

What DKG Means to Me

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As I sit down to write about what DKG means to me, the two words that keep coming to mind are relationships and opportunities. My journey began in 2011, when Rebecca Roland asked me to join Beta Mu Chapter. I knew Rebecca from another organization and knew her to be dedicated, responsible, organized, and a great leader. So when she asked me about Delta Kappa Gamma, I was inclined to accept. She didn't ask "Would you like to join. . . ." It was, "I would like for you to join" This meant, I hoped, that she saw some of those same qualities in me. Relationships – people – make all the difference.

I will admit, the first couple years were tough. The majority of my Chapter was retired teachers, and it was hard to see how I fit in. I had conflicts with the meeting day and time. For a while, I just kept paying my dues – but wasn't really attending many meetings. With time, my schedule changed and I began to get more involved. The next thing I knew, in 2014, I became the 2nd Vice President. My first opportunity to serve the organization.

In 2016, as second vice president, I attended my first State Conference – again, because a member of my Chapter invited me and encouraged me to attend. We carpooled to Terre Haute and it was a great opportunity to see Delta Kappa Gamma as more than my local chapter. Shortly after this Conference, our state liaison, Rachel Etherington, attended our Chapter meeting. It happened to be the night of election, and when I arrived at the meeting, I was asked if I would move from 2nd Vice President to President. This meeting is engrained in my memory because Rachel told my Chapter about the Golden Key Award and challenged me to earn it during my term as President. Challenge accepted. Again a member of DKG showed confidence in me and encouraged me to do more. Relationships – people – make all the difference.

I traveled to my first International Conference that summer (I needed to for the Golden Key Award). Rachel was right there to make sure I knew what was going on and helped me to feel included. The more opportunities and experience DKG offered to me, the more I knew I needed to do my part to give back. When Jo Jones asked me to co-chair the 2020 Conference, the answer was "yes!" When I was asked to accept 1st Vice President for the state, the answer was, "yes!" This was my opportunity to hopefully make a difference for another member of our organization, just like Rebecca and Rachel made a difference for me.

Relationships and opportunities. Delta Kappa Gamma has so much to offer. We just need to invite our members to participate. As with many organizations, the more you put into Delta Kappa Gamma, the more you will get out of it. Invite a teacher to join. Invite a member to come to Convention in April. Encourage a member to take a leadership role – whether for one meeting or a biennium. Don't say, "Do you want to. . . ." Instead say, "I would like for you to. . . ." Relationships – people – make all the difference.