

Gamma Alpha and the Community



Gamma Alpha demonstrates we are Key Women Educators - United in Purpose through our commitment to our Delta Kappa Gamma sisters and our service to others. Although we have worked with other organizations, we are now concentrating our efforts on two organizations.

Seedlings Braille Books for Blind Children has become an important organization Gamma Alpha supports. **Seedlings** is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to increasing the opportunity for literacy by providing high quality, low cost Braille books for children. In 1984, when Debra Bonde founded Seedlings, Braille materials were scarce and expensive. Her goals were to increase the availability and lower the cost of Braille books for children in order to promote the children's literacy skills and the love of reading. In 1985, the first year of book production, Debra made 221 books in her basement office. By 1990, Seedlings was producing 5,000 books per year, which precipitated its move out of Debra's basement and into the Bentley Center in Livonia, Michigan, and eventually to our present location on Farmington Road in Livonia. In 2003, with a small staff and a group of loyal volunteers, Seedlings produced 18,700 Braille books and articles, with a grand total of 169,976 since 1984, equaling over 8 million pages of Braille! Members donate cash, purchase Braille products and donate their time helping to code and bind Braille books. Members attend a fundraising event "Bowling for Braille" each spring. Some members volunteered their time serving food at the Seedlings fundraiser while others donated money and bowled. Seedlings and Gamma Alpha received a monetary award from the Educational Foundation for 2008 to help make fifty "Hooray for Braille" kits.

Methodist Children's Village is a private, non-profit, non-sectarian child-care agency, which has a long history of caring for children. The agency's primary focus is to care for children who have been subjected to physical, psychological and sexual abuse or severe neglect. The Village offers residential care for 70 children, ages 10-17 who are in need of highly

structured intensive environment. The treatment approach involves a team of professionals that evaluates each child's needs.

The Service Project Committee decided that our first contact with MCV should be a **Winter Hug**. Members donated hats, scarves and mittens in December. We felt every child deserved to have the clothes they need to feel warm and safe during the winter season. We also gave a "Cottage Shower" for the MCV. The director gave us a "wish list" of household items the cottages needed. Members donated new kitchen items for the cottage shower.

Society Service and Recognition

- Gamma Alpha holds a Holiday Auction each year. The proceeds of the auction are used to support our Grant-in-Aid and Scholarships. Generally enough money is earned to award two \$500 Grant-in-Aid awards or scholarships to women seeking a degree in education.
- Gamma Alpha makes a chapter donation to Members Supporting Members Fund and the World Fellowships Fund.
- Gamma Alpha has earned awards at the State Level including:

- Award of the Rose
- President's Award
- Attendance Award
- Pace Setter Award for our Yearbook
- First Place Chapter Newsletter