

## California State President Rosena Kruley's Acceptance Speech

Good morning, Immediate Past President, Sara, members of the past and newly elected State Executive Board, International dignitaries, guests, and members.

I accept the position of your State President with gratitude and honor for the support and encouragement I have had from so many people. This is a time of uncertainty and change, but also one of opportunity. I am excited about working with all of you in this biennium to move Alpha Delta Kappa forward into the future.

I would like to acknowledge and introduce you to my wonderful husband, Michael, who has been my rock from our first date some 47 years ago (43 married). We have a son Andrew & his fiancée Shina who live in Michigan and our daughter Avi, here in CA, Also, my sister, Sheila, & her two children - Dane and Esina, all of whom have been there when I needed them to help me prepare for my journey.

I am especially honored to be the first African American State President. My family, going back for generations, always valued, and encouraged education, especially for women. As the matriarch in the family now, I feel supported and encouraged by my entire family, including my grandmother and mother who are no longer with us. And, I was especially encouraged by my sister, Sheila, who attended a Regional Conference with me and told me that I had to become State President so that she could watch me walk across the stage. Well, it's a virtual stage this year, but here I am!

I have come a long way from my childhood and early adulthood to this position, both geographically and spiritually. I grew up on the South Side of Chicago, attending parochial schools through high school, earning a BA degree at the State University. I began my journey in the educational system in the Chicago area and continued here in California.

Three sisters put on the AΔK path. I am forever grateful to Andrea Smith for sponsoring me and inviting me to the Beta Alpha chapter many years ago. I have truly enjoyed many educational and social events with my sisters there. Some truly remarkable women. I wouldn't be in this position without the support of Karen Kirby who singled me out and invited me to run for office on the State Board. And Susan Raffo, who shared her wisdom and experience with history of AΔK. A big thank you to all my sisters who supported in this journey.

The theme for this biennium is **"Step Into the Future."**

When I chose this theme, I wanted to focus on moving forward. We have just come out of two very challenging years because of the Pandemic, and we now need to choose the best path for the future. The design for my logo shows a woman, representing the sisters of Alpha Delta Kappa, about to step forward into a bright, but unknown future. There is a stream and a lovely vista representing the wondrous natural beauty of our state. The sun is shining, and the future looks bright. The woman is carrying a suitcase meant to represent all the wisdom and experience that we can bring into the future of Alpha Delta Kappa, but also room for new ideas

and creativity. And, we really do need to focus on how we can do things differently as we step forward. COVID forced us to create new, and often more-effective, ways of teaching and this theme is meant to encourage us to be **creative, flexible, and resilient** as we assist our teachers with their critical efforts. So, I know that our suitcase will contain new ideas about curriculum, using technology, and being flexible.

During this biennium, I was privileged to serve as the chair of the Southwest Regional Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. A major focus of that committee is how best to foster a sense of **belonging** for all sisters in Alpha Delta Kappa. As I think about my goals and the focus of my presidency, fostering that sense of belonging is at the top of the list. We desperately need an infusion of new blood in our organization, and the best way to do that is to make sure that any teachers who are invited to any of our functions feel that they are welcome and would feel comfortable joining us.

My first recommendation to step into the future is to see AΔK become more virtual. We were forced into doing that during the past biennium, but there is value in using technology. We can be even more social and inclusive with technology. For example, sisters who have travel restrictions or who have moved out of the area can still participate in their chapter's activities. During the biennium, more of our sisters attended meetings or conferences virtually than attended before in person. The technology often allows us to create more effective presentations or bring in a speaker who would be unable to attend in person. Using technology may encourage more working teachers to be interested in joining AΔK.

My final recommendation is for the State Executive Board to better support the chapters in their activities. I know that chapters may need support to fulfill this vision of stepping into the future. The Board is committed to providing whatever is necessary for your success. We can best do this when we hear from you directly about issues as they arise. I pledge to you as incoming President to do whatever I can to reduce some of the pressures that the chapters are experiencing. I know that working together we can step successfully into the future.

I am excited but humbled to take on this responsibility as your State President. I have served on the State Executive Board for four years and learned a lot about how to be effective as a leader. The Board members are dedicated women who have truly shown me how to work collaboratively and effectively. With your support and assistance, I look forward to leading Alpha Delta Kappa as we step into the future.

As I **step into the future**, my suitcase is packed with creative, flexible, and resilient ideas, with room to grow. What are you going to bring in your suitcase for California Alpha Delta Kappa's future?