Drive, Modesto 95350. Your check needs to be to Theresa by Monday, August 28, 2023. Money will not be accepted on the day of the event because the breakfasts will be ordered on August 29, 2023.

Eta Mu is welcoming new members who will be inducted at the September Kickoff. We are pleased to have them join our chapter.




Alicia Garcia, a recipient of the Area XVII Early Career Educator Award, who teaches at Chrysler Elementary will be one of our newest members. Alicia teaches fourth grade along with Wendy Bruce and was nominated for the ECE Award by Denise Carlson-Nieto.



Salinda Padilla, a College and Career Educator at Turlock High School, another new member invited by Wendy Bruce will be joining Eta Mu.



In addition to the remarkable women above, Wendy Taro and Andrea Cadrett, both of Modesto, will also be joining our chapter. Wendy works for Modesto City Schools as a MTSS Instructional Coach at Martone Elementary. Andrea (a 2017 Teacher of the Year award recipient) is a Kindergarten teacher at Agnes Baptist Elementary in the Stanislaus Union School District.

## We Have A Great Year of Events Scheduled for 2023-2024



Below is a listing of the dates, the program, the service project, and the DKG Society International Purpose that we are fulfilling as we meet and work together as a chapter.



<p>Saturday, September 9, 2023. 10:00 a.m.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kickoff Brunch</li> <li>• Welcoming Ceremony</li> <li>• General Meeting</li> </ul>	<p>Home of Marla Rucobo 2008 Shaddox Ave., Modesto</p> <p><b>Service Project</b> - bring an item for our Area XVII Fall Brunch basket. Proceeds from the basket will be for Early Career Educators</p> <p>Basket Theme TBD</p> <p>Purposes 1 and 2</p>
<p>Saturday, October 14, 2023 9:30 a.m. Area XVII Fall Brunch</p> 	<p>Empowerment Through Art</p> <p>Speaker - Amy Bultena, Stanislaus County Office of Education</p>	<p>Martin Petersen Education Center 720 12th St., Modesto</p> <p>Purposes 2, 3, 6</p>
<p>Saturday, November 4, 2023</p>  <p>Time TBD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tour and Volente Coffee Roasters</li> <li>• Volente Coffee. Roasters is a social enterprise of the Modesto Gospel Mission.</li> <li>• There will be an Executive Committee meeting after the program.</li> </ul>	<p>Modesto Gospel Mission 1400 Yosemite Blvd, Modesto</p> <p>Service Project - Socks for Veterans. Please donate socks for men or women</p> <p>Purpose 7</p>



<p>Sunday, December 17, 2023                  2:00 p.m., followed by dinner.</p> <p>Dinner location TBD</p>	<p>Winter Wonderettes a Musical</p> 	<p>Gallo Center, 1000 I St., Modesto                  Foster Family Theater</p> <p>Purpose 1</p>
<p>Thursday, January 18, 2024                  5:30 p.m.</p> 	<p>Soup Supper</p> <p>Program - Trauma Informed Instruction</p> <p>Speaker - TBD</p>	<p>Home of Heather Nonaca                  4305 Crown Valley Way, Modesto</p> <p>Service Project - Gospel Mission Collection, monetary donation or toiletries for women or children. For monetary check donations, please make the check payable to Modesto Gospel Mission.</p> <p>Purpose 7</p>

<p>January 2024. Dates TBD</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>Virtual Leadership Seminar</p>
<p>Friday, February 23, 2024                  5:30 p.m.</p> 	<p>Chinese Cooking Demonstration and Dinner</p> <p>Program - AI and Chatbot</p> <p>Speaker - TBD</p>	<p>Home of Sally Price                  2312 Ridderkerk Circle,                  Modesto</p> <p>Service Project - donate a book for the Mary Lou Dieterich Elementary School Library</p> <p>Purposes 3 and 7</p>
<p>Thursday, March 7, 2024                  8:30 a.m.</p>	<p>Read Across America</p> 	<p>Mary Lou Dieterich Elementary School                  2412 Warm Springs Dr,                  Modesto</p> <p>Purpose 6</p>
<p>March 2024, TBD</p>	<p>Literacy Awards and Luncheon</p>	<p>TBD</p>



<p>Tuesday, March 12, 2024 5:30 p.m.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potato Fest</li> <li>• Program - Diversity, Inclusion, Equity</li> <li>• Speaker, Dr. Lisa Cooper-Wilkins</li> <li>• Table Share I Am Poems</li> </ul>	<p>Home of Janice Freeman 3909 St. Nicholas Dr., Modesto</p> <p>Purpose 6</p>
<p>Wednesday, April 24, 2024 5:30 p.m.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pizza and Salad</li> <li>• Program - Need the topic/focus</li> <li>• Speaker - Modesto Mayor Sue Zwahlen</li> </ul>	<p>Home of Judy Trask, 3316 Matalea Court, Modesto</p> <p>Service Project - donate items for Jared Boxes. Items to fit a shoe- sized storage box filled with small gifts, toys, games, crayons, coloring books, and fun activities for children in the hospital. No food.</p> <p>Purpose 4</p>

<p>Saturday, April 27, 2024 8:30 a.m.</p>	<p>Love Modesto</p> 	<p><b>Community Service Project - TBD</b></p> <p>Project - TBD</p> <p>Purpose 6</p>
<p>Friday, May 3, 2024, to Sunday, May 5, 2024</p>	<p>DKG CA Convention <i>Our Compass Is On New Horizons</i></p> 	<p><b>Santa Clara Marriott</b> <b>2700 Mission College Blvd</b> <b>Santa Clara</b></p>
<p>Thursday, May 21, 2024</p>	<p>Assemble Jared Boxes and Salad Buffet</p>	<p>Home of Pat Elston 3141 Bramham Court Modesto</p> <p>Service Project: Jared Boxes. Items to fit a shoe- sized</p>

<p>4:30 p.m.</p> 		<p>storage box filled with small gifts, toys, games, crayons, coloring books, and fun activities for children in the hospital.                  No food.</p> <p>Purpose 1</p>
<p>Saturday, June 1, 2024</p>	<p>Garden Party and General Meeting</p> 	<p>Home of Dawn Pitcock                  390 Vintage Drive                  Turlock</p> <p>Service Project: Backpack filled with school supplies, any grade K - 12, for Modesto Gospel Mission</p> <p>Purpose 2</p>

**June 14, 2023**

**Summary of Executive Committee Meeting and Program Planning for 2023-2024**

All members were asked to complete a Chapter Member Satisfaction and Feedback Survey. The responses guided today's program planning meeting.

Attendance: Linda Chrabas, Judy Trask, Denise Carlson-Nieto, Dawn Pitcock, Wendy Bruce, Pat Elston, Janice Freeman, and Kathleen Heinzinger

**Discussed**

- Eta Mu will use an Informational Meeting for Orientation
- Eta Mu will use Welcoming Ceremony for Induction
- July 13, 2023, will be an Informational Meeting and a Welcoming Ceremony at Kathleen's home, 2212 Quebec Ct., Modesto
- Wendy shared the Collection of Program Project and Activity Ideas from the DKG International Society website
- Eta Mu will have a Community Service Project every other month
- Programs and Community Service Projects for 2023-2024 were planned
- Executive Committee Meetings and General Business Meetings were planned for 2023-2024

Submitted by Kathleen Heinzinger, Co-VP Programs

## Member Highlights



### "Embracing the Sisterhood: A First-Timer's Journey at the DKG Convention" By Heather Nonaca

Attending the DKG Convention is something that has been suggested to me since I joined DKG in 2016. Unfortunately, Convention always happens to fall around standardized state testing and one of the busiest weeks in my school year. However, this year, I marked my calendar, called in a favor from a colleague to sub my classes, and made my way to Burlingame, looking forward to "Shaping Tomorrow Together." Here's what Convention taught me:

1. Dawn Pitcock's (Eta Mu) loves Starbucks as much as I do and takes a copious amount of notes while brightening everyone's day with her joyous aura.
2. Wendy Bruce (Eta Mu) is a supportive soul that generously offered to show me around her school's campus (that my Autistic son, Emmet will be attending next year) once we returned from Convention. The offer lifted a giant weight off of my shoulders and I'm so thankful to have one of my sisters at Emmet's school next year.
3. Area XVII produces leaders—as exemplified by the election of Kathleen Heinzinger and Patricia Elston to the Nominations Committee. Congratulations!
4. Suzanne Roy (DKG CA Corresponding Secretary) is a hoot to have a drink with, especially when you're being serenaded by a barbershop quartet.
5. Saying goodbye to fallen sisters is tough, but honoring them at the Convention is a beautiful way of acknowledging all the ways that they brightened their communities during their lives.
6. Being surrounded by educators that have decades of stories to tell, advice to offer, and friendship to gain, is exactly the type of energy boost that tired educators need in May.

The Convention also gave me an opportunity to lead a break-out session on "6 Ways Google Forms Can Support your Chapter," which many members of my own chapter were able to attend to offer their support. If you'd like a copy of my presentation please click [here](#). Overall, Convention allowed me the opportunity to grow closer to members of my own chapter, while making connections with other members all across California. DKG may seem small at the chapter level, but it is wide reaching at both the state and international levels. In that way, Convention reminds us that we are part of something bigger. Uniting key women educators, honoring them, advancing and stimulating their careers, informing them of legislation in education, initiating support for legislation, and endowing scholarships to aid their journeys not only supports individual women educators, it also supports our students, classrooms, and local and global communities



as well. Furthermore, hearing from Dr. Marine Avagyan (Epsilon Epsilon) has encouraged me to be brave in taking on other leadership opportunities in DKG, while leaning on those that have come before me. All-in-all, I learned that “Shaping Tomorrow Together,” doesn’t seem as daunting when you know you have a strong team of women educators in your corner.

## **" I was absolutely enthralled with the state convention experience!": A First-Timer's Reflections on Attending the DKG Convention"**

**By Dawn Pitcock**

When I talk to fellow educators (and my own biological sister, who is a member of Tau, but did NOT attend our State Conference), my first statement is this: I have NEVER IN MY LIFE been surrounded by so many super smart women who were NOTHING BUT POSITIVE, EVER! Every single person I met was helpful, supportive, and genuinely wanted to hear what I had to say. It was amazing meeting so many like-minded women, hearing some outstanding speakers with fantastic stories and information to share. This experience came at a very important time for me, and completely recharged me and helped to finish my school year on a positive note!

During sessions, I learned about the educational journeys of some superlative women—one who finally got her PhD at the age of 60! (Is there really still time for me to do that and have it pay off? Does having it pay for itself really matter if it’s something I want to do?). Connie Rensink of Texas shared the incredible opportunity to go to a highly competitive leadership seminar (called IGNITE) where participants earn the equivalent of an MBA in two weeks. This program occurs in Texas and is purported to be INTENSE—and just right up my alley! The program is offered only in odd years now and the deadline for this is December 15, 2023. Here is a link to the Google Form Application for [IGNITE](#).

Finally, I attended as many events and meals as possible and enjoyed every moment! Every single woman I came across was uplifting, cheerful and ready to learn and grow with our sisters! I will absolutely be going again next year and encourage each of you to attend as well! The more, the merrier! Truly!



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*Member Birthdays: Happy Birthday to You!*



**August** 

- 16 Pat Elston
- 16 Deb Dooley
- 22 Marla Rucobo

**September** 

- 2 Carol Wharton
- 4 Karen Mendonca
- 14 Janice Chan

**October** 

- 3 Theresa Foote
- 16 Susan Neufeld
- 17 Trudi Sigmon
- 17 Judy Trask

**November** 

- 5 Elena Vasquez
- 30 Adele Little



**SISTER TO SISTER**

*Celebrate our members!*

**Heather Nonaca** was selected as the California Virtual Academy, North Campus, Teacher of the Year! Recommendations included, “Innovative in her lesson planning, goes above and beyond for all students. Strives to be a better teacher every day. Always Prepared.” “Heather is always fast with her responses, communicative, and reliable when we’re working together.” “She goes above and beyond, always thinking of her



students/colleagues.” “Heather is amazing. She is always helping her team; she goes above and beyond for the History team. Heather is helpful to the newer teachers, too.” Congratulations Heather, a key woman educator!

**Susan Neufeld** has just been approved to become a board member for LearningQuest—Stanislaus Literacy Center. In a message July 18, Susan says she, “ is looking forward to being part of this group as it addresses the multiple facets of literacy throughout the county.”



A Message From **Carol Wharton**:



Hi Ladies.

I’m currently in Stratford, England. Tomorrow (7/16) I will have the pleasure of singing with my singing sisters through Harmony Travel. We will be rehearsing twice before we put on a 90-minute show in the evening. Among our group are two choruses and an amazing quartet. Altogether, there are 61 on our tour. Later in the week, we’ll be performing again in London. The tour in England is for 8 nights. We’ll also be exploring quite a few historical sites along the way. At the close of this tour, I will be traveling into France for a bit more singing and have a time to experience a lot of artistic sights. I’ll be back home on July 28.

My best to everyone,  
Carol

**Heather** writes to us:



Thank You: DKG has blessed me in so many ways but here is one of my favorites: In late June, Wendy Bruce met me at Chrysler Elementary to give me a tour of the campus since my son will be attending the Autism TK program there in the fall. During the tour Wendy was able to introduce to Emmet’s teacher, who gave me a full tour of her classroom, procedures, and schedule. I can’t thank Wendy enough for making this connection possible and bringing this mom some assurance that her son will be well taken care of in the upcoming school year. Thank you, Wendy, for your time and friendship.

Warm Regards,

Heather

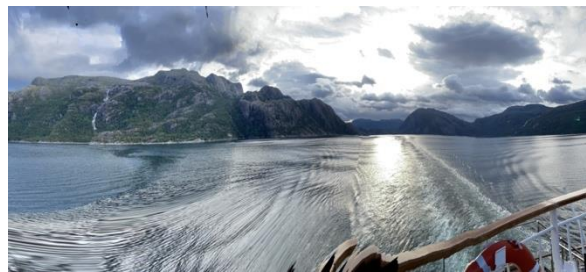


**Janice Freeman** writes:

Greetings from Norway, where we're at the end of a very special trip that started in Germany for 10 days and then moved on to Norway. The best parts have been reconnecting with dear friends, but we've also seen glorious sights. Here's a few of the more spectacular ones!



*Skyline in Oslo*



*View off the stern of our Hurtigruten ship as we sailed through a fjord*



*Stalheim overlooks which reminded us of Yosemite*



*One of the scenes along the famed Atlantic Road*



*Crossing the Arctic Circle*



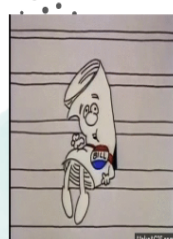
## **EDUCATION LAW AND POLICY UPDATE**

**Greetings Sisters! Here are a few Legislative Updates (“Nonaca’s News!”)**

**Nonaca’s News”**



### Legislative Updates:

	<h2>Educational Law/Policy</h2>	
<p><b>Vision:</b> All area legislative chairs and chapter legislative representatives will disperse legislative information in order to empower members to be legislative and policy advocates.</p>		
<p><b>Initial Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify chapter representatives</li><li>• Lead a Zoom training in October to provide chapter representatives with a toolkit for successfully engaging their chapter members and fulfilling their responsibilities.</li><li>• Promote the DKG National Legislative Seminar in Washington, D.C. (March 10-13, 2024).</li></ul>		

Greetings Sisters! In June I attended the **Summer Leadership Planning Session** as a new member of the **DKG CA Educational Law and Policy Committee**. I had a great time meeting my fellow committee members and enjoyed being surrounded by such an amazing group of educated, talented, professional, and inspiring women. We have great plans in store for our committee to help empower our members at the chapter level to support DKG CA’s legislative platform. I can’t wait to share them with you later this year.

**Breaking News!** Gov. Gavin Newsom signed the 2023-24 State Budget package on July 10, following an agreement reached with the Legislature in late June. The budget includes more than \$108 billion for public education and a historic 8.22% Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) – the highest since the 1970s.

For my full Legislative Update, please click [here](#)



Heather Nonaca

Area XVII Legislative Chair  
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“One child, one teacher, one book and one pen, can change the world.” -Malala Yousafzai



