

California Alpha Delta Kappa Leadership Submit
September 18 - 19, 2020

Opening Words: California Proud

I am going to start this morning by honoring the lives of those lost to wildfires and covid-19. Will you please join me in a moment of silence?

Our president Sara Cooper's overall theme for the 2020 - 2022 biennium is "California Proud." Honor is one of the four supports of her logo which also includes nurture, support and flourish. We are California Proud. We are proud to honor all whose lives were tragically lost to these two scourges. We are proud to keep those still in danger and those who have lost property and irreplaceable memories in our hopes and thoughts. We are proud of our unbelievably hardworking firefighters. We are proud to combat the climate change that causes wildfires and pandemics. We are California Proud.

Now let's take a closer look at these elements of Sara's logo through the lens of our sisterhood.

Honor - We honor all of our sisters who are teaching in these crazy pandemic times. A lot is asked of teachers and we are stepping up, being creative and flexible, and doing everything possible to help our students succeed despite the obstacles.

Nurture - We nurture all of our teachers still in the thick of educating our students and the many sisters who help them. We nurture our environment to protect the future of our next generations.

Support - We support Excellence in Education along with our teachers and the environment. We want teachers to feel very nurtured and supported!

Flourish - We expect teachers and the environment to flourish as we devote our time and energy to them. We write encouraging notes to our fellow teachers, use our time and monetary resources to support them as well as the environment.

Honor, nurture, support and we will flourish. We are California Proud.

Lao Tzu said, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” Today we begin our Leadership Summit mindful of how challenging it is to live in a pandemic world. We have to hold this meeting virtually because we can’t get together in person for who knows how long. The world is turned upside down and we, all teachers currently working or supporting from the sidelines are struggling to cope with all of the changes and challenges in our brave new world.

A well-known speaker started her seminar by holding up a brand new twenty-dollar bill. In the room filled with people she asked if anyone would like to have her \$20 bill. Hands in the rooms started going up. She crumpled and crumpled the bill and asked the crowd if anyone still wanted the bill. The hands of the audience went back up again showing that the people still wanted the \$20 bill even though it was crumpled.

She then dropped the bill on the ground and started to grind it into the floor with her shoe. She picked up, now a crumpled and dirty \$20 bill. “ Does anyone still want this bill?” she asked. All of the hands went back up again.

The speaker said, “ Today we have all learned a valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the bill, you still wanted it because it did not lose its value. Many times, in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled, and ground into the dirt by life and the decisions we make. We may feel broken and worthless; but no matter what happens to us or what will happen we will never lose our value.” The moral of the story is that no matter how beat up by life we sometimes feel, we are priceless. The worth of our lives comes from not in what we do or who we know, but by who we are. Let’s move forward into the future knowing our value and making ourselves and each other feel California Proud.

Closing Words: We can make it happen!

The poet Kiesha Shepard wrote, “Away, away I go, to some secluded beach.
I hear the lap of the water, the echo of the gulls;
Somewhere at the edge of the world, the jumping off place.
Away, away I go into the deep, where the blue sky meets the black sea.
It stretches out before me, reaching in all directions.

We have an opportunity to reach out in all directions in our beloved state of California. We can make it happen! We can support our teachers and students. We can support decision makers who can institute policies that benefit our teachers and students. We can behave in ways that honor and protect our environment.

We need a fair and just world. California Alpha Delta Kappa sisters can make it happen one teacher at a time, one child at a time, one recycling bin at a time. We can organize our sisters to support our educational communities with monetary resources and time. We can make it happen!

These are tough times in America, in education and in our environment. Let's reach out in all directions united in the cause of excellence in education and nurturing our environment. Malala Yousafzai said, "One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world." Let's leave here today determined to work our sisters to help our world flourish in whatever way we can. We can make it happen!