

Marina District Conference 01/20/2024

Good morning, Marina Sisters

As I was thinking about the theme of today's conference, "Stepping With STEAM" and what I was going to say to you, I thought back about my early teaching experiences and how much has changed in education during my life time. Most of us, of a certain age, who are labeled "Baby Boomers", started teaching in the 1970s and 1980s. We older educators can marvel over all the advancements in education during our lives, as well as recognize how many things have stayed the same. One of the changes that has occurred in education and our society as a whole, is the popular use of acronyms. Younger educators and others are comfortable using acronyms in their everyday lives. Ideas, projects, and sayings are often shortened to only their initials sometimes causing some us to be baffled about what all the letters stand for and mean.

Today as we are "Stepping With STEAM" I thought it might be interesting to tell you a bit about how the acronym STEAM (meaning science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) came about. As you know before there was STEAM, there was STEM, (leaving out the A for art) but did you know there was an even earlier acronym SMET? SMET dated from the 1990s when America saw the need to emphasis science and technology in education. In 2001 a woman biologist, Judith Ramaley, at the National Science Foundation reordered the letters of SMET (science, math, engineering and technology) which they were using at the time, to STEM making it easier to pronounce. This STEM acronym was originally introduced as a way to refer to educational curriculum and new careers in the rapidly growing industries of the 21st century. According to the Department of Commerce STEM occupations began growing at twice the rate as non STEM occupations during this time. People with STEM related degrees were making higher wages than those without those degrees. Soon the realization that the disciplines behind the STEM acronym were not going to be enough. Educators and industries began to perceive that students needed to develop a more creative mindset to succeed. An interchange between science and art

would be essential in preparing students for good paying future careers that requiring critical thinking skills. This would also be important for the United States to be competitive around the world in the years ahead.

In 2006, Georgette Yakman, a woman educator, was the founding researcher of the STEAM educational framework. She is credited in updating STEM to STEAM by adding 'A' for Arts. That addition of the Arts was important not only because it makes learning more fun, but research has shown students who were more active in the arts scored better on standardized test and spent less time on TV. These same students participated more in volunteering and were less likely to be board in school. As you all know it is important that students in the classrooms are well rounded. They need the skills necessary to enable them to succeed in collage and/or enter the workforce. The goal of STEAM based learning is to help ensure all students thrive in today's workforce. Later today we will learn how one special project is helping students "Step Into The Future" in this modern world and thrive as they are "Stepping With STEAM".

Closing

Once again, this morning, we have had fun catching up with sisters we might not have seen for a while as we enjoyed the hospitality of our Orange Coast Council. We have learned more about some of our Alpha Delta Kappa's past leaders and the workings of our organization. We were fortunate to be able to listen to Dr Laura Henriques, a noted speaker and educator as well as a Zeta Sister. We learned about the Young Scientist Camp, SEE Us Succeed at Cal State University Long Beach and the importance of it to the children it serves. We had fun as we worked together on an interactive STEAM challenge featuring science and engineering that gave us an idea of what can students experience today. Also, we can't forget the suspense we had wondering who had the correct number as each ticket was pulled from the bag determining the winners the raffle prizes.

We have Stepped with STEAM today at our conference. As we leave here this afternoon we need to continue to remember how we are all connected in

Alpha Delta Kappa. Our organization is the connection that brings us all together. We need to continue to work together to insure our organizations progress in the years ahead as “We Step Into The Future”.