

# KAPPA TALK



THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY CHAPTER (0151) OF PHI DELTA KAPPA INTERNATIONAL  
Website: [www.americanuniversitypdk@0151.org](http://www.americanuniversitypdk@0151.org)

## “Real-Talk” with Guest Speaker Kate Stephens by Cassandra Penn Lucas

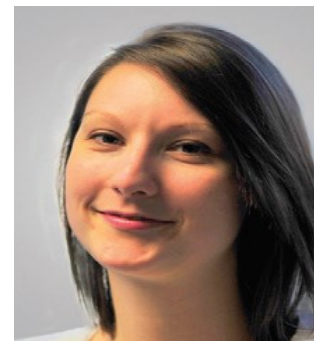
### 2019: New Venue and Avenues to Retain, Reclaim, and Recruit.

The New Year is off to a vibrant start of exploration, experimentation, and anticipation for the PDK American University Chapter #0151. On January 19th, the first meeting of the Executive Board was held at a new venue, the American University Spring Valley Department of Education. This building, dedicated to the School of Education, is fully tech-ready and it is a physical environment that sets the tone for our chapter to explore and experience new avenues to Retain, Reclaim, and Recruit.

Congratulations and gratitude to our Chapter Advisor and Uni-

versity Liaison, Gloria Smith. On very short notice, having learned in December that the Crowne Plaza (formerly Marriott-Greenbelt) would be closing for renovations, she went into action, coordinating with Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Dean, School of Education, and Ines Luengo de Krom, Senior Administrator Assistant, to secure space for our January and February meetings. Gloria’s tenacity and attention to every detail ensured a smooth transition as we re-establish our affiliation with the American University.

The Executive Board Meeting convened with a moving invocation, a scrumptious brunch (again, kudos to Gloria), and a



**Kate Stephens, PDK International**  
*Director of Relationships & Outreach*

PowerPoint presentation by Kate Stephens, PDK International Director of Relationships and Outreach, and Tamir Harper, 2017 Vice President of Educators Rising and a freshman at American University

The presentation provided an

### Special points of interest:

- Fund Raising Events, and Grants
- Budget Expenditures
- Recruitment Ideas and Tools
- Chapter Guidance, Structure, Innovative Strategies, and Next Steps
- Strategic Leadership and Governance
- PDK International Leadership, Forward-Thinking Strategies, and Next Steps
- Membership Participation & Lifelong Learning

### Inside this issue:

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## “President’s Message”

Dear Members of Phi Delta Kappa,

Thank you for your support in helping us achieve our accomplishments to date. As a result of your tireless efforts, we have already realized some of our

goals in the new fraternal year. Therefore, I would like to share with you some of the highlights of our events, programs, and activities, beginning with our affiliation with American University’s Department of Education.

It is truly an honor for me to



**Thomas L. Jones, President**



## 2018-2019 Executive Board Members

- Thomas L. Jones, *President*
- Adrienne Herriott, *Immediate Past President*
- Cynthia Greene, *Treasurer*
- Mariana Zimmerman, *Secretary*
- Vasser J. Baldwin, *Foundation Representative*
- Wanda Means-Harris & Ruby Haraway, *Technology Representatives*
- Helena P. Jones & Dr. Keith E. Robinson, *Grants Writer Representatives*
- Theresa McClurkin, *Membership Vice President*
- Cassandra Penn Lucas, *Programs Vice President*
- Dr. Gwendolyn Means & Dr. Katherine James, *Research Representatives*
- Barbara McClurkin & Dr. Thomas Penn, *Special Concerns Representatives*
- Sheila Holt, *Historian*
- LaVerne P. Brown, *Delegate/Sergeant at Arms (TBD)*
- Adrienne Herriott, *First Alternate Delegate*
- Dr. Keith E. Robinson, *Newsletter Editor*
- Gloria C. Smith, *AU (#0151) Chapter Advisor*

## FROM THE EDITOR



Dr. Keith E. Robinson,  
Newsletter Editor

*'The more teachers learn, the more they are enabled to employ new techniques, with which to create a better environment, in which students feel motivated to learn, want to learn and succeed.'*

Greetings, Fellow Kappans. As we settle into the new year, let's remain mindful of the many things we learned last year and what we **must** strive to learn this year as it relates to public schools, elevating student and

teacher professional development, relevant education research, and student-centered and instructional learning. Fittingly, many of these **hot-button** issues are featured in the Phi Delta Kappan December 2018/January 2019 magazine (pp. 5-12).

I believe that all these issues contribute to a school's success, which is, in turn, influ-

enced by either national, organizational or school culture. I also believe that these are critical issues that are inextricably bound to one another and have a significant *impact* on a public-school system's success, failure, and purpose-led outcomes. I further believe that the impact is positively *tripled* when educators demonstrate a collective understanding of why classroom instruction, educational

## Cont'd on pg. 7

research, and active listening are so important, and how they strive to improve, elevate and advance what students and education leaders need to learn.

Finally, I believe that improvement starts with deeper thinking, questioning, communication, strategic leadership, concrete strategies, innovative school-wide teaching practices and expectations, and

purpose driven assessment of students' and teachers' learning needs — all of which require listening actively and learning intentionally at all levels. Somewhere, I've read that "to listen is to learn and to learn is to listen," so the challenge for educators is to listen better and to constantly question ourselves and one another. The

questions become: "How many of us even care enough to listen, and listen enough to understand?" What is at stake and what are the real student/educator learning needs? What we know is that this is a very thought-provoking question.

We also know that there is a real **urgency** to accurately



Source: Online Pictures

## 2018-2019 AU CHAPTER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- August 18, 2018 Executive Board—Planning Meeting
- **August 24, 2018** **Newsletter Contributions Due**
- September 15, 2018 Regular Meeting—**Retain. Reclaim. Recruit.**
- October 20, 2018 Executive Board Meeting **(Cancelled)**
- October 24, 2018 “*Stay-at-Home Tea*” (8:00 p.m.)
- **November 16, 2018** **Newsletter Contributions Due**
- November 17, 2018 Regular Meeting—Celebrating AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK  
“Student Essay Contest” & **Guest Speaker: Amanda Alexander (Cancelled)**
- December 15, 2018 Regular and Holiday Meeting—Pre-Initiation **(TBA)**
- January 19, 2019 Executive Board Meeting  
**Guest Speaker: Kate Stephens, PDK International, Director of Relationships & Outreach**  
Location: American University Campus
- **February 15, 2019** **Newsletter Contributions Due**
- February 16, 2019 Regular Meeting  
**Guest Speakers/Discussion Panel**
- March 16, 2019 **21<sup>st</sup> Annual Scholarship and Education Dinner Dance**  
Location: 7810 Walker Drive, Greenbelt, Md
- April 20, 2019 Annual Chalk Walk for Education  
National Arboretum (10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon)
- May 18, 2019 Membership Election, Initiation, Awards & Educator of the Year  
Location: American University Campus
- **May 24, 2019** **Newsletter Contributions Due**
- June 15, 2019 Regular Meeting—Installation of New Officers



*Save the date to attend each meeting and event.*

**Note:** All meetings will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel (formerly Greenbelt Marriot) at 11:00 a.m., unless otherwise noted. The hotel is located at 6400 Ivy Lane, Greenbelt, MD 20770.

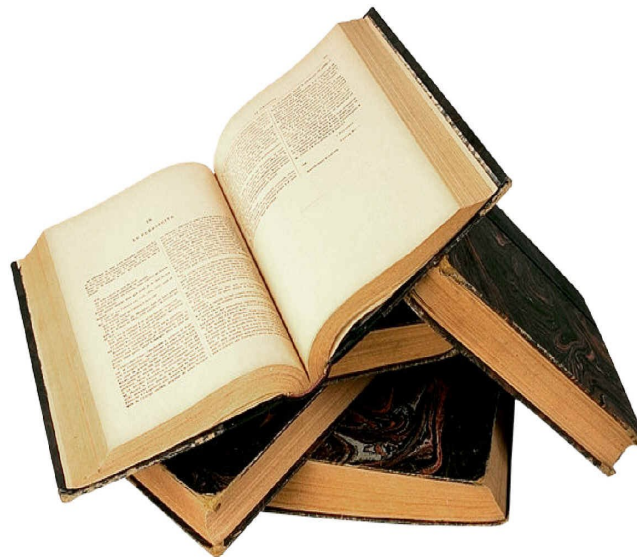
Who Makes It Happen?  
WE MAKE IT HAPPEN!



## The Editor's Recommended Book of the Month List for AU Chapter Educators

Fellow Kappans, here are ten (10) education-related books that I highly recommend we read and add to our professional libraries. In keeping with **LaVerne Brown's** suggestion at our May meeting, we should consider selecting, reading, and discussing a book once a month, or one every three months (**November, February, and May**), to continue honing our skills, make actionable decisions, and remain informed educators!

1. *Reign of Error: The Hoax of the Privatization Movement and The Danger to America's Public Schools*, by: Diane Ravitch (National Best Seller) **(October)**
2. *Teaching with Passion, Purpose, and Promise* by: Peter L. Boonshaft **(November)**.
3. *Learning to Improve How America's Schools Can Get Better at Getting Better*, by: Anthony S. Bryk; Louis M. Gomez; Alicia Grunow; Paul G. LeMahieu **(December)**
4. "Proof," Policy, & Practice Understanding the Role of Evidence in Improving, by: Michael S. McPherson **(January)**
5. *Collaborative Professionalism: When Teaching Together Means Learning for All*, by: Andy Hargreaves and Michael O'Connor **(February)**
6. *The Human Side of Education: How to Lead Change with Clarity, Conviction, and Courage*, by: Julie Margaretta Wilson **(March)**
7. *Uncommon Learning: Creating Schools That Work for Kids*, by Eric C. Shiner **(April)**
8. *Design-based School Improvement: A Practical Guide for Education Leaders*, by: Rick Mintrop **(May)**
9. *Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education*, by: Diane Ravitch (National Best Seller) **(October)**
10. *Diverse Schools Dilemma A Parent's Guide to Socioeconomically Mixed Schools*, by: Michael J. Petrilli **(November)**



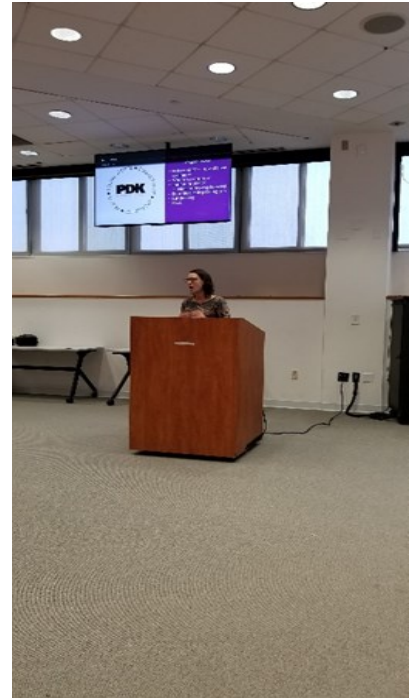
# AU Chapter Executive Board Members Having A Highly Interactive Exchange with Kate Stephens and Tamir Harper



Kate Stephens and Tamir Harper prepare to take the learning platform to speak.



Cassandra Penn Lucas eloquently introduces the guest speakers in grand fashion.



Kate Stephens addresses AU Chapter Executive Board Members with stimulating and insightful learning content.



The learning stage has been set Tamir Harper (left) and Wanda Means-Harris (right) are actively engaged.



Tamir Harper (left) interjects, comments, and fields questions as Ruby Haraway (left), Wanda Means-Harris (center), and Dr. Gwendolyn Means (right) listen intently.



President Thomas Jones (left) leading the way in a highly engaged thought interchange. Helena Jones (right) and Vasser Baldwin (right) actively listening.



Right to left : Tamir Harper & Ruby Haraway very studiously examines the learning content with pinpoint accuracy.

**AU Chapter Executive Board Members Having A Highly Interactive Exchange with Kate Stephens and Tamir Harper (Cont'd from pg. 5)**



**Left to right: Cassandra Penn Lucas, Dr. Keith E. Robinson, Sheila Holt (photographer and not pictured), Cynthia Greene, Thomas Jones (President), Helena Jones, Vasser Baldwin, and Gloria Smith (life long learners) listening intently and taking copious notes.**



**Left to right: Adrienne Herriott, Dr. Mildred Musgrove, Barbara McClurkin, and Mariana Zimmerman (life long learners) listening deeply and intently.**



**Cassandra Penn Lucas (left) and Dr. Keith E. Robinson (right) are in pensive thought. Photo courtesy of Sheila Holt .**

**Top right photo, (left to right ) President Thomas Jones and Cassandra Penn Lucas present Letters of Appreciation to guest speakers Kate Stephens (right) and Tamir Harper (center) for contributing their time and knowledgebase.**

**Middle right photo, Cassandra Penn Lucas (center) rewards Dr. Mildred Musgrove for being an "early bird" contributor.**

**Bottom right photo, Vasser Baldwin (left) and Gloria Smith (right) processing and capturing the moment.**



## FROM THE EDITOR (Cont'd from pg. 2)



Left to right: **Adrienne Herriott, Dr. Mildred Musgrove, Barbara McClurkin, and Mariana Zimmerman** are enjoying the robust learning experience.

answer the question. My challenge to educators is to continue to **learn**, to commit to ongoing personal and professional development, to inspire one another, put our collective brains together, pool our talents, be proactive, reflect, read-just our line-of-site (LOS), collaborate, cultivate our courage and embrace the urgency. The urgency is **NOW!**



Source: Online Pictures

## “Real Talk” with Guest Speaker Kate Stephens (Cont'd from pg. 1)



**Kate Stephens** passionately sets the learning stage.

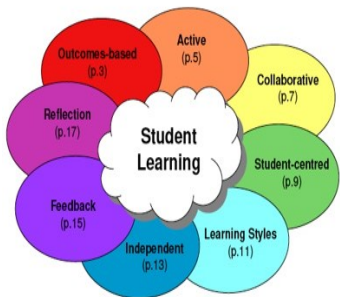
overview of PDK’s evolution from a family of three associations to seven divisions; current and future initiatives; fundraising ideas; volunteer opportunities; and new benefits of PDK membership (PDK Primers; Virtual Town halls; Travel Scholarships; Poll Toolkit; and Distinguished Educator). One of the exciting new initiatives is Educators Rising-Collegiate, which will focus on bridging the gap between college students majoring in edu-

cation and PDK membership. Set to launch nationwide in March 2019, this will be student-led, providing support beyond the classroom.

A spirited exchange followed the attention Kate called to the results of the 2018 PDK poll report, specifically, the question, **“The teaching profession: Would you want your child to become a teacher?”** “The poll’s

startling finding indicated that 54% of parents would not like one of their children to enter teaching in the public schools as a career. While **46%** of the parents surveyed would support a teaching career, that’s a steep decline from **70%** in 2009 and from **75%** in the first PDK poll in 1969. (For complete 2018 poll results, visit [www.pdkpoll.org](http://www.pdkpoll.org)).

## Culture: Impact on Learning in Organizations and Schools by Keith E. Robinson, Ed.D



Source Online Pictures

According to the *Harvard Business Review* culture is a factor when it comes to employee’s attitudes. “Employee attitudes can make or break a business.” [I] believe that the attitudes of students, teachers, school administrators, stakeholders, and legislators make or break a school system and or a higher learning institutions as well!” (p.43) HBR defined culture

as: Culture is the tacit social order of an organization: It shapes attitudes and behaviors in wide-ranging and durable ways. Cultural norms define what is encouraged, discouraged, accepted, or rejected within a group. When properly aligned with personal values, drives, and needs, culture can unleash tremendous amounts

of energy toward a shared purpose and foster an organization’s capacity to thrive p.46

The National Council of Research (NRC) acknowledged in their report that “school failure may be partly explained by the mismatch between what students have learned in their home cultures and what is required of them in school.”(p72)

## News & Fast Facts You Can Use

Culture may be even more amorphous concept than leadership. Again, it is a word that people use daily, but the concept of culture has so many components that it can be hard to give due attention to all of them. A simple way to think of culture, however, is to consider an organization's culture as its DNA (Association for Training and Development 2014).

Considered more broadly, culture includes the combination of **spoken** and **unspoken** rules that define how individuals

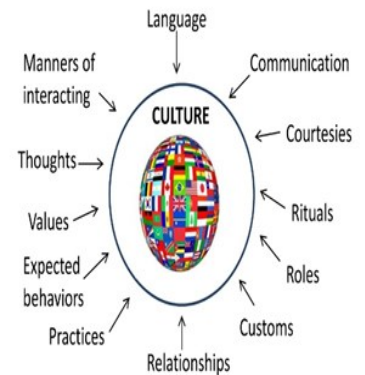
should behave to be successful; the character and personality of the **organization** and **school**; and the sum of its values, traditions, beliefs, interactions, and attitudes (Rothaermel 2013).

Cultures also includes the "temperature" of the **organizational** or **school (classroom)** setting: whether it is "cool" toward innovation or whether it has warmed to it, and whether stakeholders feel empowered to innovate and be rewarded.

It is easy to think that work-

place culture is a given, that it is baked into an organization's identity and is immutable (like DNA). This is not necessarily the case. However, it is true that altering or evolving a company's culture is incredibly challenging in almost every case.

Elements of culture that do not serve the organization and that might, in fact, prevent it from achieving its optimal functionality, can and must be rooted out and replaced with a healthier, more reasoned cultural element (Drucker 2013).



According to the **Kappan** magazine, December 2018/January 2019 **culture** is a **factor** when it comes to **students** attitudes , behavior, and relationships (pg.72)

## President's Message (Cont'd from pg. 1)

extend my thanks and gratitude to Dr. Cheryl-McCoy, Dean of American University's Department of Education, for her willingness to collaborate with American University Chapter #0151 in our movement toward an educational partnership that will broaden our role in recognizing talented students who are preparing themselves for careers as future educators.

The affiliation this chapter shares with the university's Department of Education is of the utmost importance in our quest to identify students entering the field of education with the possibility of offering them scholarships to further their goals and aspirations. We certainly appreciate all the efforts and diligence on the part of Gloria Smith, A.U. Chapter Advocate, who initiated our meeting years

ago with Dr. Holcomb-McCoy, enabling us to formulate a partnership that will benefit students who are enrolled in the American University School of Education. It is not only impressive to share the name of American University as a chapter of Phi Delta Kappa International, but we are now able to go one step further by correlating our interest in reaching out to undergraduate and graduate stu-

*"And in doing so, we will not only have an opportunity to meet outstanding educators, but also garner their latest undertakings of educational research and "best practices.""*

## 21st Annual Scholarship and Education Dinner Dance by Adrienne J. Herriott

### "Oh, What A Night. Oh, What A Night for Dancing!"

On Saturday, March 16, 2019, AU Chapter #0151 celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> Education Scholarship Dinner Dance at the Hilton Garden Inn, in Greenbelt, Md.

To have awakened on Saturday morning with the thought that

the day would be all about having a good time – that is how the gala was characterized by Vasser and LeGrande Baldwin! They later checked into the Hilton Garden Inn, well ahead of time for the dance, leisurely visited the ballroom, where others were busily preparing for the evening; then returned to

their room to dress for the occasion, **"The Red Ball."**

The couple soon made their entrance in grand style, and totally enjoyed the evening's events: dinner, dancing, door prizes, cash bar, photo-shoots, jewelry table, and lots of fellowships! The evening started off with one of several special

highlights of the evening celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of Mother Harris the mother-in-law of AU chapter member Wanda Means Harris. Wanda brought delicious chocolate on chocolate sheet cake so the entire group could help to celebrate the birthday. It was quite an enjoyable time for Mother Harris



## 21st Annual Scholarship and Education Dinner Dance (Cont'd from pg. 8)

who was serenaded by all attendees. She has been a guest at many of our Scholarship Dinner-Dances. We wish for her many more years!!!

Another highlight of the evening was when our DJ extraordinaire, Mr. William E. Greene, was honored for having been with our scholarship affairs for twenty 20 of our twenty-one 21 years! He was presented with a specially designed certificate (from our own private design team of the McClurkin sisters) and a thank-you card with a gift card included. There were

countless other highlights, and great moments at this annual affair, but to mention that it was quite a pleasure to see someone who has "grown up" in, and with the PDK, A.U. chapter is an understatement!

That person is Miss Tiana Wright, the granddaughter of Past-president Adrienne Herriott, who was totally unaware that Tiana would be coming to our affair! Tiana, who is a sophomore at St. Johns University in New York, was just home for the weekend and returned to

school the next day. Ms. Bonnie P. Herriott, who has attended the dance for years, commented, "I enjoyed myself immense-



**AU Chapter #0151, (PDK International)  
Saturday, March 16, 2019**

## Having Headquarters Based In Our Backyard Has Its Privileges!

As I've discussed with Cassandra Penn Lucas, Vice President of Programs in previous communication, having headquarters based in our backyard, being connected, and recognized as a vibrant and innovative chapter has its privileges. On Wednesday, January 23, 2019, I reached out to Kate Stephens to inquire about volunteering to be a scholarship reviewer and about speaking

with someone in headquarters to get our chapter registered with "BENEVITY" under the umbrella of PDK International, our parent organization.

What was particularly moving about my exchange with Kate was how responsive she was to our needs. After I expressed our interests via email, she was able to very quickly assist me with everything except for the

scholarship reviewer request, about which she informed me that the scholarship team had gotten all the volunteers they needed. But, no sooner then I responded to her e-mail, she responded to inform me that she had just spoken to the scholarship team, and they'd be happy to include me as an AU chapter PDK Scholarship Program Volunteer Reviewer representative and that she'd pass

*"Having headquarters based in our backyard, being connected, and recognized as a vibrant and innovative chapter has its privileges. Hence, we must take advantage of this blessing and continue to **advance** and **elevate** our chapter both locally and abroad!"*

*Dr. Keith E. Robinson—*

## Cont'd from above

my information on to them.

As a courtesy, I attached September/December copies of our newsletters for her reading pleasure. In her response, she thanked me and stated that "PDK International is looking at adding a section to the website for chapter newsletters to be shared with other chapters and members at large." She also

stated that after reviewing our schedule of events, she marked her calendar and hopes to join us at our **Annual Chalk Walk for Education on Saturday, April 20th, at the National Arboretum.**

These are exciting times, with lots of promising opportunities for our chapter to excel! Again, having headquarters based in

our backyard has its privileges!



**P. O. Box 13090, Arlington, VA  
22219**

PDK International is a "US professional organization for educators."

The **core values** are:

- Social Justice
- Engagement
- Excellence
- Results

## “Real Talk” with Guest Speaker Kate Stephens (Cont'd from page 7)

The poll response to this question struck a chord of deep concern among our chapter members. A lengthy discussion ensued in which several of our serious, dedicated, and experienced educators shared passionate insights as to the possible “Why?”. Opinions included the paradigm shift in teacher education and preparation, decline in the number of institutions of higher education with dedicated schools of education, as well as the impact of societal changes on the teaching profes-

sion. Both Kate and Tamir assured us that the lively exchange will be useful as PDK International continues to evolve in strengthening its core values: Social Justice, Engagement, Excellence, and Results.

Members are encouraged to visit [www.pdkintl.org](http://www.pdkintl.org). The website has a new look, and provides links to articles, other PDK chapter activities, and valuable resources available from PDK International headquarters.

I look forward to future programming opportunities for our chapter to explore and embrace new avenues in support of the PDK mission: Engaging educators and strengthening schools, so every student thrives.



*‘Teachers need students to highlight the future. Students need teachers to latch on to the past...’*

Dr. KER—

Source: Online Pictures

## President’s Message (Cont’d from pg. 5)

dents with interest in becoming future educators.

On behalf of the American University Chapter #0151 Executive Board, I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Holcomb-McCoy and her staff for accommodating our chapter, particularly with respect to assisting with the preparation of various meetings held on the campus of American University. I would especially like

to thank Inez Luengo de Krom, Senior Administrative Assistant of the School of Education, through her consultation with and support of Gloria Smith, for coordinating A.U. chapter’s use of state-of-the-art facilities, notification of caterers, as well as setting up the meeting site.

Most recently, an Executive Board meeting was held on Saturday, January 19, 2019, on

the campus of American University at the Spring Valley Department of Education. Both Inez and Gloria coordinated this project to help bring about a successful outcome.

I would also like to give kudos to Lumumba Dunduza, Office Assistant from the Department of Education, who was very instrumental in directing our participants to the meeting location.

*“I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Holcomb-McCoy and her staff for accommodating in our chapter, particularly with respect to assisting with the preparation of various meetings held on the campus of American University.”*

## President's Message (Cont'd from above.)

Lumumba not only designed the PDK flyers, but also posted them on elevators and floors throughout the facility so that there would be no difficulty in locating the meeting site. This all set the stage for an informative and thought-provoking meeting orchestrated by Cassandra Penn Lucas, Vice-president of Programs, all of which proved to be very

rewarding, under the auspices of guest speaker Kate Stephens, Phi Delta Kappa International’s Director of Relationships and Outreach.

Ms. Stephens not only highlighted the various facets of her agenda through a PowerPoint presentation, but she also expounded upon a number of items, such as PDK’s history; the rationale for the creation of “Educators Rising Collegiate”

and its impact on PDK membership; the use of PDK Poll Data; application for travel program scholarships; the rationale and importance of fundraising efforts; recognition of members through the core values of Research, Service and Leadership; PDK’s participation in community forums; and much more. A complete listing of the agenda items can be obtained through the following sources:

[www.pdkintl.org](http://www.pdkintl.org), [memberservices@pdkintl.org](mailto:memberservices@pdkintl.org) or 800-766-1156.

In fulfilling her role as PDK International’s Director of Relationships and Outreach, Kate Stephens has kept our membership on point with educational news releases, academic programs, innovative teaching practices, information regarding public opinion (such as the PDK Poll), data analysis, community forums, and many other areas of

## A Panel Discussion with Educators by Cassandra Penn Lucas

### Elevating the Discourse: Interactive Relationships and Student Success.

On February 16, 2019, the first membership meeting of PDK International American University Chapter #0151 was held on campus at the Spring Valley Department of Education building. Our members gathered in anticipation of a panel discussion entitled, "Toward Student Achievement: Improving the Student-Teacher Relationship".

Ms. Bonnie Berry, Special Assis-

tant to Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Dean of the School of Education, joined us as a special guest.

At the January Executive Board meeting Kate Stephens, PDK International Director of Relationships and Outreach presented an overview of PDK International, including highlights from the 2018 PDK Poll. Following that meeting, Dr. Keith E. Robinson, Newsletter Editor, and I discussed bringing an opportunity to our chapter members to elevate the discourse on some of



Left to Right: Thomas Jones, (President), Cassandra Penn Lucas (Moderator), Theresa Saunders (Panelist) & Bro. Anthony Hyman, Jr., (Panelist)

## On Being the Subject of Research by Dr. Gwendolyn Means (In part)

Kappan Dr. Gwendolyn B. Means, recently participated in a research project titled: Examining the Trajectories of Black Mathematics Teachers: Learning from the Past, Drawing on the Present, Designing Goals for the Future. "The purpose of this research is to examine the lived experiences of retired Black mathematics teachers who taught pre-and post-de jure desegregation. This research is

being conducted to explore their past to teaching, their purpose in teaching mathematics, their radicalized experiences as Black mathematics teachers, the reason they persisted in teaching mathematics, and their perspectives on current issues on recruitment and retention." Dr. Toya Frank, (Graduate School of Education), Dr. Jenice L. View, (Graduate School of Education), and Kath-

leen Matson, (Graduate School of Education) at George Mason University are conducting this project. The researchers hope that the information and insight received during these video taped interviews, which will be available to researchers in the future, might prove beneficial for studies interested in learning how to address historical intractable issues for Black teachers and to learn more

*"The purpose of this research is to examine the lived experiences of retired Black mathematics teachers who taught pre-and post-de jure desegregation."*

## The New District of Columbia Public Schools Chancellor (In part)

After a six-month nationwide search, on Thursday, January 31, 2019, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser named and the DC Council confirmed Dr. Lewis D. Ferebree to lead the District of Columbia Public School System. Mayor Bowser commented that "Dr. Ferebree is someone with experience leading at all levels of public education." Dr. Ferebree hails from Indianapolis, Indiana, where he served as Superintendent, Chief of the Public

School System since 2013. Prior, he served in a leadership role as Chief of Staff of the Public School System at Durham, NC, and he does have a local connection in that, he earned his master's degree at George Washington University.

According to DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, "Dr. Ferebree presents with a very long record of success that focuses on some of the issues that are very critical to the DC Public

Schools at this time." He is the third Superintendent appointed by Mayor Bowser to lead the public school system. He has experience as both an administrator and teacher.

Dr. Ferebree noted that "even though DC Public Schools are not quite ready to take a victory lap, they have had academic success and do have a strong foundation that can be built upon." Congratulations, Dr. Ferebree! What a way to punctuate the New Year!



Dr. Lewis D. Ferebree

Source: [https://www.nbcwashington.com/blogs/\\_first-read/dmw/DC-Mayor-Names-Schools-Chancellor-Lewis-Ferebree-501813201.html](https://www.nbcwashington.com/blogs/_first-read/dmw/DC-Mayor-Names-Schools-Chancellor-Lewis-Ferebree-501813201.html)

## “President’s Message” (Cont’d from pg. 10)

importance to our members. Most recently, she shared information regarding the criteria to become a PDK Distinguished Educator, along with the application process to attain this achievement. Therefore, we would like to thank Kate Stephens for her highly effective approach in bringing about information that is vital to our membership. In addition, we are most fortunate to hear about a new program, under the auspices of Phi Delta Kappa International, entitled “Educators Rising Collegiate,” which was formulated for the purpose of

encouraging students to “aspire to the profession of teaching.”

At the meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup>, we had the pleasure of meeting Tamir Harper, the recipient of the 2017 Educators Rising Collegiate award, who was accompanied by his mentor, Kate Stephens. Harper, an American University sophomore and student vice president, offered an impressive presentation, as evidenced by his scholarly manner and his effective responses to our colleagues’ questions. It was quite evident that he displayed wisdom well beyond his

Years. We are very proud of Tamir Harper and we congratulate him on being the recipient of this prestigious honor.

Last month, during the January 19<sup>th</sup> Executive Board meeting, a suggestion was made by Dr. Gwendolyn Means regarding the possibility of A.U. Chapter bringing about wider recognition of our chapter through the submission of selected articles called “spotlighting” that consist of events, programs, and topics of discussion that could appear in *The Heritage*, a publication

under the auspices of Phi Delta Kappa International. Since we all felt this was a venture we should investigate, Dr. Keith E. Robinson, Editor of *Kappa Talk Newsletter*, took immediate action to proactively pursue the matter by consulting with Kate Stephens. He was successful in that the AU chapter will be “spotlighted” in the June issue of the Heritage newsletter. He also volunteered and was immediately accepted to serve as a PDK scholarship reader.

## On Being the Subject of Research by Dr. Gwendolyn Means (Cont’d from pg. 11)

about how to recruit and retain Black mathematics teachers.



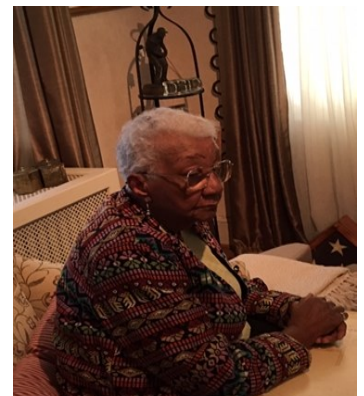
*“This research is being conducted to explore their racialized experiences as Black mathematics teachers, the reason they persisted in teaching mathematics, and their perspectives on current issues on recruitment and retention.”*

## Recognizing and Appreciating Kappan Citing's by Dr. Gwendolyn Means

Have you ever heard of this publication? Two Hundred Years of Public Education in the Nations Capitol 1804-2014: Profiles of 500 Key Women Educators. Editor is Dr. Marion E. Hines. This was a hook project of the Delta Chapter, District of Columbia,, Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. If you ever have an occasion to review this publication, you will find descriptions of the professional lives of the women superintendents and lead-

ers of schools in the District of Columbia. Some of our own American University Kappans who appear in this enormous publication include, **Mrs. Cynthia A. Greene, Mrs. Gloria Coley Smith, Ms. Zenobia Brooker, and Dr. Gwendolyn B. Means.** The entries of many others and historical women were based on responding to an inquiry from Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. The AU Chapter of PDK International is truly blessed to

have such accomplished leaders in its membership!



## “President’s Message” (Cont’d from pg. 12)

We all look forward to such a venture and the promise it holds for American University Chapter #0151.

There is another publication showcased by Dr. Robinson at the start of the New Year entitled, “Extra...Extra...Extra...” It is a supplement or bonus issue to the *Kappa Talk Newsletter*, which highlighted the activities that took place the December 15, 2018, Annual Holiday Social at the Crowne Plaza, in collaboration with Cassandra Penn Lucas, Vice-president of Pro-

grams. We thank Cassandra for leading this event in an exceptional manner!

There is another project I must bring to your attention, of which I am very proud. The recruitment of future members is a very important activity of our chapter. Therefore, in order to bring this to fruition, it was felt that a new procedure be instituted to encourage potential candidates to consider membership in American University Chapter #0151. Subsequently,

it was suggested that a special letter of invitation be formulated to share information regarding our programs, activities, and events, while entertaining the possibility of recruiting new members. Words of thanks and praise are extended to Theresa McClurkin for composing the letter of invitation, which has already been sent to individuals who have expressed an interest in our chapter.

Finally, the next project that is fast approaching is the **21st Annual Scholarship/Dinner**

**Dance: Red Ball.** The date is March 16, and it will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Greenbelt, MD, from 7:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight. Tickets are still available, and we look forward to seeing everyone there. Adrienne Herriott, chairperson, and her committee have been collaborating on this project, which we hope will be a great success! I extend many thanks to everyone for working with me in order to make the outcome of this new fraternal year a complete success!

## A Panel Discussion With Educators (Cont’d from pg. 11)

the issue addressed in the poll. After brainstorming several approaches that would engage our members, we agreed to design a panel presentation focused on two issues from the poll results that impact student success: the student-teacher relationship and parental engagement.

Dr. Robinson extended a panelist invitation to Anthony Hyman, Jr., a math teacher at Gunston Middle

School, Arlington, VA, asking him to address issues including: the incentives for him becoming a “career teacher”, greatest challenges he faces in a public school system as a black male teacher, and the impact of those challenges on his teacher effectiveness and success. Mr. Hyman shared several “small things” that he does to ensure student success, such as: 1) knowing students by name and face; 2) asking



Left to right: Theresa; LaVerne; Dr. Means; Dr. Musgrove; Vasser, and Gloria

## Cont’d from above

students if they have eaten; 3) being honest and sharing information with students; and 4) making sure that outside distractions are not a hindrance to learning. He was passionate about the importance of building rapport with students, particularly with black students and other students of color, and added that he is not afraid to act as a surrogate parent, recognizing that students are con-

fronted daily with many issues that may impact their achievements. It was especially enlightening to learn about some of the challenges he has faced in interactions with colleagues, such as 1) being viewed as a disciplinarian vs. an educator; 2) discrimination in not being a female teacher; and 3) advances from female teachers/administrators seeking partners for marriage. I extended the

panelist invitation to Theresa Saunders, a past president of the Prince George’s County, MD Parents and Teachers Association Council, Inc., to share her observations of some of the adverse conditions in the black community due to integration, particularly the ‘loss of culture through assimilation’. Ms. Saunders presented several examples, such as 1) assimilation brought about a lack of respect

for education; 2) the community no longer playing a vital role in helping to discipline the child; 3) the unfair removal of effective principals and teachers, and being replaced with de-based leadership; and 4) societal influences and the impact on the family dynamic. These are just a few of her observations regarding the cause for

## Panel Discussion with Educators (Cont'd from pg. 13)

the decline of quality in parent-teacher relationships, which, in turn, has impacted student achievement negatively. Ms. Saunders also shared some of the initiatives she spearheaded during her tenure as president of the Prince George's County Parents and Teachers Association Council, Inc., particularly successful fundraising events that provided substantial financial resources for student enrichment activities.

The remarks of Mr. Hyman and Ms. Saunders invoked a lively

and interactive exchange with our members, especially Dr. Gwendolyn Means, Dr. Mildred Musgrove, LaVerne Brown, Wanda Means-Harris, Sheila Holt, and Adrienne Herriot. Ms. Berry expressed her enlightenment and positive impressions of chapter engagement and commitment as a stakeholder in education as a profession. She assured us that she will share with Dean Holcomb-McCoy the need and benefits to strengthen the School of Education and chapter partnership.

The enthusiastic engagement reaffirms that PDK International American University Chapter #0151 members are serious educators who embrace the core values of social justice, engagement, excellence, and results. This panel presentation reached across the spectrum of the PDK core values, with the primary focus being **engagement**. For complex problems to be solved, multiple stakeholders from different perspectives need to collaborate and be part of the problem-solving process. My most heartfelt thank you to

President Jones and Dr. Robinson for their support in bringing this program to fruition. The welcoming hospitality we receive at our meetings would not be possible without the dependable energy and dedication of Gloria Smith, Chapter Advisor and University Liaison, and Ines Luengo de Krom, **Senior Administrative Assistant, School of Education**.

I look forward to us experiencing new venues to elevate the discourse on informative, thought-provoking, and well-

## Cont'd from above

documented educational issues as our chapter continues to retain, reclaim, and recruit!



Left to right: Dr. Musgrove; Vasser; Gloria, and Ms. Bonnie Berry



Left to right: Helena; President Jones; Cassandra; Ms. Saunders; Mr. Hyman; and Dr. Robinson

## 21st Annual Scholarship Education Dinner Dance (cont'd from pg. 9)

ly during the American University Chapter's Annual Scholarship Dinner Dance. I have been attending for many years, and each year, the dance gets better and better. The members are very warm and welcoming; the dinner is great, and the DJ always keeps us well entertained. I look forward to attending many more!"

Mrs. Adrienne Herriot, the Chair

of the Dinner Committee commented: "A big high five and kudos" to the Dance Committee and members of Phi Delta Kappa International, American University Chapter #0151 for a job well done! The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Scholarship Dinner Dance was a class act. Congratulations for money raised for scholarships to provide additional resources

for deserving students to realize their full potential as the chapter and guests continue to support their future goals and educational journeys.

The entire evening was very delightful! The Greenbelt Hilton Garden Inn was the perfect venue to host this fantastic event. The food prepared by Chef Jonathan and his staff

was excellent, the service was superb, and the ambiance was very elegant. Unsurprisingly, DJ William E. Green really rocked the house with his "Music on the Move" by playing a wide variety of music genres. Members donated many door prizes that were much appreciated by the recipients. And, finally the committee members Ms. Barbara & Theresa McClurkin

21st Annual Scholarship Education Dinner Dance "Red Ball"  
Photo Collage



21st Annual Scholarship Education Dinner Dance "Red Ball" (cont'd from pg. 15)



commented, "Everything was just excellent!" (cont'd from pg. 14)  
Congratulations to the Scholarship Education Dinner Dance Committee for a job well done!





**Top photo left to right: President Jones, Cassandra (Moderator), Theresa, Bro Hyman, Rhonda, Wanda, Dr. Means, Dr. Musgrove, Vasser, Gloria & Helena**  
**Bottom photo left to right: Cynthia, Sheila, Bonnie Berry (AU Special Asst to the Dean School of Education), Adrienne, Bro Hyman, Theresa & LaVerne.**  
**Panelists photo left to right: President Jones, Bonnie Berry (AU Special Asst to the Dean School of Education), Theresa, Cassandra & Bro. Hyman**

## Looking Back Two Years at Our Past Performance by: Keith E. Robinson, Ed.D.

In the last two years, under the leadership of President Thomas L. Jones, the American University (AU) chapter, a graduate chapter and an affiliate of the American University, welcomed five new members. The chapter anticipates welcoming two more members in 2019-2010. Another important highlight is that out of all the chapters based in the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. area, AU chapter #0151 is one of the strongest, sustaining itself and engaging in impressive and notable activities.

For example, last month, the chapter upgraded its website to a 21st century, user-friendly medium through which chapter members and all end users can access meaningful chapter information with pride. Additionally, our 2018 scholarship recipient, Tiffany Ben of Washington, D.C., a student at Alabama State University, recommended by Dr. Mildred L. Musgrove, former Newsletter Editor, was featured in PDK International's 2018 Strategic Plan, bringing wide visibility to our chapter and its activities.

Every year since the first publication, the chapter has produced first-rate newsletters on a quarterly basis, publishing high-quality research and evidence-based information and articles for readerships far and wide. We consistently explore "hot-button" issues, such as teachers running for public office, innovative teaching practices, classroom instruction improvement, and education research.

The chapter also consistently invites highly informed educators as guest speakers who are passionate about education-related

issues and the community at large. In December 2016, Dr. Katherine James, Research Representative, invited Yasmine Arrington, a motivational speaker and founder of the non-profit ScholarCHIPS, Inc. to speak to the chapter. ScholarCHIPS, Inc. provides scholarships and a support network for children of incarcerated parents, inspiring them to complete their college education.

Another key highlight is the chapter works hard to maintain its active involvement in and support of research. In December 2017, Dr. Katherine James and Dr. Gwendolyn Means, Research Representative invited student researchers Makiri Pugh and, in June 2018, Jessica Gonzalez (special education teacher), to present their research proposals to the chapter. To date, the chapter has presented 48 prestigious EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR AWARDS and one of several criteria was research. In 2016, the Educator of the Year award was presented to Dr. William Blake, and in 2018, Dr. Keith E. Robinson. There was no award presented in 2017.

In February 2018, Gloria C. Smith, Chapter Advisor, invited Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Dean of the School Education, as guest speaker. Dr. Holcomb-McCoy shared her mission, vision, concrete strategies, and strategic goals for the AU School of Education and the chapter. Another highlight of the year was our annual student-led symposium. The school that hosts the symposium reflects the work of AU chapter vis-a-vis the impact the symposium has on the children and educators, who adopt that school, and work with it long-term. In particular, the chapter provides assist-

ance to the children and staff and because we know the importance of recognizing new teachers, we use our receptions as a medium to do that, thus ensuring that there is a substantial return for everyone.

And don't forget that one of our very own, Dr. Gwendolyn Means, Research Representative, participated in and was featured in the HERITAGE Volume 1, February 2018, (pg. 3) at the 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE PDK POLL of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, "the most trusted source of public opinion about K-12 education because of its rigor, its depth, and its commitment to capturing all voices and viewpoints" (pg. 3).

Not resting on our laurels, we opened 2019 on a vigorous note. On Saturday, January 19, 2019, Cassandra Penn Lucas, Vice President of Programs, invited Kate Stephens, PDK International, Director of Relationships and Outreach, and Tamir Harper, 2017 Educators Rising, Student Vice President, and a freshman at American University, to speak with us.

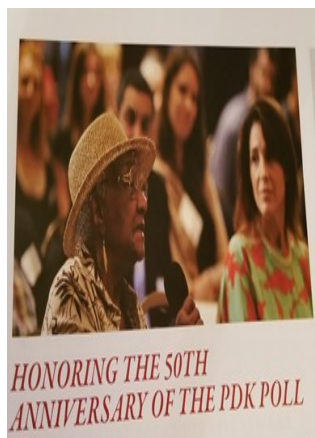
Kate facilitated a highly interactive dialogue with chapter members on PDK history, current state, next steps, fundraising and scholarship initiatives, and volunteering opportunities. The lively discussion was stimulating enough to compel Dr. Keith E. Robinson, Newsletter Editor, to volunteer and be accepted by the PDK International Scholarship Team to serve as a scholarship reader on Thursday, January 23, 2019.

On Saturday, March 16, 2019, under the leadership of Adrienne J.

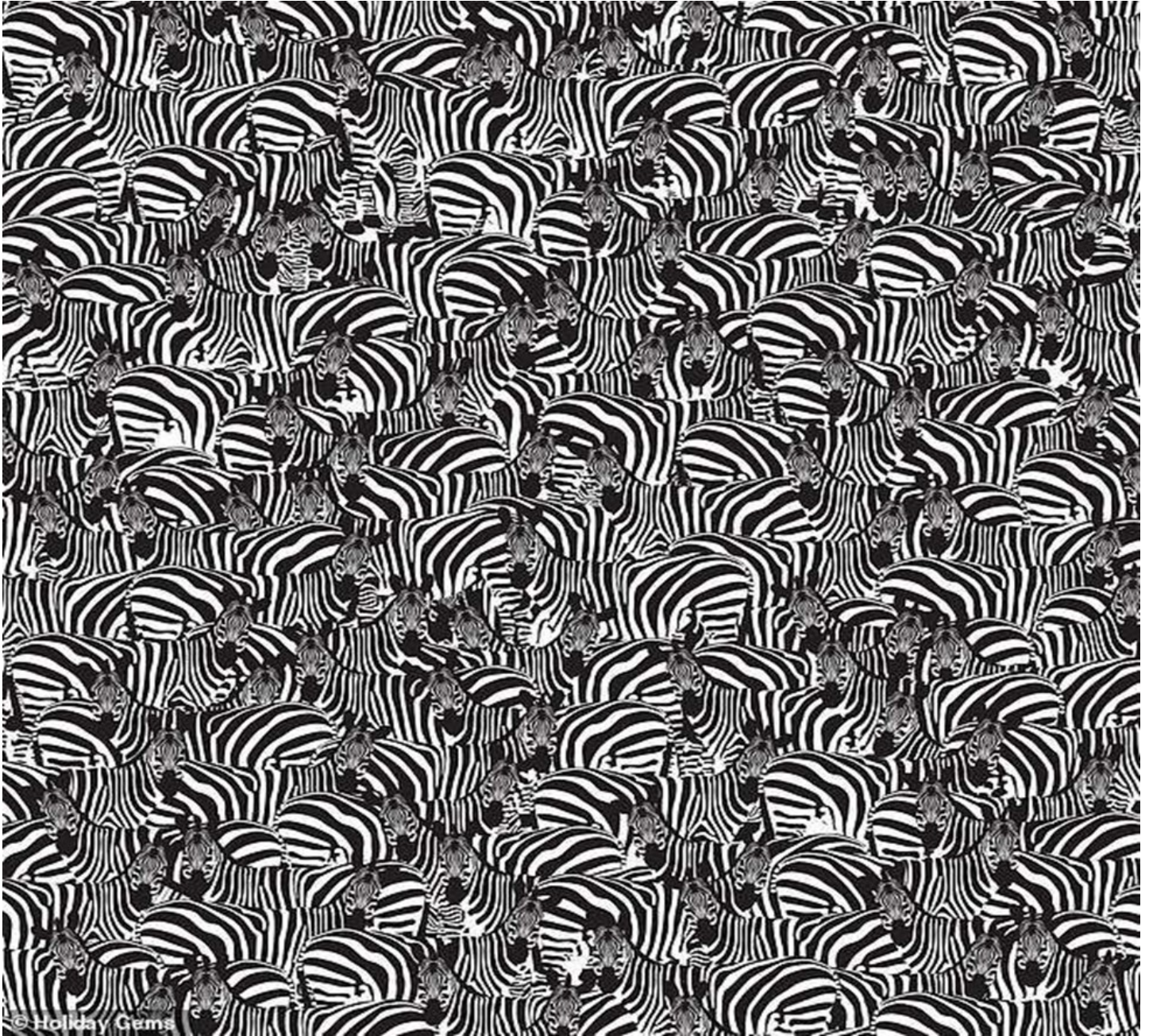
Herriott, Committee Chair, the chapter will host its **21st Annual Scholarship and Education Dinner Dance** our flagship fundraising event.

### Contributing:

Professor Dr. Katherine James & Wanda Means-Harris (Principal Emeritus)



## Educational Brain Teaser



Fellow Kappans, Can You Find the **Musical Key Board Instrument** Hidden Among the Herd of Zebras?

How long did it take you to find the keyboard?

- ⇒ 1 or less
- ⇒ 2 to 3 minutes
- ⇒ 3 to 5 minutes
- ⇒ What keyboard?

Source: <https://www.msn.com/en-us/lifestyle/lifestyle-buzz/can-you-spot-the-keyboard-among-the-zebras-infuriating-new-brainteaser-challenges-players-to-find-the-instrument-hidden-in-the-herd/>



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*Kappa Talk is published quarterly. If you would like to submit an article for the newsletter, e-mail your articles to [kedwardrobinson@yahoo.com](mailto:kedwardrobinson@yahoo.com). Send in items to let us know what you are doing, articles on educational issues (fast facts) , or any other item you feel would be of interest to the members.*

*To facilitate the process, it is kindly requested that all articles and photos be submitted by **February 15, 2019** to be published in the **March** issue. 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.*

**Notable and Quotable**

***“Life as a teacher Begins the day that YOU realize that You are always a Learner.”***



**Left to right:** Tamir Harper, Wanda Means-Harris, Dr. Gwendolyn Means (thoroughly addressing the floor), Cassandra Penn Lucas, Dr. Keith E. Robinson, and Cynthia Greene look on. Photo courtesy of Sheila Holt