

## Opening

Good morning Northern Sisters, it is good to be with you this morning.

Your District Conference theme “Small Steps Create Big Changes” made me think of a very famous Chinese proverb, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”. Both of these quotes come from the idea that something big does not necessarily have to happen all at once.

We as educators realize when a child starts school, the child is starting a journey toward becoming an educated member of our society. Each day the interactions and lessons in our classrooms, many small steps, will add up to the knowledge the students will need in their lifetimes. We know knowledge is not acquired all at once, but these countless small steps will ultimately lead to big changes in the lives of these students and the lives of those they meet when they are adults.

In our life time all of our successful journeys have started with that first small step. It is easier for us take small steps daily toward a goal rather than being overwhelmed by the final goal that seems so far away. Often, we are afraid however, to take that first step, especially as we age. It is human nature for many to resist change. Sometimes this reluctance comes from a fear of change or perhaps failure. Making change in our lives can be difficult, but we can make it easier by taking little steps.

I know in my own life I have resisted change and sometimes I have even fought it to no avail. As we age we get comfortable in doing the same things over and over because we know them and life is comfortable, but perhaps a bit boring.

A number of years ago my chapter was struggling with obtaining members who would step into leadership roles. Past State President Karen Kirby was our Chapter President at the time and was gracious enough to offer to run again if someone volunteered as president elect. It was so quiet you could hear a pin drop in the room. Everyone was looking down at their laps. Very reluctantly my hand went up.....a little step. Later, I was asked to fill in as a chairman on one of our California State Committees. I figured it was something I could do to help out....a little step. A year later the newly elected state president called me to see if I would

help again on a committee.....another small step. While I was serving on that committee, I noticed that no one was running for one of the state offices, Vice President for Membership. I thought to myself, "I can do that, I'll step in".....one more small step. I am not going to go through all my other small steps in Alpha Delta Kappa, instead I am going to share with you what all those small steps have led to.

Due to my involvement in our organization "Big Changes" have occurred in my life. I have learned how to do many new things I never dreamed I could do. I have been able to accomplish new goals. Most importantly, I have been blessed with the friendship and support of numerous sisters in California. I have made friends from many different states, in person and with the advent of zoom. Taking that first small step over 12 years ago has allowed my life to be enriched by meeting and knowing so many of you.

Rosena, our California State President has challenged us to "Step into the Future" with her in Alpha Delta Kappa. We can do that by being willing to take a small step in our chapters. We might do this by helping out as a chapter officer, volunteering to host a meeting, planning for an event, or even sending cards or greetings to chapters sisters we haven't seen in a while. Taking that first step may be challenging, but the rewards can be great. I know, when we work together, we will discover that "Small Steps Create Big Changes" in our organization.

### Closing

Once again, this morning, we have enjoyed the warm hospitality of the Basque Cultural Center and each other's company. We have reconnected with friends and enjoyed the wonderful dance entertainment shown us by the Basque dance team. The dancers many "Small Steps" lead to a wonderful "Big" result in their outstanding program for us today.

As we close today I want to remind all of you that we all will continue to be "Stepping into the Future" in Alpha Delta Kappa if we remember the theme of today's Conference and take those small steps, towards creating big changes in our organization.