

An Important Update on the Avenue M Project

From International President Dr. Debbie LeBlanc and Executive Director Nita R. Scott, CAE



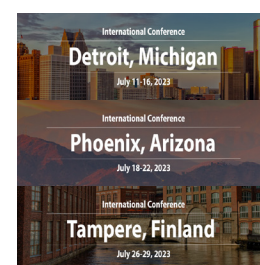
DKGIEF: Golden Gift and DKG Ignite



The following update was presented by International President Dr. Debbie LeBlanc and Executive Director Nita R. Scott, CAE, at the 2023 International Conferences in Detroit, Phoenix, and Tampere. The presentation included information critical to the growth of the Society and a challenge from President LeBlanc to members as DKG approaches its centennial anniversary. Due to the conversational style delivery of the presentation, the script published here includes an indication of the content delivered by each speaker.



App Permissions and Phone Security Tips



2023 International Conferences End



2023 Achievement Award Winner!

DEBBIE: This is a somber, necessary conversation. Our members matter, and without you, this organization would be extinct. We are facing challenges of membership, leadership in a variety of roles, and marketing our organization. As a membership organization, we are at a crossroads that could determine our sustainability in the future. Members matter at each level of the Society, and we need them for this organization to flourish and thrive into the next decade and beyond. The Society's vitality, relevance,

and sustainability are keys to the survival and ultimate growth of our organization. And these begin with the chapter. Chapters are the heart and soul of this organization. Interactions at this level of the Society are powerful and clearly can make or break our Society. After all, as I said earlier, we can move heaven and earth at the international and state organization levels, but the buck truly stops with the chapters.

This past fall, I asked the Administrative and Executive Boards to approve the hiring of a firm to complete a

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*Dr. Debbie LeBlanc,
International
President 2022-2024*

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deep-dive analysis of multiple facets of the organization to provide a fresh, neutral perspective that would provide our members with critical information to make informed decisions. This information is important to meet the goals

of relevancy, vitality, and sustainability as a valuable organization for women educators. With that in mind, we interviewed three very reputable firms and decided to recommend Avenue M, a firm based in Chicago, with Sheri Jacobs as CEO. Shortly after, a detailed work plan listing tasks, responsibilities, and deadlines was developed and accepted.

This plan included a deep-dive discovery of relevant documents, including the strategic plan, past research and data, and the Society's website. Membership input is critical to a deeper understanding of the needs, interests, motivations, and jobs to be done by women educators. To that end, oral interviews and surveys were completed with women who represented these categories: members in the organization, women who have dropped their membership, and educators who are eligible for membership but, for a variety of reasons, have never joined DKG.

To date, the firm has completed an analysis of our governing documents, more than 25 oral interviews (including the use of translators when necessary), and almost 11,000 surveys. The plan is to provide preliminary results by early September with more detailed plans for future growth by the end of the year. The recommendations they provide are not just for international use; they are intended to be shared with state organizations and chapters. This support is for 12 months so that all levels can benefit

from understanding and communicating the information and creating plans for measurable and sustainable success.

NITA: As most of you know, our organization was founded in 1929 by a small group of women led by Dr. Annie Webb Blanton in Austin, Texas, on the campus of the University of Texas. These women understood that, at that time, women organizing for any purpose other than social was frowned upon – to the degree that jobs, careers, and more would be at risk. So, although they were actually fighting for women's rights and better conditions for women in education, they shielded themselves from risk by making the organization look like a sorority. At that time, there was a definite need for secrecy, so they borrowed paraphernalia from a sorority on the campus, created the organization, and ultimately adopted the name "Delta Kappa Gamma."

But even so, the 12-person membership of the one small chapter in one state quickly grew. The organization grew from 12 to 10,000 in 10 short years! That one chapter grew to more than 300 chapters and that one state to 35 states. Remember, at that time they had no email, no Facebook, no Twitter, and phone calls were expensive and cumbersome. They increased membership by over 9000% and expanded organizational reach by 97% with mail and personal travelers as their main methods of contact!

However, after reaching our peak in 1991 with over 168,000 members, we have unfortunately fallen to less

than 1/3 that number this year. Many of you who know me have heard me report membership data repeatedly over the years, and I have always promised that if it ever became critical, I would tell you.

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*Nita R. Scott, CAE
Executive Director*

**“
...The future is
in your hands.
”**

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Well, ladies, we are there – our decrease has become critical.

And while our membership is decreasing, and I do think we are at a crossroads, I have to share with you that I believe we are still as relevant today as we were in 1929. Our story touches women of all ages and walks of life every time I share it. Our Founders were amazing and progressive women – agents of change and mavericks in their time. They worked to build the organization we know today as DKG – and I hear them cheering us on as we face the challenges of a new era.

I have shared our story in many places where women, young and old, have heard how we were founded and learned about these women. And every time, those women who hear it express how very relevant and meaningful it is to them as they navigate a world still so challenging for us.

I love DKG and what we represent. I love that I was honored with membership and will do all I can to sustain this organization into the next 100 years. And I hope you are just as committed – because, quite frankly, the future is in your hands.

So, let's go back to the data. The truth is that, if we continue to lose membership at the current rate, the organization may not survive. It is an uncomfortable thought, but it is time we face the truth – because, you see, as executive director, it is my job to be concerned about fiscal and financial sustainability. So, of course, I am concerned about the effect membership loss may have on our budget, and I believe it is my responsibility to be honest about that.

But the fact is – not only as executive director but also as a member – I am even more concerned about what membership loss is doing to the IMPACT WE HAVE in the world, and in the education

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“
...If we continue to lose membership at the current rate, the organization may not survive.
”

DEADLINES

September 1

State Organization Treasurer
Annual Report (Form 16)

September 15

Arts & Humanities Gallery
Submissions for Fall Gallery
(opens August 15)

September 15

International Speakers Fund
Speaker application

September 15

Nomination Recommendations
and Endorsement Forms for
International Officers/Elected
Committees

September 30

All dues must be entered in the
portal to avoid members being
dropped Oct. 1.

October 1

All members marked unpaid in
portal are dropped.

October 1

Bulletin: Journal submissions

October 1

Proposed amendments to
Constitution/ISR

October 15

Society Representative request

October 31

Website Compliance Renewal
(Form 72) submissions

HQ CLOSED

September 4

Labor Day (USA)

October 9

Columbus Day (USA)

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profession, and on behalf of those who educate and learn. From 1991 to today, it is not the loss of more than 100,000 members' dues payments that concerns me most — it is losing what those more than 100,000 women could be doing for education, educators, and children today! I am concerned that we have lost our voice and our impact worldwide. And I have to believe the world has missed us and the impact we had and could have again. It is about the nurturing of that many more young women joining the profession and the growing of that many more women into the outstanding educators they were meant to be. Who better to grow great teachers and build up our profession than DKG?

So, to circle back to my story. I am a totally different person today — only 18 years later — as a result of DKG. Membership has been a life-changing experience. My only regret is that no one invited me sooner. . . . So, I am going to ask a bold question — for a moment of reflection: How are you different today as a result of DKG? Are you glad for your membership experience? What if DKG had not survived long enough for you to have that opportunity? How would your life be different if DKG ceased to exist tomorrow? Our largest number of members, as best we can estimate, fall between the ages of 66–75 years old. And that concerns me because it is those younger than I who will take the helm when I am gone.

I serve on the board of directors for the Texas Society of Association Executives, and we (as well as many other organizations) consider under 35–40 as “Next Generation” members — those members who will carry on the work of the organization and grow us into the future. About 2% of our DKG membership would be considered Next Gen — at least as best we can estimate ... and that's a whole other story for another day. But in cross referencing data, I find it interesting that it appears a large number of us are inducting new members, but not only are we not netting growth because we lose more than we induct ... it appears that we are inducting members who look like us, act like us, talk like us, and ... something critical to our long range future ... are about our same age. While I know talking about the Next Gen is not always popular, we have to ask ourselves: When we are all gone from this world, who will carry the organization on? Who will be the DKG of the future?

I want DKG to continue to grow into the future for the benefit of my colleagues who follow me, to ensure the

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future of the profession I love and believe in, and for the future of my children, grandchildren, and their children. I believe this organization can change the world. Do you?

DEBBIE: We are at a pivotal place in our organization that we must be ready to make changes. We must go forward informed by the past but, intentionally and skillfully, find new ways to meet our Purposes, foster leadership growth, and impact women

educators for the future. Our ongoing work will need to focus on fulfilling the needs of long-term members while simultaneously enriching the experiences of future generations. *If we cling to our conventional approaches and structures, we will lose our relevance. We will have members but not influence. We will have lost our voices. Radical change is necessary if we are not only to survive but also to be successful in rebuilding this organization. A new focus with a new vision and purpose is mission critical at this point.*

In [early September], Avenue M will provide to us – and I don’t mean international leadership, I mean us ... I mean you and the entire organization – a draft report including an executive summary, key findings, summary of interviews, gap analysis, SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, Member Value Canvas, implementation strategy, and recommendations. I am confident it is not going to be pretty and all wrapped up in a purple bow. Most likely, it will cause us to be uncomfortable, but that’s ok. We asked for this – so we will listen, reflect, and decide next steps. There must be a realization that change with action cannot happen without difficult conversations. If this organization means as much to you as it does to me, I know we are ready, willing, and quite able to take that stand.

Revitalization in DKG is a process where members of a state organization realize there is a grave concern that the state organization could dissolve for a variety of reasons. There is a process that includes gathering information to identify areas of greatest need, meeting with members of the state organization with a trained facilitator, and developing a plan for revitalization. It has been a highly successful initiative for these states. Frankly, I envision a process such as revitalization happening with this entire organization.

I challenge each one of us to find our remarkable selves. Do you remember the commercial that said, “Be like Mike!” (as in Michael Jordan)? Well, why don’t we say, “Be like Annie!” She would say this: “Keep up with the moving world while not discarding what in the old has value. But don’t cling to the old when the worth has passed. *Don’t be a person so set in your views that nothing can change you.*” She would want us to have these important, challenging, and most likely uncomfortable discussions so that we are informed to make decisions that will move this Society forward. The time to act is NOW. Our Founders were not afraid – they dreamed, persevered, and accomplished what many thought could never be achieved. Let’s be like them. We are not afraid of what can go wrong but excited about what can go right. It’s time to make changes, time to take action, and time to move forward before it is too late. And finally, If not us...Who? If not now...When? I’m ready. Are you?

“
Keep up with the moving world while not discarding what in the old has value.
”

Nita R Scott

Debra B. LeBlanc

DKG INTERNATIONAL EDUCATORS FOUNDATION COLUMN

It Only Takes a Spark...To IGNITE the Leader in You



DKG Ignite, a Golden Gift Fund program that supports a one-week leadership management seminar, offers selected applicants the opportunity to grow their leadership skills in an energizing atmosphere with incredible peer-to-peer interaction and instructional leadership from the world-class faculty of the top-ranked McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas in Austin.

The Golden Gift Fund, overseen by the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International Educators Foundation (DKGIEF), makes DKG Ignite: Leaders Empowering Leaders available to selected DKG members during even-numbered years. The next seminar will be held July 14–20, 2024. The DKG Ignite application opened on **July 1, 2023** and closes on **December 1, 2023**.

The Golden Gift Fund began as part of the Golden Anniversary celebration of the Society with a generous donation from the late Dr. Eula Lee Carter (Texas State Organization) coupled with donations from members throughout the Society. This fund currently relies solely on donations.



Candi Martin, AR

Candi Martin is the 2022–2024 Leadership Development and Golden Gift Committee Chair. As a 2012 participant in what was then called the Golden Gift Leadership Management Seminar (now DKG Ignite), she encourages all members to apply for this extraordinary opportunity. Candi affirms: “I believe that the most valuable professional and personal growth investment that a DKG woman can make in herself and in her future is to attend DKG Ignite: Leaders Empowering Leaders. This weeklong seminar is truly a difference-maker. The most oft-heard descriptor about this experience is ‘life changing.’ To be honest,

I was hesitant to believe that this short time spent with people whom I did not know, in a place I did not know, in classes that I was sure couldn’t be *that* relevant to me was going to be ‘life changing.’ However, to that point, no opportunity that DKG offered me had disappointed. So, I applied. I was selected. I attended. **I was wrong!** It really **was** ‘life changing.’ Not only did it change my life, but I also saw the lives of others change. I saw 31 strangers become dear friends. I saw these 31 new friends discover the best in themselves and each other. Fear was replaced with confidence. Hesitance was replaced with courage. It truly was transformative. I know that we most regret the chances we didn’t take, so I am most grateful I chose not to miss out on DKG Ignite. I strongly urge you to apply.”

The Ignite experience will help participants achieve their potential in both their personal and professional lives. Recipients of the Golden Gift Fund scholarship for DKG Ignite eagerly express how attending this program has enriched their lives.

Susan Halliday, immediate past president of Arizona State Organization, reflects: “In 2022, I attended the first Ignite Leadership Seminar. It was a week of intense learning from the best professors at the UT McCombs School of Business. My classmates and I attended class for 6 hours each day and 2 hours in the evening and grew remarkably close. I feel I profited by getting to know the 20 strong women within the group. In class, we covered marketing, advocacy, mental



Susan Halliday, AZ

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agility, negotiation, conflict management, creative solutions, and wellness of self. For me, the most beneficial information was gaining a better understanding of personality types and how [best to use] this information when collaborating with other people. Ignite was a fast and intense learning experience, well worth my time and the Society's investment. I came out a better leader because of Ignite."



*Ignite participants
Cathy Daugherty, VA,
and Nancy Bentz, FL*

Nancy Bentz of Florida describes her experience: "Ignite brought *explicit* guidance about how to build a future for our organization, which at one time, for me, inexplicitly lay rather dormant and somewhat stagnant. As the classes continued, I saw ways the teachings fit into the organization's future. While each of these topics may be used for any of life's stages or circumstances, they have a direct impact on our organization's future vision as we consider changes. The impressive and knowledgeable professors made presentations geared for DKG's move forward."

Nancy also asserts, "I'm certain I can speak for all 21 Ignite attendees when I offer our kudos to the planners who made this experience possible. The financial and member support was astounding. I just can't express enough the impact made by our leaders' efforts. We all deeply appreciate the opportunity to attend **Ignite**, and we've become lifelong supporters of each other."

"Participating in the DKG Ignite: Leaders Empowering Leaders Seminar was life-changing," says **Kristin Merkle**, Iowa State Organization member and 2022 participant. "I walked away with not only a network of new DKG sisters, but I expanded my knowledge about being an effective leader. I was able to reflect on my learning each day and think about how I could use this information in my DKG life and in my fifth-grade classroom. I was halfway through my state president biennium while taking part in Ignite, but after returning, I quickly began to share leadership topics while visiting chapters and while planning our own



Kristin Merkle, IA



*Ignite Participants Karen Dole, IA,
Carmen Wendt, AZ, and Belinda
Clift, OK — All three went on to
become state presidents.*

Iowa state leadership seminar held this summer. I hope to continue to help grow leaders with the confidence and knowledge I gained from my Ignite experience. I encourage everyone to apply, and I thank DKG for providing this experience to grow my leadership skills and change my life forever."

Belinda Clift, DKG International Communications & Marketing Chair, recognizes her selection for DKG Ignite as a tremendous honor. She acknowledges: "The time spent learning leadership skills, not just from the staff at the University of Texas but also from each other, was unparalleled. I was part of a diverse group of DKG members from six countries, with varying ages, education backgrounds, teaching experiences, and levels of

involvement in DKG. During our time together we formed a bond that has tied us together over the years. We are each other's support system[s], sounding board[s], and cheerleaders as we continue to expand our leadership skills and take on new positions in DKG— from chapter roles to state to international."

Support leaders who build leaders! Your generous contributions to the DKGIEF Golden Gift Fund allow selected recipients to attend the biennial one-week leadership management seminar known as DKG Ignite: Leaders Empowering Leaders Program. To donate to any of the nine funds managed by DKGIEF, go to **dkg.org**

> **DKGIEF.**

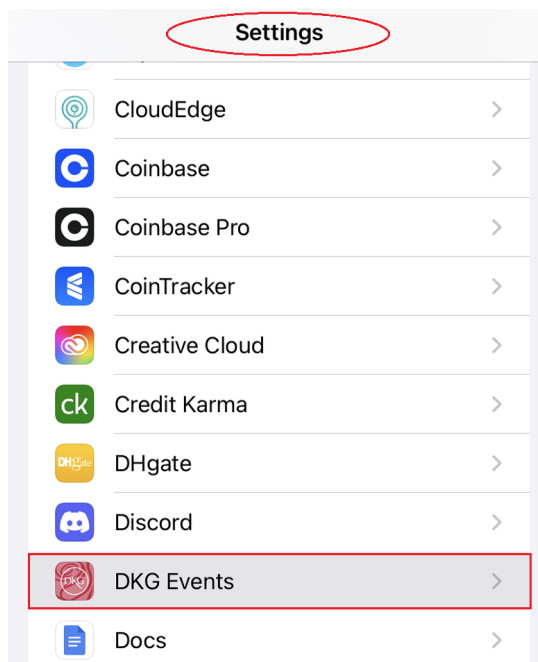
TECH CORNER: APP PERMISSIONS AND PHONE SAFETY SETTINGS

Smartphones have created a host of new possibilities. From enabling long-distance social interactions to keeping us connected to the latest news from around the world, it's no doubt that the smartphone has become a near critical part of our everyday lives. However, all these new features can mean there's a lot more to learn when it comes to using your smartphone. For example, attendees at the 2023 international conferences raised quite a few questions about their phone's safety settings, app permissions, and sharing photos to the DKG Events App.

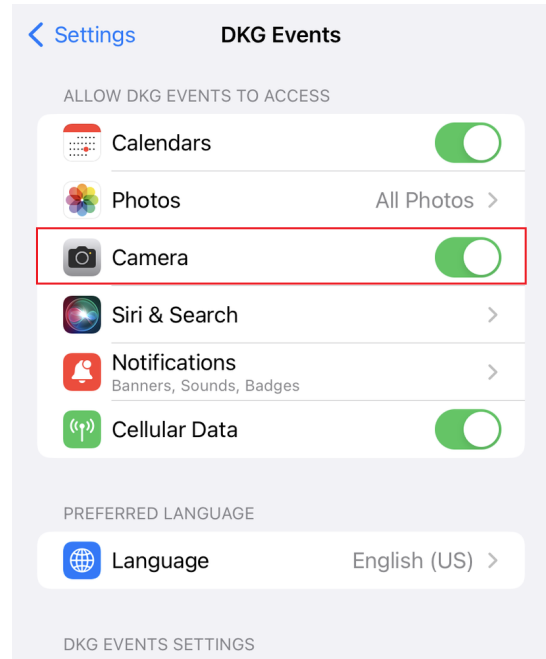
Be aware that your phone has a host of settings designed to protect your safety. For future reference, the following steps will allow apps (like the DKG Events App) to view and share your photos. Remember, these are steps to take in your phone's settings app, *not* in the social media app itself.

iPhone:

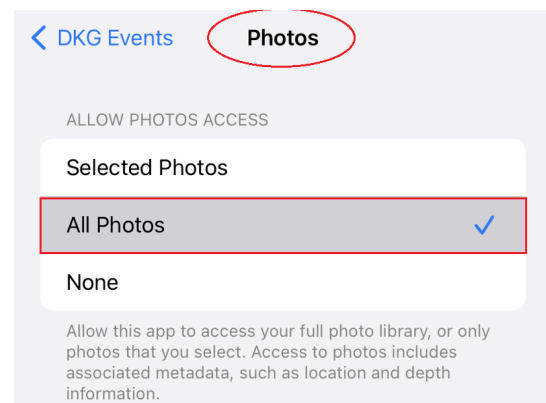
1. Go to the Settings app and scroll down to the app whose permissions you wish to change (in this case, the "DKG Event" App).



2. Toggle "Camera" to "on."



3. Select "All Photos," NOT "Selected Photos." Selecting "All Photos" will make it so that your entire camera roll is visible from within the app. This means you'll be able to share photos directly from the app. If you choose "Selected Photos," you will be unable to view your photos within the app. This means you'll only be able to share photos for which you have given prior authorization, which can be a long, strenuous process, especially if you want to share a photo you've just taken.

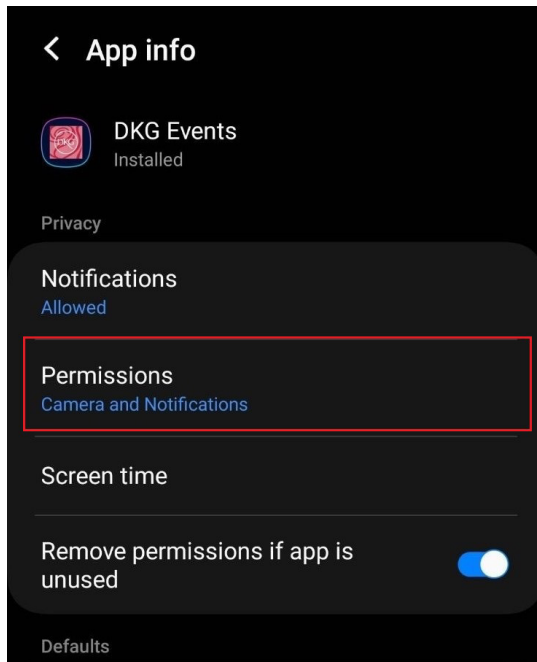


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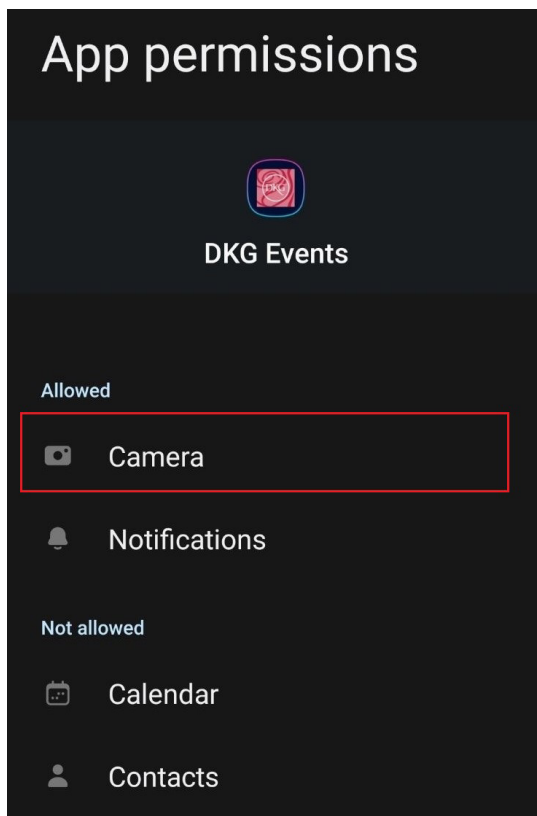
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Android*:

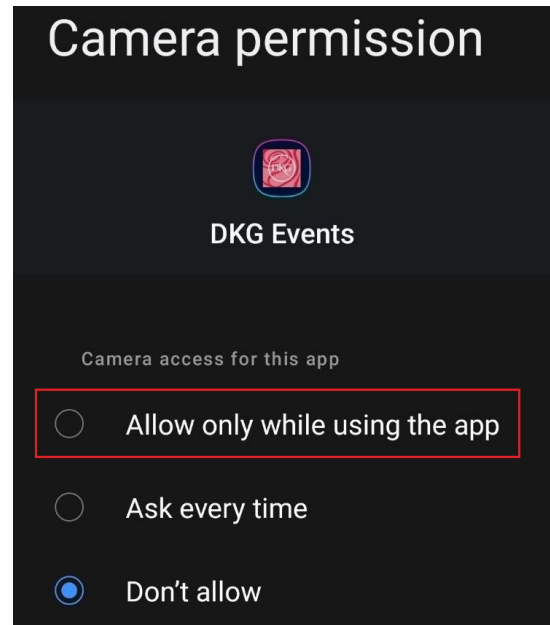
1. In the Settings app, go to the App info for “DKG Events.”



2. Go to “App permissions.”



3. Change camera settings from “Don’t Allow” to “Allow while using the app.” This will allow you to view your photos from within the app.



For Android users: Please ensure you have given Storage permission to the DKG Event app for uploading pictures from your phone. This can be found in the Settings app under **Security & Privacy > Privacy > Permission manager. Here, you can also find out which other apps have allowed or denied Storage permission.*

Please be aware that app permissions may change when your phone undergoes a security and/or system update. These updates tend to happen automatically. After each update, check your app permissions again to be sure they are still appropriate for the apps you’ll be using.

Thank you for sharing your incredible experiences at the 2023 international conventions! The DKG Events App will return in 2024 for the International Convention in National Harbor, Maryland.

For a more detailed description of what these permissions mean and how to change them, head to:

- **iPhone:** <https://tinyurl.com/yf8ksv6v>
- **Android:** <https://tinyurl.com/yckvzanu>

A Look Inside the 2024 International Convention in National Harbor, Maryland

The 2024 DKG International Convention comes to National Harbor, Maryland, from **July 9-13, 2024**. Hosted at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center, attendees will enjoy gorgeous views of the Potomac River and access to waterfront terraces. The bustling town of National Harbor features malls, boutiques, casinos, wine bars, top-notch restaurants, and so much more. And, for a dive deep into American history, Washington, D.C., and Alexandria, Virginia, are only a short drive away.

Like those before it, the 2024 International Convention promises to deliver enlightening breakout sessions, the chance to network with fellow members from around the world, and the opportunity to shape the future of DKG as members gather to vote on proposed amendments to the Society's governing documents. Two incredible keynote speakers are already lined up, with more excitement to come. Keep an eye on the *DKG NEWS* and www.dkg.org over the next few months for more information on this incredible, enriching event!

Keynote Speakers:

Margot Lee Shetterly – Writer, researcher, and entrepreneur Margot Lee Shetterly is the author of *Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race*, which was a top book of 2016 for both *TIME* and *Publisher's Weekly*, a *USA Today* bestseller, and a #1 (instant) *New York Times* bestseller.

The film adaptation of Shetterly's book became the number one movie in America upon its release in 2016. It was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture and Best Adapted Screenplay, and star Octavia Spencer was nominated for Best Supporting Actress. Per *The New York Times*, the film introduces viewers to "real people you might wish you had known more about earlier ... [who] can fill you with outrage at the persistence of injustice and gratitude toward those who had the grit to stand up against it." A television show is also in the works.

Shetterly is also the founder of the Human Computer Project, a digital archive telling the stories all of NASA's "Human Computers," women from all backgrounds whose work tipped the balance in favor of the United States in WWII, the Cold War, and the Space Race. Shetterly's father was among the early generation of Black NASA engineers and scientists, and she had direct access to NASA executives and the women featured in the book. She grew up around the historically Black Hampton University, where some of the women in *Hidden Figures* studied. Her research has been supported by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. She is currently a scholar-in-residence at the University of Virginia, with joint appointments at the McIntire School of Commerce and the School of Engineering.



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Andre Bradford (S.C. Says) – Andre Bradford, a.k.a. S.C. Says, is an Austin-based slam poet who has been performing slam poetry since 2013. He has toured and been featured at venues and universities across the country, and his work has been featured in the *Huffington Post*, *Write About Now*, *The Edge* radio, *The Culture Trip*, and *Blavity*. He is a two-time Austin Poetry Slam Champion, the 2022 Texas Grand Slam Champion, and author of the poetry collection *Golden Brown Skin*. He also once popped a bag of popcorn without burning a single kernel, which is arguably one of his greatest achievements.

Bradford's poetry covers a gamut of topics ranging from being mixed race, to social justice, to mental health awareness, to never settling in relationships. Slam poetry is an art form he loves due to its raw vulnerability and its ability to cultivate transparency and dialogues into many different walks of life.



International Constitution Committee: Let Your Voice Be Heard

Are there barriers to the seven (7) Purposes that are preventing your chapter members or state organization from moving forward? If so, submit a Proposed Amendment (PA) to add a new Article or International Standing Rule (ISR) or to modify an existing Article/ISR to improve our Society's governing documents. PAs may also include recommendations to delete Articles/ISRs from the governing documents that more properly belong in the *Guidelines and Policies and Procedures (GAPP)*.

Follow these steps to submit a proposed amendment:

- Go to the DKG website (www.dkg.org) and sign in.
- Click the My DKG tab.
- Select Apply/Submit.
- Scroll down to PA Submissions.
- Click Submit to enter a PA for either the *Constitution* or *International Standing Rules (ISRs)*.
- Fill out the form, choosing Option 1 or Option 2.
- Remember to state your rationale in 50 words or less.
- Complete by marking "Send me a copy of my responses."
- Last, click on the red Submit box.

Following the **October 1** deadline, submitted PAs will be compiled by the International Constitution Committee (ICC). PAs with a financial impact will be sent to the International Finance Committee for their consideration. With or without change, the PAs will move to the International Administrative Board for its review. PAs will then be published in the 2024 March/April issue of the *DKG NEWS*.

At that point, members will be asked to let their leaders know their thoughts about the PAs. New PAs and PAs carried forward from the 2022 International Convention in New Orleans will be voted on at the 2024 convention in National Harbor, Maryland. Help shape the future of DKG and submit your PA today!

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES HUB: CONFERENCE RECAPS 2023

Detroit, Michigan, USA

Participants at the Detroit International Conference enjoyed the opportunity to have fun and learn together this past summer! The conference began with two great pre-conference sessions. Participants had the chance either to take a deep dive into learning about parliamentary procedure with Dr. Helen Popovich and Lynna Gene Cook or to learn more about how mindfulness can help personally and professionally, hosted by Kelly Sammis of Breathe For Change.

The rest of the week was filled with fun, laughter, learning, reuniting with old friends, and even making new friends. Session speakers presented on a variety of topics. Monica Eason from Capturing Kids' Hearts discussed leadership and the value of relationships; Kristy Sidlar shared her courageous story about her heart transplant and the value of never giving up; and the Southfield Martial Arts Institute shared basics about their craft, featuring a member who was more than 90 years old. A large variety of workshops gave all attendees opportunities to learn and grow professionally and personally. The US Forum presented a panel discussion with DKG members and encouraged all in "Growing Our Mental Health Garden." A virtual scavenger hunt was enjoyed by many and became quite competitive!

Participants also enjoyed giving Shout Outs of positive recognition to others and contributing to the DKG Emergency Fund with each Shout Out. The conference ended with a celebratory evening featuring *Howl To the Moon To-Go* with a Motown-inspired dinner and dueling pianos. Throughout the conference, participants enjoyed something new and different every day and found ways to find joy and reenergize, preparing them to meet any challenge!

Thank you to Beverly Mantey-VanCronkhite, NW Regional Director, and Susan Perkins, SW Regional Director, for their service to the Society in making this a meaningful experience for the participants. And of course, as always, thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, planned, and contributed to this incredible event!

Phoenix, Arizona, USA

Approximately 260 DKG members found their way to the Sheraton Grand at the Wildhorse Pass for the 2023 International Conference in Phoenix, where members found themselves surrounded by sunflowers, culture, and friendship.

The pre-conference Immersion Experience events allowed attendees to celebrate the customs of the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) with a journey to the Huhugam Heritage Center, where they received a guided tour of the history of the GRIC and its historical inhabitants. Later that evening, a GRIC food festival had attendees sampling the local cuisine. This Immersion Experience continued the next day, as participants learned new appreciation for basket weaving and beaded jewelry in artisan-led classes.

At the conference's opening session, members played GRIC trivia bingo and learned more about the community, including a land acknowledgment to honor the local Native American tribes.

Speakers for the conference celebrated community connections and diversity. These

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speakers included Alona Kladieva, a World Fellowship grant recipient; Dr. Alejandrina Mata-Segreda, DKG Area Representative Latin America; and Al Quihuis, an award-winning author who encouraged attendees to write their own stories of diversity to leave a legacy for future generations.

Breakout sessions throughout the week gave members the opportunity to learn, grow, and explore different aspects of the Society. For the first time, this year's conference also featured extended sessions that allowed presenters to dive with more depth into their topics. Finally, the conference ended with a Celebration of the GRIC, where attendees got to experience live traditional Native American Hoop Dancing and enjoy even more delicious GRIC cuisine.

Mova Sa'pe (thank you) to Dr. Teresa Cowan, SE Regional Director, and Carol Herzog, NE Regional Director, for helping attendees discover the joys of DKG. As always, thank you to all attendees, participants, and contributors to this enlightening event!

Tampere, Finland

The 2023 International Conference in Tampere left attendees with plenty of material for reflection. Overall, 178 registered members and 22 guests and partners attended the event, with many delivering outstanding feedback to event organizers.

The conference opened in Tampere Hall. Afterward, the Deputy Mayor of Tampere welcomed attendees to the Vapriikki Museum Centre at an event featuring glasses of sparkling wine, lovely snacks, and a visit to the Fairy Tale Exhibition. Over the next 2 days, attendees enjoyed sessions from outstanding keynote speakers on topics including sustainability, the importance of reading education, brain research and well-being, and student and teacher exchange programs with Erasmus+. Approximately 25 workshops covered various topics for attendees to expand their education further. Additionally, 33 NewBees found their way to Tampere, with 10 of them presenting workshops of their own.

At the Grand Dinner, attendees recognized the 2021 and 2023 European Achievement Award recipients for their contributions to the development of DKG's European region. Congratulations to Brigitta Johanson (Sweden) and Eyglo Bjornsdottir (Iceland), respectively, for this honor!

The European, US, and Canadian Forums each held their own meetings, then met together for a combined forum. The topic of discussion was "A Happy Student, A Happy Teacher." A panel discussion about sustainability followed. Afterward, attendees gathered for a small Celebration of Life ceremony for those European members who had passed. Finally, this incredible conference concluded with a farewell luncheon.

Special thanks to Europe Regional Director Marie-Antoinette Hubers de Wolf and Finland State Organization President Eija Liisa Sokka-Meaney, as well as all the attendees, volunteers, and contributors to this wonderful event!



Congratulations 2023 International Achievement Award Winner: Becky Sadowski

“Passionate,” “warm-hearted,” and “inspirational” are all words that describe the 2023 International Achievement Award winner, Becky Sadowski. Dr. Debbie LeBlanc, 2022-2024 International President, presented the Society’s highest recognition to Sadowski at this year’s 2023 International Conference in Phoenix.

Sadowski, now Immediate Past International President, is a member of Alpha Lambda Chapter in Tennessee State Organization. In her state organization, she has served on and chaired many different committees, as well as served as area director, corresponding secretary, first vice president, parliamentarian, and state president. She has been instrumental in the success of the state organization’s Advanced Leadership Management Seminar.

At the international level, Sadowski exemplifies notable servant leadership. She has been an active participant and presenter at regional and international conferences since 1994. In 1999, she graduated from the Society’s Leadership Management Seminar. She served as Southeast Regional Director during the same biennium she chaired the international convention steering committee, proving her dedication to the organization and her masterful ability to multi-task. Prior to serving as international president from 2020-2022, she served as both second and first international vice president. Currently, she is a member of the 2022-2024 International Administrative Board and chair of its revitalization committee.

Those who nominated Sadowski noted: “While her resume is impressive, it is her good nature that stands out to those with whom she interacts. In everything she does, it is clear that Becky Sadowski truly believes in each member’s potential to make a difference. She clearly demonstrates this belief throughout her efforts to develop leaders and inspire members to pursue their passions through DKG. She tirelessly encourages members to “use their voices” to share their thoughts, dreams, and ideas, both for their personal and professional development and the development of the Society. According to Sadowski, one of her greatest joys is connecting with members and building relationships, and this is evident in every interaction with her. Becky Sadowski truly exemplifies every characteristic of a thoughtful and dynamic leader.”

The International Achievement Award is given annually to a leader who has merited recognition for her distinguished record in the Society. The gold medallion and chain can only be worn by members who have been voted this honor and privilege by an international executive board.



Becky Sadowski

Did You Know...?

Rising 180 feet above the Potomac River, **the Capital Wheel** in National Harbor, Maryland, is the ultimate tourist destination. With 42 climate-controlled gondolas holding eight passengers each, riders can get a gorgeous view of some of the most well-known sites around Washington, D.C., such as the Washington Monument and the National Cathedral, plus an ariel view of the historic city of Alexandria, Virginia. One-time rides and all-day passes are available for purchase. Members won't want to miss this at the 2024 International Convention next summer!



The Capital Wheel of National Harbor, MD.

Educators Book Award Update

The Educators Book Award Committee proudly presented this year's award to Dr. Denise Ammeraal Furlong, author of *Voices of Newcomers, Experiences of Multilingual Learners*, at the 2023 Phoenix and Tampere International Conferences. Her presence at these conferences delighted members, who were able to meet her and hear about the process of writing such an important book. At the Detroit conference, Dr. Furlong received the award virtually at Friday's luncheon, which included a video presentation she had supplied.

In addition, Dr. Furlong presented well-received 45-minute workshops at both the Tampere and Phoenix conferences. She was also able to sell her books at the Expo Fair in Phoenix. We are happy to report that she sold all the books she brought with her.

Additionally, the Educators' Book Award Committee displayed an informational exhibit at the Committee Connections at each of the conferences. Many attendees were able to meet with committee members to learn more about their work for the Society.



From left: Patricia Woodley, Janis Barr, Dr. Denise Furlong, Dr. Debbie LeBlanc, and Leslie Black

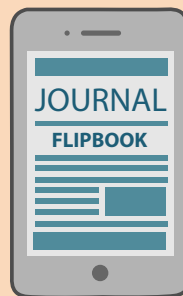
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UPDATE: CANADA

Canadian DKG has had an exciting year so far. Teams from all but two provinces attended the wonderful leadership training event in Dallas, Texas. It was great getting to know our own members as well as the leadership teams from so many other state organizations, including those from other countries.

Last fall, we hosted an international Zoom exchange highlighting state organizations from the eight European countries and the seven Canadian provinces. Because of the success of this event, we plan to do it again. However, this time we will also include our newly elected state organization presidents as well as leaders from Alaska State Organization. Anyone is welcome to join us.

Since last fall, we have also held three other cross-Canada Zoom meetings. These meetings featured presentations about facing change and growing our membership. The last of these meetings included a virtual forum attended by many members. We also held live forums in Detroit and Finland during the 2023 international conferences.

A major concern of Canadian members, as well as many others, has been the name of our organization. We believe "Delta Kappa Gamma" is not reflective

of who we are. When we ask someone to join DKG, their first question is always, "What is that?" We must explain that it is not a sorority but a society of international women educators from 17 countries. We particularly like the acronym IWE (for *International Women Educators*) because as teachers we move from "I" to "WE" as we interact with our students. However, we could certainly keep the initials DKG as part of our title (e.g., *The Women Educators Society International [DKG]*). The vote for a name change fell to the floor for lack of time at the 2022 International Convention in New Orleans but is again a proposed amendment to be voted on in 2024.

When DKG Quebec State Organization could not find a president, they had a rather creative solution. Instead of one singular president, previous provincial presidents will share the responsibility of leading the province for a period of 3 months each. You can reach this leadership team at dkgque@gmail.com.

We look forward to continuing with the initiatives of the 2022–2024 Administrative Board. We also look forward to DKG's 100th anniversary celebration in Austin in 2029.

Lorna Berlinguette
Area Representative Canada