



# KAPPA TALK

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March 2018

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members of the American University Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa International,

I am proud to announce that during the past few months, American University Chapter #0151 presented a number of programs, projects and activities that have brought us much recognition and praise. One of our activities was with recent Initiation and Induction Ceremony, which was held on Saturday, February 17, 2018, on the campus of American University School of International Service (SIS) building, Founder's Room.

This gathering of our membership at the Initiation and Induction of new members was such an auspicious occasion because our very special guest was Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Dean of Education of American University. During her remarks, she shared with the membership her inspiring background as an educator and her subsequent appointment to the Department of Education.

Prior to Dr. Holcomb-McCoy's position at the

Department, her experience as a teacher and administrator enabled her to open paths for new and young students, thus promoting change that benefited the students she served. Upon being recognized for her dedication to teaching and academic preparation and fulfillment at the university level, Dr. Holcomb-McCoy, subsequently was appointed to her current position. Moreover, the extensive progress she has made thus far in this new position is quite notable. In her remarks regarding the thrust for the Department of Education, Dr. Holcomb-McCoy introduced Ms. Inez Luengo de Kroma, Senior Administrative Assistant, who greeted everyone and provided support whenever it was needed. For example, Ms. Luengo de Kroma facilitated our arrival by forwarding a campus map of the university parking facilities; organizing the State-of-the-Art meeting site; and suggesting a brunch menu that met with our expectations. We certainly anticipate Ms. Inez Luengo de Kroma being a part of our planning for future PDK programs at American University.

While Dr. Holcomb-McCoy spoke of her accomplish-

ments as Dean of Education, she cited a number of educational programs that afford the Department greater recognition. Through the School of Education, she created a number of improvements, launched higher education and training. Moreover, Dr. Holcomb-McCoy increased educational programs that led to various levels of achievement. She has also invited senior high students to visit the campus and participate in summer programs. Furthermore, Dr. Holcomb-McCoy's outlook encompasses a scholarship program, which will have a diversified role. For all that she has accomplished, we certainly commend Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy on her progress as Dean of the Department of Education, and we look forward to collaborating "in Partnership" with the Education Department to broaden our chapter's involvement in higher education and student achievement.

As a token of our appreciation at the conclusion of Dr. Holcomb-McCoy's remarks, Barbara McClurkin, Vice President for Programs and Theresa McClurkin, Vice President for Membership, presented Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy and

(Continued on p. 2)

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Continued from p. 1*

Ms. Inez Luengo de Kroma with mementos.

The second highlight of the day was the Initiation and Induction Ceremony for two initiates, who also received their PDK Membership Pins and Certificates from Dr. Thomas Penn, Special Recognition Representative, and Theresa McClurkin, who invited them to share with us their Philosophy of Education.

Ms. Valeria Reid, a retired elementary school teacher spoke of her years of experience as a classroom teacher. While participating in instructional interaction with her students, she clearly understood that all students have different learning styles (i.e., seeing, hearing, hands-on, etc.), that greatly had an impact upon the students' understanding of subject matter. Ms. Reid also felt that it is very important for teachers to evaluate and incorporate those learning styles into their teaching programs/lesson plans, so that every student will understand the lesson being taught and learn accordingly. Ms. Reid's experience in this area has served her immensely. Also, she spoke of how children and students model themselves after their teachers or individuals with whom they interact daily. Moreover, Ms. Valeria Reid

pointed out that it is important to carry oneself in a positive way, so that students will have supportive role models.

Our next inductee also demonstrated effective teaching techniques that impact upon the learning styles of students.

Ms. Ruby Haraway, who is currently serving as a school guidance counselor, enlightened us with "best practices" in her teaching techniques that influenced her lesson plans throughout her years as a classroom teacher. Ms. Haraway consistently noted that students react in an excited and favorable manner to teachers who show enthusiasm for teaching and learning. That is why her communication techniques made students feel good about themselves with higher self-esteem and confidence. Ms. Haraway recounted that whenever students were asked about their assignments, they did so with spontaneity, certainty and assuredness. Also, she spoke of the importance of teacher-preparedness. Ms. Haraway shared this point of readiness with her students who would emulate her management style in regards to how they handle their own class assignments. Her effervescent and effusive approach to student participation encouraged students to model themselves after Ms. Haraway's

interaction with her class. Finally, she emphasized that it is important to understand that a teacher's demeanor is also emulated by students, who will foster that same behavior when they are adults. Based upon all that we have heard from both Ms. Valeria Reid and Ms. Ruby Haraway, teachers do have a great influence on the learning process through their innovative and creative teaching styles and knowledge of how students learn.

Following the outstanding presentations by our new inductees, our Inspirational Speaker for the day, Dr. Keith E. Robinson, A.U. Chapter's Grants Writer Representative, shared with us his observation that expounded upon "Possibility vs. Opportunity." He also defined each one in the following manner: "Opportunity is something that is made available; whereas possibility is something you will accept or not accept due to circumstances in your life." Dr. Robinson "set the learning stage by saying that "not all opportunity is created equal." Also, he pointed out that an "opportunity for one person, may not be an opportunity for another." Throughout his presentation, Dr. Robinson gave numerous examples of each, raised questions, gave interesting and thought-provoking anecdotes. At the conclusion, he presented us with two of the books on the National Bestseller's list.

Dr. Keith E. Robinson's position as our Inspirational Speaker was well received, and we thank him for his expertise and sharing of knowledge. As a token of our appreciation and thanks for Dr. Robinson's inspirational presentation, Barbara McClurkin came forward and also presented Dr. Keith E. Robinson with a special memento.

This was truly an outstanding day

(Continued on p. 3)

## NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

*Kappa Talk* is published quarterly. If you would like to submit an article for the newsletter, email your articles to [m.j.l.dredlmusgrove@verizon.net](mailto:m.j.l.dredlmusgrove@verizon.net). Send in items to let us know what you are doing, articles on educational issues, or any other item you feel would be of interest to the members. Newsletter articles must be submitted by **May 26, 2018**.

Education sharpens one's curiosity about events. Members of the AU Chapter are curious about what fellow Kappans are doing. Let us know about your exciting events and careers.

Our newsletter is an important communication tool for the American University Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa. Share your knowledge.

# PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

*(Continued from p. 2)*

for all of our guests and participants, and I thank everyone for their contributions and participation. Finally, I would like to bring to your attention a new publication that caught many of us by surprise upon receiving notification from Dr. Katherine James, Research Representative. Phi Delta Kappa International recently introduced a supplemental magazine called HERITAGE: Bringing Our Community Together, Volume 1/ February 2018.

Dr. Gwendolyn Barnes Means’ photo is on page 3, and she is giving her testimony at a PDK convention. The title is “Honoring the 50th Anniversary of the PDK Poll.” Dr. Means, a Research Representative, has consistently been involved through the years as a participant in the Phi Delta Kappa International’s release of findings from: “Public’s Attitudes toward the Public Schools.”

American University Chapter’s Research Committee, under the

direction of Dr. Means and Dr. James, is very unique. These erudite researchers consistently go about the task of addressing and seeking answers to perplexing and challenging educational issues. Congratulations to Dr. Means in her dedication to educational research! Also, we extend kudos to Dr. James for making the members aware of the PDK Newsletter: Heritage!

Sincerely,  
Thomas L. Jones  
President

# A LETTER TO MAYOR MURIEL BOWSER

The Hon. Muriel Bowser  
Mayor, Washington, DC  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser:

As a retired teacher and principal of the District of Columbia Public School System, I offer the following comments:

-The use of the word “best” in describing any particular DCPS school is actually an opinion, not a fact, unless one specifically states the criterion (e.g., test scores, graduation rates, and the like). For example, the Duke Ellington School of the Arts may indeed be the *best* school for a budding performer or artist; the School Without Walls may be the *best* school for an independent, mature student who learns well through external experiences; Wilson may be the *best* for those seeking high test scores above all else; student musicians could say that Cardozo was the *best* because of its renown marching band (played at RFK years ago), and I believe that Balou and possibly Anacostia have

taken on that mantel too; I have known countless alumni who pronounce the name of Dunbar with particular pride and reverence; even the children at Moten can think their school is the *best* after they won a chess championship; and we could go on. Every school has its specialty that is *best* for someone. But to mention one school as “the best” can be misleading and can in fact be erroneous. As we hear about and read about the choices that parents make, we should keep these criteria in mind and not simply say that one school is “the best” or even “one of the best,” as to do so leaves out the individual qualities of all DC public schools.

-As you prepare to search for another chancellor, please consider looking within among the experienced, professional educators already in the system. They have the history, the knowledge, the heart for the city and its students. One of the most effective and respected Superintendents of Schools was Floretta McKenzie, who had worked in the DC system for years. I submit that one of our current principals or other administrators can fill this position and be especially effective,

a move that would also avoid the expense of forming a search committee, allowing for travel and related expenses, and the passage of time.

Please look among the talented DCPS personnel for your next chancellor.

Thank you for considering these heartfelt comments.

Sincerely,  
Katherine A. James, Ed.D.  
Principal, DCPS (retired)

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Dr. James has put to paper a concept that many educators, current and retired, have expressed time and again. We thank Dr. James for being a voice,

and we sincerely hope that Mayor will seriously consider her comments.

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The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.—Martin Luther King, Jr.



Mildred L. Musgrove  
1010 Taylor Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20017



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## 2017-2018 AU CHAPTER CALENDAR

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|----------------|---|
| March 17, 2018 | 20th Annual Scholarship/Education Dinner Dance<br>Theme “St. Patrick’s Day”                             |
| April 21, 2018 | Annual Chalk Walk for Education,<br>Election (Membership)<br>National Arboretum (10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon) |
| May 19, 2018   | Awards/Installation of Officers/Educator of the Year<br>Location: American University Campus            |



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**THE MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY CHAPTER OF PHI DELTA KAPPA MOURN THE TRAGIC DEATHS OF STUDENTS AND STAFF OF MARJORY STONEMAN DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL.**

**WE EXPRESS OUR PRIDE IN THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE SO ELOQUENTLY LEADING THE NATIONAL DISCUSSION ON HOW TO PREVENT SCHOOL SHOOTINGS. THESE YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE TURNED THEIR ENERGIES TO WORK THAT THEY FEEL WILL LEAD TO BETTER OUTCOMES FOR ALL STUDENTS.**

**Delaney Tarr, a senior at Stoneman Douglas said,**

“This movement, created by students, led by students, is based on emotion. It is based on passion and it is based on pain. Our biggest flaws—our tendency to be a bit too aggressive, our tendency to lash out, things that you expect from a normal teenager—these are our strengths. The only reason that we’ve gotten so far is that we are not afraid of losing money, we’re not afraid of getting reelected or not getting reelected, we have nothing to lose. The only thing we have to gain at this point is our safety.”