



The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International  
DKG

Serving Women Educators from Western Wayne County  
Gamma Alpha is a Proud Member of Detroit Metro Coordinating Council  
October/November, 2020  
Volume 41, Issue 2

# GAMMA ALPHA BULLETIN

## Presidents' Challenge

Amy Wight and Carole Lower

**Co-Presidents of Gamma Alpha Chapter**

Gamma Alpha Friends,

**Co-presidents** - Carole & I are looking forward to starting our biennium as your co-presidents. Carole will preside over chapter meetings, send email reminders, and complete national & state forms. I will facilitate the Zoom meetings, continue to write for the newsletter, and receive your meeting RSVPs. Both of us will generate the agendas and represent us at state events.

**Newsletter** – Liz Frazier is joining Jackie Smart as co-editor of the newsletter. They will continue to keep us updated, informed and entertained.

**Service Projects** – Gamma Alpha will continue to support Seedlings Braille Books, and the Beverly House.

**Technology Tools** – We will continue to share information using the following tech tools:

- Zoom – this allows us to hold our virtual meetings
- Google Docs – this allows us to share files, instead of emailing changes back and forth
- Facebook – using a Facebook group would let us share brief meeting reminders and information, as well as photos from recent events
- Sign up Genius – this website allows chapter members to see what items other members have signed up to donate, for example donations to the Beverly House or dishes to pass at the next planning meeting

**Membership Initiative** – Our use of the state's membership initiative continues. We look forward to strengthening & ensuring the vitality of our chapter by increasing our membership.

**DKG +1** – Carole & I continue to encourage all of you to share your love for DKG with your friends, teachers and non-teachers alike. Invite a friend to enjoy a nice evening with you. All you have to do is share the link to our Zoom with them.

DKG +1 promotes awareness of DKG and Gamma Alpha, which will help us to increase our membership and also build support for our events (Women in the Arts and our holiday auction) that are open to non-members.



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### REMINDERS

We will meet via Zoom in October.



## CALENDAR 2020-2021



### **October 15, 2020 (Thursday)**

Place: The comfort of your home.

Time: 6:30PM We are using the same password for each virtual meeting.

Amy will send a reminder about the meeting and password prior to the meeting.

Program: Education in the Time of Covid

Panel with our working teachers: Pam Sayre, Jennifer LaRose, Joanna Eiwen, Jessica Walker, Sarah Elsesser

Dinner in Northville after the meeting

### **November 1, 2020 (Sunday) CANCELLED**

After contacting Laurel Manor to make arrangements for the annual auction, we were advised by the management to postpone our yearly event until next November. They do not have the necessary permits to open at 50% capacity like restaurants. Because the auction is our only fundraiser, the executive board is asking that you make a donation of \$50-65. If we held the auction, you would undoubtedly spend more on the meal, your raffle donations, purchasing raffle and 50/25/25 tickets, and perhaps a glass of wine or two. The money we make from the annual auction covers are grant-in-aid awards, projects for Beverly House, donations to Seedlings Braille Books for Children, Schools for Africa, World Fellowships, Member Supporting Member, and the Educational Foundation. Your generosity is appreciated. Please send your donation check payable to Gamma Alpha to our treasurer:

**Cindy Dietz  
7329 Gilman  
Westland, MI 48185**

### **December 10, 2020 (Thursday)**

Gamma Alpha Holiday Happy Hour and Service Project Donation

Place: Margie Sievert

18265 Arselot Drive

Northville 48168

Time: 5:30 - 7:00 PM

A Genius Sign-up will let us know what we should donate in terms of appetizers and service project donations

### **January 21, 2021 (Thursday)**

Cruising into January

Place: The comfort of your home via Zoom.us

Time: 6:30 - 7:30 PM Amy will send an invitation and password prior to the meeting.

Executive Board Business meeting one hour prior to the meeting (4:30 PM)

Select members will share travel ideas, cruise tips, Airbnb info, and some fantastic vacation photo memories

**Please email Amy Wright your pictures, information, tips, ideas & stories from your travels: [amosande@hotmail.com](mailto:amosande@hotmail.com)**

### **February 3, 2021 (Wednesday)**

Virtual Happy Hour

Place: The comfort of your home via Zoom.us

Time: 6:30 - 7:30 PM

**Program Virtual Trivia—email Amy Wright 3 multiple choice trivia questions: [amosande@hotmail.com](mailto:amosande@hotmail.com)**

**March 11, 2021 (Thursday)**

Place: The comfort of your home via Zoom.us

Time: 6:30 - 7:30 PM



We are working on having author, Erin Bartells, joining our Zoom meeting to share her journey as a writer. Her debut novel, “We Hope for Better Things” released in January 2019 and received rave reviews. It was followed in September 2019 with “The Words Between Us.” Please join us for this Zoom meeting.

**April 30-May2, 2021 (Friday, Saturday, Sunday)**

DKG Michigan State Organization Executive Board and State Convention

DoubleTree by Hilton Riverfront Bay City

One Wenonah Park Place

Bay City, MI

Registration information will be in the Wolverine and in our newsletter

**May 15, 2021 (Saturday) Metro Council Field Trip**

**Program: Wild Women of Detroit Bus Tour**

**Cost: \$65.**

**Time: 10:00 am to 2:30 pm**

Join Metro Council for the Detroit History Tours on a 4 hour bus tour of some “Wild Women of Detroit” and their stories. We will enjoy a mini-sub lunch, chips, cookies, and a soft drink. Because a bit of swearing comes with the history, all public bus tours are a strict 21 years old and older. Alcoholic beverages are NOT allowed on the bus (DARN.) Bottled water is provided and guests may bring snacks or nonalcoholic beverages on board.

The tour leaves promptly at 10:00 am and returns at 2:30 pm from Millennium Park in Livonia. Millennium Park is located on Middlebelt and I-96. We will park near the service drive in front the Home Depot parking lot. Home Depot is directly behind Costco. There will be a sign. Boarding starts at 10:00 AM. The bus holds 52 passengers. DKG members and their guests are welcome (although DKG members will have priority.)



Why science teachers should not be given playground duty.

## May 20, 2021, (Thursday)

Gamma Alpha Chapter's 42nd Birthday Dinner

Place:

Karl's Cabin  
6005 Gotfredson Road  
Plymouth, MI

Time: 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Cost: \$33

Program:

Birthday Dinner

Chapter Woman of Distinction

Friend of Education

Honor any Retirees

Present Lifetime Service Award

Grant-in-Aid Recipient

Induction of New Members

Service Project Donation

## June 12, 2021 (Saturday)

Planning

Place: Carole Lower

45766 Fermanagh

Northville MI 48168

Time: 11:00 - 2:00

Bring: Sign-up Genius for Dish to Pass, Program ideas

## BIRTHDAYS



### October

14 Lynne Bemer

21 Alice Duke

23 Lisa Austin

### November

4 Linda Dobrzeniecki

5 Amy Wright

10 Sherry Green

11 Sarah Elsesser

15 Jose Engel

17 Pam Emerson

## State News

The Fall Workshop will be held online this weekend September 26th. Please see below for the link to sign up to register for the online workshops. This link just became available. Please sign-up today to reserve your spot. All you need to participate is a computer or a phone. They have a great program lined up, and you can sign up for any or all the sessions.

Link to REGISTER for the DKG Michigan State Fall Workshop: (Please register by 9/23)  
<https://forms.gle/Uf2sZw5yevcRfNYe8>

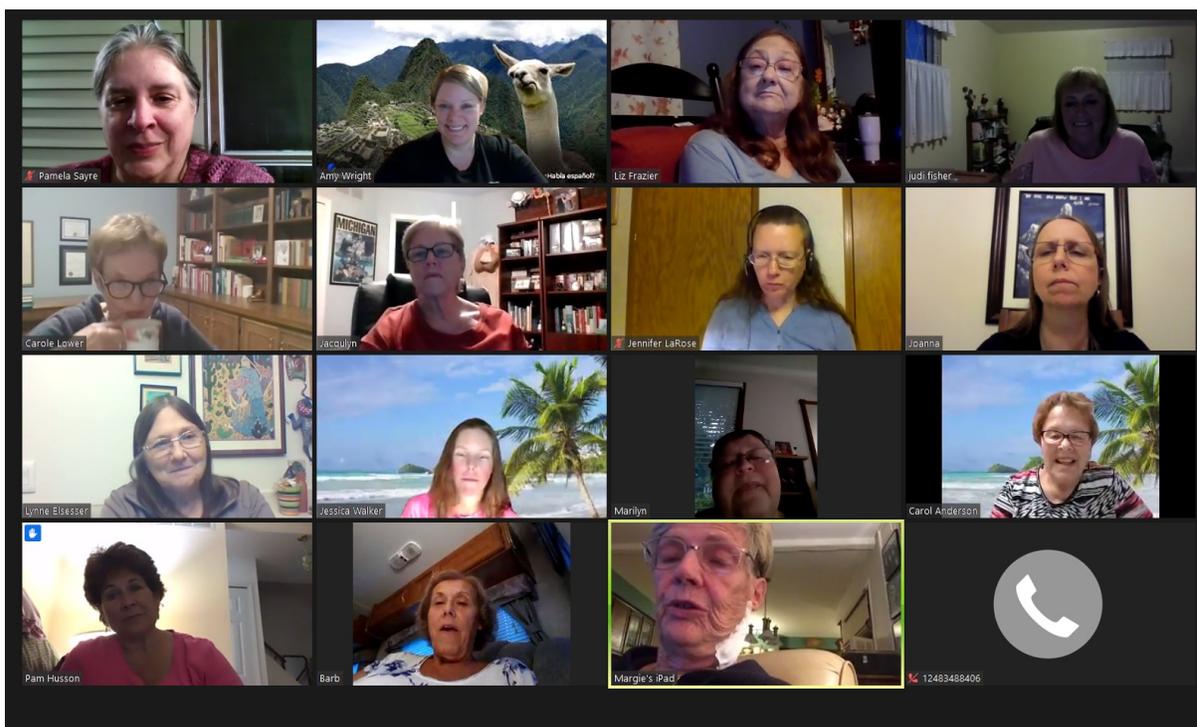
## DKG International ([www.dkg.org](http://www.dkg.org))

The **2020 DKG Virtual Event** ran from **July 7 - 10** with events planned throughout those days, both livestreamed and pre-recorded. Programming has been posted on the website for later viewing by members not able to attend the initial showings. You do not have to have Zoom to view the events.

On the DKG website you will be able to view:

- Two scheduled keynote speakers; Jane Golden and Olympia Lepoint
- A variety of workshops originally selected for presentation
- An interview with the author of *Our Heritage IV*
- The 2020 Achievement Award winner announcement (Dr. Helen Popovich)
- Election results and Installation of officer
- A combined forum event addressing diversity and much more!

## September 10, 2020 Zoom Meeting



**Some attendees from the September 10th meeting. Next time, tell us when you are taking a screen shot so we can SMILE!**

Co-presidents Amy Wright and Carole Lower expertly handled our second virtual meeting via Zoom.us. There were 19 attendees (a few left the meeting before the picture was taken.) Carole started the meeting with a fun get-to-know you opener. We chose our favorite type of snack. Carole requested we share some information about ourselves based on the snack. For example, if you chose salty, like me; you were asked to share your favorite book. (anything related to Jane Austen.) It was nice seeing so many faces and hearing about their favorite book, most embarrassing moment or what was on their bucket list. We had a busy agenda and Carole led through it with a PowerPoint made by Amy to keep our attention. Amy included *The DKG Song* during a planned break. Many thanks to Amy for sending us Zoom etiquette notes. Since Gamma Alpha has purchased a Zoom package for future meetings, we will be using the same meeting ID to join Zoom meeting:

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5760748757>**

**Meeting ID: 576 074 8757**

**Dial by your location**

**+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)**

**+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)**

**Meeting ID: 576 074 8757**

## **Gamma Alpha Minutes for Meeting on September 10, 2020 Zoom Meeting**

**Meeting called to order** at 6:34 p.m.

**Welcome and Ice breaker** led by Carole Lower, Co-President

**Approval of previous minutes.** Motion to Approve by Liz Frazier and seconded by Margie Sievert. Motion carried.

### **Presidents' Reports**

- Next meeting will be Zoom – October 16, 2020
- Members will talk about Education in the time of Covid. It will be a panel discussion.
- Meet at 6:30 at the same Zoom link.
- President Strategic Plan has been completed by Carole Lower and Amy Wright for the next 2 years.

**Treasurer's Report** - Cindy Dietz was not present. She will email out report. If you have not paid your dues, please get that money to Cindy ASAP. Dues are \$85 per year. Write check payable to Gamma Alpha and mail to Cindy's home address at 7329 Gilman Westland, MI 48185. Donations: If you donate to Beverly House, send your check payable to Gamma Alpha and mail to Cindy Dietz. Indicate in the memo it is for Beverly House. Donations to Seedlings can be made directly to Seedlings. We always make a memorial donation to Seedlings for those who have passed. Memorials should have been made for Grace Morgan who passed in June and Debbie Ervin who passed in August. Amy will send a text to Cindy to ask if these donations were made.

**Corresponding Secretary's Report** - Jackie Smart reported that you should have received your calendar booklet/contact list/mini-yearbook in the mail. The complete yearbook (108 pages) is only available on our website and is password protected. The website address and password are on the booklet cover. All of the new inductees got information for the yearbook to her. The 2020 -2021 is waiting for a couple of items to be completed before it is posted on our website.

**Grant-in-Aid** - Joanna Eiwen reported that the application is on our website. Jessica Walker was the recipient of last year's grant. She still hasn't spent the grant yet. She wants to get an interactive whiteboard. This is something she could use at home. She currently has to teach from home 3 days a week. She might also use some to buy PPE. She will receive the second part of her grant money from Cindy since she has attended a meeting.

**Service Projects** - Judy Morante reported that the Disney + has been purchased for the Beverly House. The girls were EXCITED. They are currently housing teens, no babies. Lynne Elsesser brought mums and with the help of the girls, the mums were planted. The girls got carryout one day. They appreciate everything we are doing. Judi Fisher reported that the employees at Seedlings are still working and they hope to hold the Bowling for Braille next March. Many people donated money even though bowling was cancelled.

**Vacation Auction** - We are doing Quarantine crafts instead of the Auction.

**50/50** - Is there a way to do it while Zooming? Might be possible with a cash app. We will consider alternatives between now and the next meeting. Motion to defer discussion of 50/50 to the next meeting was made by Jackie Smart and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Carole Anderson. Motion approved.

**Used Book Sale** - Margie Sievert reported we can't do this until we meet In person. If you read a good book send a book report to Jackie Smart.

**Annual Auction** - Jackie Smart reported that the Annual Auction has been deferred until November 2021 year. The explanation is in the calendar. We usually make about \$2000 which goes to fund Grant-in-Aid, Beverly House, Schools for Africa, and other things. People usually spend money

paying for the lunch, buying items for the auction, buying raffle tickets. Can easily spend over \$100 on these items. Suggestion that members could make a donation to Gamma Alpha since we are not holding the Auction. Send it to Cindy Dietz. Make a note in the memo line.

**Membership** - Recommendation for Membership form is on our chapter website Please include the new member's birthdate. Please e-mail to Lynne Elsesser or Linda Clark.

**New Business** - Calendar Adjustments: The **Fall Conference** will be virtual on Zoom- Saturday, Sept 26<sup>th</sup>. Information should be going out to Chapter Presidents this week. You can pick the sessions that you want to attend on Zoom. Will only be held Saturday, not Friday. **Women in the Arts** is cancelled for this year.

**Holiday Happy Hour** in December is still on the calendar. We will wait and see if it is a go. Margie Sievert says we are all still invited.

**January** - will be Zoom meeting- about Cruising Tips.

**February**- Virtual Happy Hour with a Trivia game. Send Trivia questions to Amy. Will Use Kahoot. You will want to have 2 devices. One to be on the meeting and one to play the game. Questions should be multiple choice or true/false. Choose Fun, Interesting, Obscure trivia.

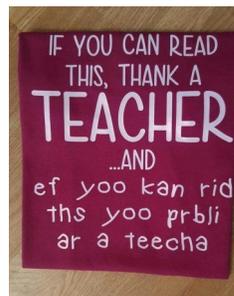
**State Convention** - It is currently scheduled to be held at DoubleTree in Bay City from April 30<sup>th</sup> -May 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Metro Council** - There is also a deposit on Wild Women of Detroit for May 15, 2021

**Birthday Dinner** - is schedule for May 20, 2021 at Karl's Cabin.

### Birthdays

- September
- 9 Cindy Dietz
- 16 Carole Lower
- 19 Helen Mate
- 24 Barb Anderson
- 26 Jennifer LaRose
- 27 Linda Clark
- 30 Jackie Smart.



### Announcements

Next Meeting- October 15, 2020

*Education in the Time of Covid*

Our working members will speak about teaching during the 20-21 school year.

6:30 p.m. Zoom link + meeting ID

Amy renamed the Zoom link Gamma Alpha.

Thanks to Amy for Tech Advice.

Motion to adjourn was made by Jackie Smart and seconded by Judi Fisher to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting Adjourned at 7:44 PM

Following the business meeting was "Quarantine Show and Tell."

Joanna Eiwen, Recording Secretary

Linda Dobrzeniecki, Recording Secretary



# RECIPE OF THE MONTH

## Cinnamon Sugar Pumpkin Muffins

This recipe yields 24 glorious muffins which is **awesome** because you're going to want to share with friends and family. And honestly, what a great start to October with your favorite cup of coffee or tea. Yum!

### Ingredients:

- 2 3/4 cups of all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 cups of sugar
- 2/3 cup of brown sugar
- 3 eggs
- 25 ounce can of pumpkin
- 3/4 cup coconut oil
- 1/4 of milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

### Cinnamon Sugar Topping

- 2/3 cup of sugar
- 2/3 cups chopped pecans
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice

### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
2. Line (24) muffin tin with cupcake papers
3. Combine flour salt, cinnamon, and soda then set aside
4. Combine both sugars, pumpkin, coconut oil, vanilla and milk
5. Slowly fold dry mixture into wet mixture just until combined
6. Use ice cream scoop to fill muffin containers 3/4 full
7. Topping: Combine sugar, pecans, and pumpkin pie spice in a small bowl
8. Sprinkle a teaspoon or more on top of muffins
9. Bake for approximately 25 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Let



## BOOK SHELF

### **Eight Children's Books About Race and Diversity**

Children's books are one of the most effective tools to engage with young children on important issues. To encourage conversations about race and diversity with your children, check out this list of books to read together at school or as a family.

#### **Sulwe**

Lupita Nyong'o

This Coretta Scott King award-winning picture book is about self-esteem and beauty within. It's a whimsical and heartwarming story about a little girl who learns to embrace her unique self.

#### **Whose Knees Are These?**

Jabari Asim

This interactive and multicultural board book is a fun way to embrace diversity through a baby's dimpled knees! Great for babies and toddlers.

#### **Hair Love**

Matthew A. Cherry

This sweet story is about a little girl with beautiful hair. When her dad has to help style it for a special occasion, he has a lot to learn, but is ready for the challenge since he loves his daughter so much.

#### **The Day You Begin**

Jacqueline Woodson

National Book Award winner Jacqueline Woodson and two-time Pura Belpré Illustrator Award winner Rafael López bring this inspiring story to life about finding the courage to connect. It's about how sometimes you can feel like an outsider, but sharing our stories can bring us together.

#### **I Believe I Can**

Grace Byers

This gorgeously illustrated book lets all kids know that, no matter their background, they can love and believe in themselves.

#### **Little Leaders: Bold Black Women in History**

Vashti Harrison

Through sweet illustrations and educational text, the biographies of 40 remarkable Black women are brought to life. Scientists, artists and activists from history are all included in this inspiring book.

#### **She Persisted:**

#### **13 Women Who Changed the World**

Chelsea Clinton

This book features 13 women throughout history and today who persevered in the face of adversity. It encourages your child to keep striving for your dreams and to speak up.

#### **I Am Enough**

Grace Byers

This ode to female empowerment is the perfect gift for any little girl in your life. It's all about loving who you are, kindness, and respecting others.

## GAMMA ALPHA EXECUTIVE BOARD COMMITTEES



**Co-Presidents:** Amy Wright & Carole Lower

**Co-Vice-President & Membership:** Linda Clark & Lynne Elsesser

**Co-Recording Secretary:** Joanna Eiwen & Linda Dobrzeniecki

**Co-Corresponding Secretary:** Jackie Smart & Liz Frazier

**Treasurer:** Cindy Dietz

**Parliamentarian:** Pam Sayre

#### **Committees**

**Grant-in-Aid -** Joanna Eiwen

**Newsletter & Yearbook Editor –** Jackie Smart

**Service Projects -** Judy Morante, Lynne Elsesser, & Judi Fisher

**Finance -** Judi Fisher

**Sunshine -** Esther Loskowske

**Vacation Auction -** Mary Jo Dreffs, Carol Palk, Sherry Green

**50/50 -** Cindy Dietz & Esther Loskowske

**Used Book Sale –**Margie Sievert

**Gamma Alpha Annual Auction -** Jackie Smart, Pam Husson, Esther Loskowske, Cindy Dietz (& all Gamma Alpha Members)

If you would like to be part of a committee, please contact Amy or Carole.

#### **WEBSITES**

**DKG Gamma Alpha**  
[www.migammaalpha.org](http://www.migammaalpha.org)

**DKG Michigan**  
[www.dkgmichigan.org](http://www.dkgmichigan.org)

**DKG International**  
[www.dkg.org](http://www.dkg.org)

## **New Michigan Teacher of the Year An Advocate for Educators and ‘Marginalized Voices’**

*By Brenda Ortega, MEA Voice Editor*



MEA member Owen Bondono quickly got down to work as the new Michigan Teacher of the Year (MTOY). Just a few weeks into the role as advocate and voice for the state’s educators, the Oak Park language arts teacher began surveying school employees on their thoughts about returning to school amid a global pandemic.

Bondono has sorted educators’ fears into several categories. One concern was repeated again and again, he says: How can a school system that can’t keep toilet paper and pencils in stock be able to supply adequate personal protective equipment?

“There’s a lot of worry about funding and supplies,” he said. “There’s worry about air quality and infrastructure. There’s a lot of worry about schools that are going to disregard anything on the (MI Safe Schools) Roadmap that’s recommended instead of required and essentially go back to school like its business as usual with no social distancing, no reduced class sizes, and – depending on the age of students – no masks. There’s a lot of concern about teachers being forced to work from their school building even though they’re teaching remotely in areas with high numbers of infections. And I’ve heard a lot of concern about the lack of transparent communication (from administrators).”

On the other hand, many educators are feeling optimistic and creative despite the challenges and concerns, Bondono said. “They know the circumstances might not be the best, but they’re excited to reconnect with their peers and their students and get back to some sense of routine and normalcy, even though it won’t look like what we’re used to.”

The 31-year-old sixth-year teacher said he plans to take the feedback to the September 8 meeting of the State Board of Education, where the MTOY holds a non-voting seat. My job at the State Board of Education is to represent teachers’ voices – especially in a time like now when many teachers are feeling unheard.”

For his part, Bondono worries about ongoing effects of COVID-19 that some survivors are experiencing. “I know somebody who’s been sick for over nine weeks. We don’t know yet what the long-term consequences of this disease are going to be for some people.” Ensuring safe spaces has always been a focus for Bondono, who has committed to lifting up the voices of marginalized people during his year in the education spotlight.

He is the first openly transgender person to be selected for the state’s top teaching post, recognized for creating an inclusive, supportive classroom where all young people can thrive. The key, he says, is getting to know students on a human level. “We can forget sometimes, especially at the secondary level when you’ve got 130 or more students under your charge, that every single one of them is a completely unique individual. We spend a lot of time at the beginning of the year talking about identity, what communities we belong to, and moments that have emotional significance.”

Once bonds are created, he maintains connection by prioritizing open conversation. “Protecting the space is about being willing to stop, for example, if someone makes a joke that is sexist and say, ‘Hey, I don’t think you realize that was inappropriate, so let’s unpack this together.’ “I approach it as a learning opportunity, and students start to learn that they’re safe in my room.”

Even more frequently than their straight, cisgender peers, LGBTQ youth experience hostility, harassment, or violence at school – and sometimes at home, as well. As a young person, Bondono had friends who became homeless after coming out to parents, and he points out that LGBTQ youth are four times more likely to attempt suicide than other groups.

Growing up in Shelby Township, he felt supported in his family but experienced bullying at school. “My mom is a lesbian, and my big sister is also queer, so I wasn’t getting that negativity from my home, but at school it was sort of—what’s the phrase? Death by a thousand little cuts?”

The abuse began with teasing about his mother in elementary school and getting in trouble when he defined the word lesbian for some kids on the playground. In high school, where he was out as bisexual (he didn’t come out as trans until college), Bondono was mistreated by students who didn’t want to let him use the bathroom. When he and others tried to start a Gay-Straight Alliance club, the principal denied the request.

For that reason, Bondono hopes to be a “possibility model.” He borrowed the term from transgender actress Laverne Cox, best known for her groundbreaking role on the Netflix series *Orange is the New Black*.

“That term shapes a lot of what I do in my classroom, because many times our students don’t know how to have these conversations. They don’t know how to express who they are. They don’t know how to stand up for themselves in a way that’s appropriate. So by doing these things in front of them, I’m being a possibility model of what one version of an adult looks like.”

Bondono originally thought he would pursue music when he arrived at Wayne State University as a freshman, but he changed after realizing that all of his interests and hobbies had to do with helping people grow on their journeys.

It started with a volunteer role with the non-profit *National Novel Writing Month* organization 12 years ago – a position he still holds as the metro Detroit region liaison. The organization encourages writers to produce 50,000-word novels every November, and Bondono helps organize local events.

“Writing has always been a thing I’ve done,” he said. “When I was a little kid and I got in trouble, my mom would make me write out what I had done wrong and what I would do differently next time. She stopped the day I wrote a story about how it was actually the alien’s fault.”

Now Bondono enjoys encouraging students to become readers and writers. He looks for literature that is well-written and relatable, either because the characters are diverse or the situations depicted are universal.

He also encourages educators from every subject area to “normalize LGBTQ identities” by teaching about queer people who have contributed to their field. He remembers, for example, studying Walt Whitman in high school and being shocked to learn in college that the 19<sup>th</sup> Century poet was gay.

“Queer people have always existed, and it helps knowing that you are not some strange anomaly – that the community is not some recent development in the human condition. We’ve always been here, and we’ve always contributed to society.”

In addition to his work on the State Board of Education, Bondono will serve with the nine Regional Teachers of the Year on the Michigan Teacher Leadership Advisory Council and as a member of the Governor’s Educator Advisory Council. He is also the state’s candidate for the prestigious National Teacher of the Year award.

