**The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International**
**DKG Michigan State Organization**
*Serving Women Educators from Western Wayne County*
*Gamma Alpha, Zeta, Gamma Gamma, Beta Chi, & Alpha Rho are*
*Members of Detroit Metro Coordinating Council*
**Winter 2026**
**Volume 47 Issue 2**

# GAMMA ALPHA BULLETIN



## President's Message
## Linda Dobrzeniecki, President's Message

Gamma Alpha Sisters,

As we enter the Thanksgiving season, I find myself reflecting on how fortunate we are to be part of such a caring and dedicated organization. I am truly grateful for the generosity, time, and talents our Gamma Alpha members share throughout the year.

At our October meeting, we had the pleasure of learning how our grant funds were used to benefit students. The creativity and thoughtfulness behind the teachers' projects were truly inspiring! It was wonderful to see firsthand how our contributions are making a meaningful difference in the lives of children.

Our Story Ladies also deserve a special thank-you for sharing their time and love of reading with children. Through their visits and storytelling, they help spark curiosity, encourage imagination, and nurture a lifelong love of learning. *Jackie needs two more volunteers for the December 7th visit to Elliott Elementary in Wayne-Westland. Please contact her if you are available for either or both dates.*

In November, so many members generously gave their time, energy, and resources to make our Annual Auction a success. Events like this remind me of what we can accomplish when

*(Continued from page 2)*

### *IN THIS ISSUE*

*2 BIRTHDAYS*
*3 CALENDAR*
*7 BOOK CORNER*
*8 SEPTEMBER MINUTES*
*10 OCTOBER MINUTES*
*13 STORY LADIES*
*14-20 AUCTION NEWS*
*21 WHY TEACHERS STAY*

**This is the link for Zoom meetings.**

*https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5760748757?pwd=bHZ6TnJJZVEyS3hwbStRVGJzUnpwUT09&omn=81598475155*

*Meeting ID: 576 074 8757*

*Passcode:*
***dkg** (all lowercase)*

or
you can join us by phone.
*312 626 6799 US (Chicago)*
*Meeting ID: 576 074 8757*

**Jackie will send the link in an email prior to meetings. Just click the link!**

# Winter Birthdays

*(Continued from page 1)*

we work together and support one another.

As December approaches, I hope we will continue to enjoy the friendships and fellowship that make Gamma Alpha so special. Most importantly, may we always remember that the work we do, both big and small, helps enrich the lives of children and supports their future.

Thank you for all that you do, for your willingness to give, and for making Gamma Alpha such a wonderful organization. I am grateful to be part of this special group!
Wishing you and your families a very happy Thanksgiving and a joyful holiday season!

**Linda**



## DECEMBER

12 Barb Broadley
30 Judi Fisher

## JANUARY

1 Carol Anderson
6 Rosa Russenberger
7 Donna Colaianne
8 Margie Sievert
13 Cheryl Valdahl
31 Marie Canzoneri

## FEBRUARY

29 Marge Braun



# Gamma Alpha
# 2026-2027 Meeting Calendar

**December 17, 2026 (Thursday) Holiday Happy Hour**
**Time:** 5:30-7:30
**Place:** Home of Vicki Dwelley
21333 Summerside
Northville, MI 48167
**Meeting Information: Fun, Food, and Giving to Beverly House**
Gamma Alpha members will gather for an evening filled with friendship, festive fun, delicious food, and the spirit of giving. An Evite with all the details will be sent in early December. Members will have the opportunity to sign up to bring a hearty hors d'oeuvre or a favorite dessert to share. As part of our holiday tradition, the Service Project Committee will present the wish lists from the girls at Beverly House, giving us the opportunity to help make their season brighter. Together, we can celebrate the holidays while making a meaningful difference in the lives of others. We look forward to sharing a wonderful evening of fellowship, laughter, and generosity with everyone.

**January 14, 2027 (Thursday) Zoom Executive Board Meeting**
All members are welcome to attend. Jackie will send you the link to the meeting. You'll click the link to join the meeting.

***https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5760748757?pwd=bHZ6TnJJZVEyS3hwbStRVGJzUnpwUT09&omn=81598475155***
***Meeting ID: 576 074 8757***
***Passcode: dkg (all lowercase)***
**or you can join us by phone…**
***312 626 6799 US (Chicago)***
***Meeting ID: 576 074 8757***

**Time: 7:00-8:00 PM**
**Meeting Information:**
1. President's Reports:
    - Form 2 Death of a Member annual report Interactive Form (Ready to send Feb 1)
    - Award of the Rose Google Form
    - President's Award Google Form
    - Chapter Woman of Distinction Google Form
    - Lifetime Service Awards Google Form (Smart & Bacinski)
    - Friend of Education Google Form (Need a candidate)
2. VP-Membership Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Auction Report
5. Newsletter Report
6. Service Project Report
7. Grant-in-Aid Report
8. Confirm meetings for February-June

**February 18, 2027 (Thursday) Zoom Meeting 1 SCECH Pending**
Jackie will send members the Zoom link.
**Time:** 7:00-8:00 PM
**Meeting Information**:
**Protect Yourself from Scams: Learn How to Stay Safe**
Scammers are becoming increasingly sophisticated, using phone calls, text messages, emails, social media, and even artificial intelligence to deceive their victims. This

presentation will cover common scams targeting seniors, families, and consumers, including identity theft, online fraud, phishing schemes, romance scams, grandparent scams, and financial exploitation.
Attendees will learn:

- How to recognize warning signs of a scam
- The latest tactics used by fraudsters
- Practical steps to protect personal and financial information
- What to do if you suspect you've been targeted
- Resources available to help victims of fraud

Knowledge is one of the best defenses against scams. Join us for this important presentation and gain valuable tips that can help you protect yourself, your family, and your finances from becoming the next target. Don't miss this opportunity to stay informed, stay alert, and stay safe.

**March 18, (Thursday) 1 SCECH Pending**
**Time:** 5:30 P.M**.**
**Place:** Northville Sports Den
133 W. Main Street, Suite 102
Northville, MI 48167 (*Free parking is located on Cady and Center Streets.)*
**Meeting Information:**
**Nutrition for Brain Health and Longevity**
What we eat plays a powerful role in how we think, feel, and age. Join us for an engaging presentation that explores the connection between nutrition, brain health, and healthy aging. Learn how specific foods and dietary patterns can support memory, focus, and cognitive function while helping reduce the risk of chronic disease. This presentation will highlight practical, evidence-based strategies for nourishing the brain, maintaining vitality, and promoting longevity. Participants will discover simple lifestyle choices that can enhance overall well-being and support healthy aging at every stage of life. Whether you are interested in improving your health, caring for a loved one, or simply learning how to live well and longer, this informative session will provide valuable insights and actionable tips for everyday living.

**April 18, 2027 (Sunday) 2.5 SCECH Pending FIELD TRIP**
**Time: 11:45 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.**
**Place:** Zekelman Holocaust Center
28123 Orchard Lake Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
**Cost: $5** (Prepayment is needed)
**Meeting Information:**
**Lessons in Humanity: A Visit to the Zekelman Holocaust Center**
Join fellow DKG members for an inspiring, educational, and deeply moving visit to the Zekelman Holocaust Center in Farmington Hills. This meaningful experience offers an opportunity to explore powerful exhibits that preserve the history and lessons of the Holocaust while fostering understanding, empathy, and civic responsibility. We arrive at the center and head to the auditorium at 11:45 for Welcome and Orientation. At 12:00, we will listen to the Survivor talk. Every survivor's story is unique and offers a firsthand account of life before, during, and after the Holocaust. Hearing from local Michigan survivors helps us see the victims as individuals. From

1:00-2:15, a knowledgeable docent will lead us through compelling exhibits featuring personal testimonies, historical artifacts, and stories of resilience, courage, and survival. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the consequences of prejudice, discrimination, and hatred, as well as the importance of defending human dignity, promoting justice, and confronting intolerance in all its forms. As educators and community leaders, DKG members will reflect on how these lessons continue to shape our work in education and strengthen our commitment to building inclusive, compassionate, and informed communities.

**May 13, 2027 Birthday Dinner**
**Time:** 5:00 - 7:30 P.M. (We will eat @ 5:30.)
**Place:** Genitti's Hole-in-the-Wall
108 E. Main Street
Northville, MI 48167
**Meeting Information:**

- Friend of Education Certificate
- Grant-in-Aid Award
- Lifetime Service Awards
- Chapter Woman of Distinction
- Anniversary Pins
- Induction of New Members (if any)

**May 15, 2027 (Saturday) Detroit Metro Coordinating Council**
**(1 SCECH Pending)**
**Time: 12:00-2:30**
**Place:** Northville Sports Den
133 W. Main Street, Suite 102
Northville, MI 48167
(*Free parking is located on Cady and Center Streets.)*
**Lunch:** Separate Checks
**RSVP to Attend.**
**Meeting Information:**
**'The Revitalization of the Detroit Riverfront'**
Join fellow members of DKG Metro Coordinating Council for an engaging and informative session exploring the revitalization of the Detroit Riverfront. Participants will gain insight into the history of the waterfront, the challenges and opportunities of its redevelopment, and the impact of this revitalization on surrounding communities. Given our members' appreciation for education, civic engagement, local history, and community development, we believe learning more about the Detroit Riverfront's remarkable evolution would be both informative and inspiring.

**June 16, 2027, Thursday Planning Meeting & Pot Luck Lunch**
**Time:** 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
**Place: Home of Kristen VanDoorne**
32418 Nestlewood St.
Farmington Hills, MI 48334

**What's on the Menu?**
Good food, great company, and even better ideas! Jackie will email everyone a Google

RSVP form. Please let us know if you'll be attending and what delicious dish you'll be bringing to share. (No pressure, we're sure everything will be better than burned toast!)

**Help Us Plan an Amazing Year**
Many of you belong to other organizations and have heard outstanding speakers or participated in fun activities. We'd love to hear your ideas!
The RSVP form will also include space for you to:

- Suggest a speaker, program, or group outing.
- Volunteer to present a program yourself (just include a brief description of your topic).
- Share speaker recommendations or contact information, even if you can't attend the planning meeting.

Every idea helps us build another great year of meetings.

**Looking Ahead**
Each year we typically schedule **four or five meetings** featuring guest speakers, special activities, or field trips. Your suggestions are what make our programs interesting and enjoyable!

We're also looking for:

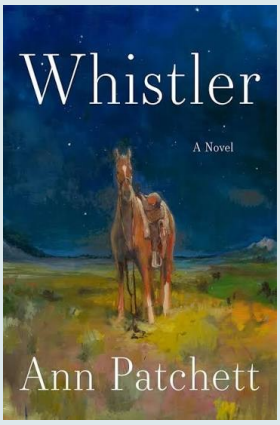
- Ideas for our Metro Council meeting—the more creative, the better!
- A volunteer to host our annual Holiday Happy Hour in December. The best part? You get to pick the date! (Yes, that means you have the power!)

We hope you'll join us for an afternoon of planning, laughter, and good food. Together, we'll create another year of engaging programs and memorable gatherings. The more people we have at our June planning meeting, the more wonderful and diverse ideas we have! Please plan on attending or sending ideas.



# Book Corner

*Whistler* by Ann Patchett




Thenovel begins with Daphne Fuller, age 53, when she spots an elderly man following her and her husband through The Metropolitan Museum of Art. It is Eddie Triplett, her former stepfather whom she hasn't seen in 44 years. Eddie was married to Daphne's mother for just over a year when Daphne was nine. The marriage ended abruptly after a traumatic winter car accident. For over four decades, Daphne has secretly carried the heavy guilt that she caused the crash that fractured her family. Their unexpected reunion sparked a beautiful, poignant journey to untangle childhood secrets and view the flawed decisions of adults through the mature lens of middle age.

As women educators, we spend our lives nurturing children and wondering about the long-term impact of our work. *Whistler* speaks directly to the educator's heart in three profound ways:

1. Teachers spend their days observing children and trying to decode what they don't say. Patchett brilliantly captures the internal world of nine-year-old Daphne; how a child can silently internalize massive adult burdens and carry false guilt for decades. Educators will deeply appreciate this poignant reminder of how fragile, observant, and deeply sensitive the children in their classrooms truly are.

2. Teachers frequently wonder if they are making a difference, especially when students move on at the end of a school year. *Whistler* is a beautiful validation of the fact that a brief relationship can alter the trajectory of a life. Eddie was only in Daphne's life for fourteen months, yet his love sustained her for forty-four years. For teachers who only get one year to impact a child, this theme is incredibly affirming.

3. As a profession dominated by women who frequently balance caregiving at school and at home, women teachers will connect with the book's nuanced depiction of motherhood, female resilience, and the sacrifices women make when navigating broken families and new beginnings.

# September 24, 2026 Minutes

**Attendance:** Rosa Russenberger, Jackie Smart, Cindy Dietz, Ana Tilley, Cheryl Valdahl, Pam Emerson, Jen Troike, Kristen Van Doorne, Lynne Bemer, Karen Dickelman, Pam Sayre, Joanna Eiwen, Judy Morante, Lynn Elsesser, Sarah Elsessor, Fran Saenz, Carol Anderson, and our speaker Lynn Mason.

Meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM by VP Rosa Russenberger.

- Cheryl Valdahl was inducted as a new member, sponsored by Karen Dickelman.

**Minutes:**

Minutes of the last meeting were approved as written.

**Reports:**

- VP Rosa reported that the new Executive Board watched very informative narrated training slides this summer. She recommended that potential member watch an orientation video on our chapter website www.migammaalpha.org titled "Unlock Your Potential". Membership forms are available at the meeting and on the state website www.dkgmichigan.org
- The Treasurer's Report and Budget were sent to members. The Budget was approved following a motion by Judy Morante and seconded by Kristen Van Doorne.
- Service Projects chair, Lynne Bemer, reported that flowers were planted at Beverly House this summer. Sarah Elsesser suggested that activities be planned for the residents at their house since we have had issues with liability when we planned offsite activities/outings. She offered a contact who will do facials, etc. for the girls. This will be discussed at the October meeting.
- Auction chair, Jackie, reported the auction is November 8 at St, Mary's Cultural Center. Numbers are down. We are responsible for 50 meals. We generally have 70 attending the event. Sign up, bring friends, and family. Don't forget your donations for the cup raffles and silent auction. Carol Anderson secured the auction permit.
- Joanna reported that Grant-in-Aid applications are on the table and on the chapter website www.migammaalpha.org

Lynn Mason from Sigma Chapter (Belding) presented a very informative talk on how to address elected officials about issues involving education. She gave us materials from the League of Women Voters and made many of us feel that we are prepared to advocated for women and education. She also brough apples from her orchard for everyone. Jackie invited Lynn to stay overnight so she wouldn't have to drive home .

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM with no objection. Next meeting is October 22 at Northville Sports Den.

Minutes prepared by Carol A. Anderson for Margie Sievert, Recording Secretary

# September Meeting Pictures



**Apples for the teachers from Mason's Orchards in Belding, MI**

**Karen Dickelman with new inductee, Cheryl Valdahl.**



# October 22, 2026 Minutes

**Gamma Alpha Minutes**

**October 22, 2026**

**Call to Order: 5:35 P.M.**

President Linda welcomed members and let them know we will order our meals before the program.
If you want SCECH credit for the presentation today, Jackie will give you the sheet to sign.
Twenty-six were in attendance. Guests were Renee Debs, Caitlin Willard, Patricia Sayre -McCoy, and Ian Smart (as or tech support.)
**Minutes:** Minutes were printed in the agenda. Judi Fisher was at the September meeting. Minutes were approved with this correction.

**Reports**:

**President:** President Linda attended the Chapter Presidents' Zoom meeting last night.

**Vice President:** Rosa reminded members that if they know someone who is interested in joining, to contact you or go to our chapter website for the Membership application www.migammaalpha.org. Potential members can watch an orientation, "Unlock Your Potential" on our chapter website, as well. Jackie brought some membership forms if anyone knows someone who might want to join.

**Treasurer:** No report this month

**Standing/Special Committees:**

**Personal Growth & Service Projects Committee** – Lynne Bemer

Gamma Alpha members will gather for an evening filled with friendship, festive fun, delicious food, and the spirit of giving at the home of Vicki Dwelley. An Evite with all the details will be sent in early December. Members will have the opportunity to sign up to bring a hearty hors d'oeuvre or a favorite dessert to share. As part of our holiday tradition, the Service Project Committee will present the Wish Lists from the girls at Beverly House, giving us the opportunity to help make their season brighter. Lynne will be trying to contact Beverly House to get the wish lists to us. Together, we can celebrate the holidays while making a meaningful difference in the lives of others. We look forward to sharing a wonderful evening of fellowship, laughter, and generosity with everyone. Ideas for on-site experiences include facial. Sarah might have a contact to help us with this.

Carole Lower made a motion to spend $100 for books at Seedlings. The motion was seconded by Pam Sayre. Judi Fisher will contact Seedlings and purchase the books.

**Auction Committee** -– Jackie Smart

The Auction is Sunday, November 8. Flyer is in the newsletter, in the mailing,

and I brought a few with me tonight. RSVP $33 via cash, check, or e-pay options. Specific information about the auction is in the pink booklet. Bring your own WINE!

**Grant-in-Aid Committee** – Joanna Eiwen

Grant applications are on the chapter website www.migammaalpha.org and are due February 28. There are a few applications on the handouts table. The grants are for $1,000…$500 in May at the Birthday Dinner and the remainder when the recipient attends a meeting.

The AIM grant application from the state can be found on the state website www.dkgmichigan.org

**Special Orders** None

**Unfinished Business** None

**New Business** None

**Announcements:**

October Birthdays:

14 Lynne Bemer

21 Alice Duke

23 Lisa Austin

**Next Meeting**

Annual Action on Sunday, November 8 at St. Mary's Cultural Center at 11:30.
Gamma Alpha hosts one fundraiser to support our chapter's service work, grants, and charitable giving.

We count on YOU to make it a success!

**Adjournment:** Business meeting adjourned at 5:53 P.M. Members had dinner followed by an informative meeting by Grant-in-Aid and A.I.M. grant recipients. We learned how modest a grant, combined with creativity and dedication, can transform learning and inspire young minds. The group had a renewed appreciation for the difference these young teachers can make.

Minutes prepared by Jackie Smart for Margie Sievert, Recording Secretary

# October Meeting



L-R: Caitlin, Ana, Joanna (Grant-in-Aid chairperson), Jen, Karen, and Karen.

## GRANT AWARDEE PROJECTS

What happens when you give a creative teacher a little funding, a great idea, and permission to think outside the box? Some pretty amazing things! Gamma Alpha Chapter and The AIM Educational Foundation, Inc. provide grants that empower active teachers to enhance classroom learning through innovative projects and activities. Several Gamma Alpha members and one non-member who have received grants showcased their funded projects and shared the impact these experiences have had on their students. We learned how a modest grant, combined with creativity, dedication, and a healthy dose of teacher ingenuity, can transform learning and inspire young minds. We discovered the wonderful things teachers can accomplish with a little support and a lot of imagination.

# October Story Ladies

Retirement hasn't stopped the members of DKG Gamma Alpha Chapter from doing what they love best - teaching! This month, our retired educators visited Elliott Elementary School to read fall and Halloween stories to students in kindergarten through third grade.

Reading aloud helps children build vocabulary, strengthen listening and comprehension skills, spark their imaginations, and develop a lifelong love of books. Best of all, it creates special moments filled with curiosity, laughter, and learning.

Although we may be retired from lesson plans, grading papers, and classroom duty, we haven't retired our love of teaching! We miss sharing stories with young learners, and volunteering gives us a wonderful way to give back to our school community.

Once a teacher, always a teacher! We may have hung up our classroom hats, but we're still turning pages, sharing smiles, and inspiring young readers - one story at a time. And with Halloween tales, there were plenty of treats and giggles, with no tricks required!

*"The more that you read, the more things you will know.*
*The more that you learn, the more places you'll go!"*

Dr. Seuss, I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!

Cheryl, Rosa, Cindy, and Jackie…October's Story Ladies!







The Story Ladies will be reading in K-3 and two ASD classrooms on December 7 and March 17 from 9:00-11:00. If you would like to be a reader, we would love to have you.

# November Raffle and Silent Auction Tables







As you can see from the photos, Gamma Alpha members were incredibly generous with their auction donations! Thank you to everyone who contributed, brought guests, and helped make our afternoon such a success.

Treasurer Cindy shared the following results from our fundraiser:
**Silent Auction:** $785 raised!
**Raffle Cup Sales:** $1,800 raised!
**Member Donations:** $433

**50-25-25 Raffle:** $260 *(This goes into Gamma Alpha's operating fund.)*
After paying St. Mary's Cultural Center and covering our additional expenses (name tags, extra yellow raffle tickets, and Costco cupcakes), we had about $12 left from the meal proceeds. That's pretty impressive budgeting!

Bottom line: $3,018 profit to support our grants and charitable contributions.

A HUGE thank-you to everyone who brought guests, donated auction items, purchased raffle cups, and supported Gamma Alpha in so many ways. Your generosity is truly appreciated!

We hope everyone enjoyed a fun afternoon of friendship, food, and a little friendly bidding competition on the silent auction table. We also hope you went home with a special treasure—or at least something you didn't know you needed until you won it!

Thank you for making the day such a success!

# Auction Inspiration

Welcome to Gamma Alpha's Annual Auction! It's wonderful to see so many friends gathered together this afternoon. As women, many of us have mastered the art of getting more for less, spotting a bargain, and justifying a purchase because it was on sale. But today, we get to turn that logic upside down! This is the one day when spending more than planned isn't a shopping mistake—it's a charitable contribution. And outbidding a friend is perfectly acceptable, as long as you smile while doing it!

My inspiration today is *Project Hail Mary*. If you haven't read the book, listened to the audiobook, or seen the movie starring Ryan Gosling, it's about a middle school science teacher who unexpectedly becomes humanity's best hope. I'm all for STEM if Ryan Gosling is teaching it! Suddenly, I understand why science enrollment might go up.

A special shout-out to Karen Dickelman, Wayne-Westland's K–12 STEM teacher. She may not be a movie star, but she has something even more valuable: the ability to make science exciting and inspire students. And Karen, if you ever need a teaching assistant, we'll check to see if Ryan is available!

When you think about it, *Project Hail Mary* isn't entirely fiction. Teachers have been saving the world for years. They just don't get a spaceship. Instead, they get a class roster, a constantly changing curriculum, a copier that jams five minutes before class, and a budget that expects $50 worth of supplies to last until June.

Teachers solve problems with limited resources, adapt when plans fall apart, master new technology, and manage 27 people asking questions at once. Honestly, that sounds less like a school day and more like a NASA mission—with one major difference: NASA probably doesn't have to remind its crew to stop talking and get back to work!

Teachers inspire reluctant learners, calm anxious students, communicate with parents, complete mountains of paperwork, and still find ways to make every child feel seen. All while being asked to attend one more meeting that could have been an email. If that isn't heroic, I don't know what is!

One of the central themes of *Project Hail Mary* is that knowledge, curiosity, and teamwork can change the world. That sounds a lot like DKG. Since 1929, our Society has believed that investing in educators is one of the smartest investments we can make. Every teacher we support reaches countless students whose lives are shaped by the encouragement, creativity, and confidence they receive in the classroom.

And that's why we're here today. Your generosity supports the G.I.R.L.S. Fund through UNICEF, Seedlings Braille Books for Children, Beverly House Group Home, and our Grant-in-Aid Awards, which help women educators in our communities begin and strengthen their careers.

Several of our past recipients are with us today, and we're delighted to celebrate them. Their achievements remind us that investing in educators creates a ripple effect that reaches classrooms, families, communities, and generations of students.

So, this afternoon, I encourage you to embrace your own **"Hail Mary"** moment! Here are a few strategies for auction success:

- **Buy one more arm's length of yellow and blue raffle tickets than you**

**planned.** Consider it a sound educational investment!

- **If you see something you love, fill that raffle cup with tickets!** Don't listen to the little voice asking, "Do I really need this?" It's the same voice teachers hear before buying more classroom supplies with their own money. Ignore it!
- **If someone outbids you, smile sweetly and raise that paddle!** We're teachers—we know persistence pays off, and there's no extra credit for letting someone else win!
- **If you go home with more than you intended to buy,** simply call it professional development. Today, we're learning how to shop competitively for charity!

Today, none of us has to save the planet. We simply have to invest in the people who shape its future. Every bid, raffle ticket, and donation helps a teacher inspire the next scientist, artist, engineer, author - or maybe even the next person who saves humanity.

And unlike the hero of *Project Hail Mary*, our teachers don't need to travel light-years to make a difference. They do it every day, right here in our own communities. So, enjoy some wine, bid generously, laugh often, and remember: the only thing better than getting a great auction deal is knowing your bid is helping someone.

**That's a mission worth believing in!**



# November Auction Pictures





# November Auction Pictures





# November Auction Pictures





# November Auction Pictures






## Why Teachers Stay

According to an October 14, 2026 article in *neaToday,* teachers stay in education for more than a paycheck. A six-year study of 13 school districts across four states found that **relationships, respect, and a supportive school culture** play a major role in teacher retention.

The strongest factors included:

- **Collegial relationships:** Teachers stay when colleagues welcome them, share resources, collaborate, and help them feel they belong.
- **Trust and autonomy:** Teachers want the freedom to make instructional decisions without being micromanaged or constantly monitored.
- **A voice in decisions:** Teachers are more committed when they help shape their schools and are treated as knowledgeable professionals.
- **Fair compensation and resources:** Salary matters, but so do adequate materials, planning time, and meaningful professional development.
- **A culture of belonging:** Teachers are more likely to stay when they feel respected, supported, and confident that their school wants them to succeed.

These conditions don't happen by accident. School leaders and strong teacher unions can help build a culture of collaboration, provide time for teachers to connect, and ensure their voices are heard. Teachers may enter education to make a difference, but they're more likely to stay when they know they matter, too. They don't just stay for a job - they stay for a community that values them. When schools invest in their teachers, teachers are better positioned to invest in their students.

**When we take care of teachers, we help them take care of the future.**

## 2026-2028 Gamma Alpha Executive Board & Committees

**Presidents:**
Linda Dobrzeniecki

**Vice-President & Membership:**
Rosa Russenberger

**Co-Recording Secretary:**
Margie Sievert

**Treasurer:**
Cindy Dietz

**Parliamentarian:**
Pam Sayre

**Communications:**
Jackie Smart

### Committees

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

**Service Projects:** Lynne Bemer

**Finance**: Judi Fisher

**Sunshine**: Fran Saenz

**50/50:** Cindy Dietz and helper

**Auction**: Jackie Smart & Carol Anderson

### Websites

**DKG International**
www.dkg.org

**DKG Michigan State Organization**
www.dkgmichigan.org

**DKG Gamma Alpha**
www.migammaalpha.org