Introduction

“We salute the twelve founders of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. We honor them for their clarity of vision, for enduring faith in that vision, for the fortitude with which they held the course. We recognize their courage as breakers of precedents. We acknowledge our debt to them for enriched professional lives.”

Edna McGuire Boyd
Our Founders

We salute the 12 Founders of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. We honor them for their

- Clarity of vision
- Enduring faith in that vision
- Fortitude with which they held the course
- Courage as breakers of precedents

We acknowledge our debt to them for enriched personal lives.
Our Founders

Annie Webb Blanton
August 19, 1870-October 2, 1945

Dr. Annie Webb Blanton
Dr. Annie Webb Blanton began her career as the one teacher in a rural school at age 17, later earning her Bachelor in Literature at the University of Texas. After teaching in Austin for several years, she went to North Texas Normal School as Associate Professor to teach for 17 years; the grammar text she wrote became a mainstay for her students. She finished her career at the University of Texas as chair of the Department of History and Education after completing her Ph.D. in rural education at Cornell University.

Always active in professional organizations, Dr. Blanton was the first woman elected president of the Texas State Teachers Association in 1916.

In 1918 she became the first woman to break the female political barrier when she was elected State Superintendent of Instruction. A few of the many achievements while in this position included doubling financial support for public schools, creating a system for free textbooks, improving rural schools and increasing teachers’ salaries.

She enjoyed growing roses, cooking, reading mysteries and collecting miniature donkeys. She dearly loved her nieces and nephews and her friends and rarely turned down a request from one of them.
Baudence and I send greetings
A MERRY CHRISTMAS
and
A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Annice Webb Banton
Our Founders

Mamie Sue Bastian
November 27, 1875-February 20, 1946

Mamie Sue Bastian
Remembered always for her vivacious and fun-loving personality, Mamie Sue Bastian worked untiringly for the teacher retirement system, a goal that finally came to fruition. Persuasive and often blunt, she appeared before countless legislative committees on behalf of teachers’ issues, particularly to fight discrimination against women.

Teaching all grades and all subjects in elementary schools, she admitted that her favorite subject was arithmetic. She left the classroom for a principal’s position and quickly realized that both teachers and administrators could realize professional improvement through organizations. Thus, the Houston Teachers Association and the Houston Principals Association were born. In the later years of her professional career, she became an inspirational teacher of teachers.

Mamie Sue Bastian was the epitome of buoyant living, of the humorous remark, of infectious optimism. She valued the “frivolous, the things of the heart.” So, it is no surprise that she initiated the idea of the Birthday Luncheon and encouraged adding music to all events. She said, “There is a place in Delta Kappa Gamma for both the scholarly and the gay.”
Our Founders

Ruby Cole
December 2, 1893- November 21, 1940

Ruby Cole
Known for her thorough and meticulous habits, Ruby Cole was a perfectionist. Delta Kappa Gamma reaped the benefits of these qualities, for in the beginning of the Society, she worked on the processes, structure and rituals for chapter use. Then each chapter president received mimeographed materials which she was expected to follow.

In the same way, as a principal, Ruby Cole was methodical and diplomatic in working with her teachers. She was passionate in working for adequate funding for public schools. She, more than any other founder, encouraged chapters to work with other civic organizations to realize common goals.

San Antonio benefited from her dedication to restore missions, establish parks, purchase historical landmarks, and create a public library.

She loved her dogs – Lucky and Lady, reading, collecting Texas histories, playing bridge, and entertaining guests.
Our Founders

Mabel Grizzard
March 22, 1888-July 12, 1968

Mabel Grizzard
A teacher and principal for forty years, Mabel Grizzard contributed much to education as a whole and to her community – Waxahachie – in particular. She balanced her interest in participating in a variety of organizations with her dedication to the welfare of youth.

As a teacher and as a principal, it was her philosophy that the overall purpose of education was to establish character. So, it was important to teach the basics and develop good citizens. Nonetheless, she spent many summers attending colleges and universities in order to keep abreast of teacher training methods. She also spent a two-year tenure as elementary supervisor of rural schools in Texas.

Reading, playing bridge, collecting old books and commemorative plates: these activities filled her leisure time.
Our Founders

Dr. Anna Hiss
May 11, 1892-January 29, 1972

Dr. Anna Hiss
One of the most outstanding administrators ever on the campus of the University of Texas, Dr. Anna Hiss served as Head of the Physical Education Department. A practical idealist, Dr. Hiss paid attention to the needs of her students, at one time teaching some of the rural women under her tutelage the necessary social graces by holding a formal dance in the gymnasium. When the Depression hit, the dances were discontinued, but she formed student relief groups to help the most needy.

Dr. Hiss felt that physical education was as important for women as for men, and she spent her career creating programs and opportunities to fulfill that need. In fact, she was instrumental in the establishment of the professional degree for physical education and the program for the preparation of teachers in that field. Perhaps the proudest accomplishment in her professional career came when her dream of a gymnasium for women came to fruition.

Organizations were important entities in her life; she believed in their power to change and improve the world. As one example, she founded the League of Women Voters on the UT campus.

She had a flare for telling entertaining stories to audiences of all ages; she loved poetry and music. And, of course, she loved sports, especially basketball.
Our Founders

Ray King
July 13, 1888-January 4, 1979

Ray King
The first treasurer of Delta Kappa Gamma, Ray King took great joy in balancing the books each year of her four-year tenure in the position. She served in many Society capacities over the years, but perhaps her most thrilling moment was her participation in the ground-breaking ceremonies and the laying of the cornerstone for the International Headquarters in Austin, Texas.

Believed in this formula:
Idea + Vision + Faith + Work = magic

Taught history and chaired high school department
Studied and traveled her entire life
Favored reading as a favorite pastime but loved cooking and playing bridge

A history teacher, Ms. King served as chair of her high school department for many years. She supplemented on-going study in her field with much travel throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Her magic formula for Society success was this: idea + vision + faith + work; this brought Delta Kappa Gamma from simple beginnings to a sturdily based international organization.

Her favorite pastime was, not surprisingly, reading, but she also loved to needlepoint, tend her African violets and cook delectable foods.
Our Founders

Sue King

January 8, 1886-May 4, 1930
An excellent scholar and a good leader, Sue King contributed much to the Society. Though she loved learning in all areas, her special favorites were history and languages. She was one of six graduates from the University of California in her class who earned high honors. Most of her summers were spent studying and expanding her knowledge.

Beginning as a Latin teacher, she found she enjoyed history instruction more and became chair of the history department in her junior high school.

Miss King was instrumental in Dr. Annie Webb Blanton’s election as president of Texas State Teachers Association. “Now a woman will wield the gavel and man must take orders.”

Aside from participating in the other organizations of which she was a member, she enjoyed reading, cooking, as well as playing bridge and tennis.

She died in May 1930, one short year after the founding of Delta Kappa Gamma.
Our Founders

Dr. Helen Koch
August 26, 1895-July 14, 1977

Helen Koch
Renowned professor of child psychology at the University of Chicago, Dr. Helen Koch found great satisfaction in research. She never compromised her high standards in her own study or as a teacher. And her students loved her for that perfectionist attitude. Working with her, a student felt both dignified and honored. She conducted a 12-year study on twins that is still quoted in the literature of child psychology.

A gifted pianist, she studied and practiced for fourteen years in her own home, then decided that she would rather be a psychologist than a piano teacher. However, she continued to teach piano lessons at the University of Chicago Settlement.

Dr. Koch viewed Delta Kappa Gamma as an organization that could improve the lives of women educators and children. Her dream was that the Society would become an international organization able to “dissipate any condition which [would] seriously threaten the welfare of children anywhere...”

Traveling extensively both during her tenure as professor and during her retirement, she took great joy in being a “globe-trotter.”
Our Founders

Ruby Terrill Lomax
February 7, 1886-December 28, 1961
Ruby Terrill Lomax

- Brilliant scholar
- Dean of Women and Associate Professor of Classical Languages at University of Texas
- Assistant to her husband, John Lomax, in collecting folk ballads
- First parliamentarian of the Society
- A welcome, enjoyable speaker to audiences

A brilliant scholar, Ruby Terrill Lomax earned the highest average ever achieved by anyone at the University of Texas when she graduated in 1908. After teaching Latin at Dallas High School and at East Texas State Teachers College, she returned to UT as Dean of Women and Associate Professor of Classical Language.

She married John Lomax, well known for his lectures and collection of folk ballads, gaining four well-loved stepchildren. Mrs. Lomax enthusiastically joined in his research and accompanied on his many research travels.

During the first election of state / national officers, Mrs. Lomax was made parliamentarian. With her keen knowledge, she effectively guided the fledgling organization with integrity.

Mrs. Lomax truly enjoyed speaking before audiences, entertaining and enlightening them with her intellect and wit.
Our Founders

Dr. Cora Martin
November 27, 1884-April 23, 1965

Dr. Cora M. Martin
An excellent leader and scholar on campus, Dr. Cora Martin studied to become a teacher of elementary education at North Texas State Normal. Continuing her academic and professional career, she moved to Austin to attend the University of Texas. There she organized the program of Elementary Education.

Dr. Martin believed that content of readers should be meaningful to children, so she wrote a series of five *Real Life Readers* later adopted by Texas, Louisiana and Alabama. After 26 years of training new elementary teachers, she was given the permanent status of professor emeritus of elementary education when she retired from UT. Many of her students saw that as a teacher, she was able to bring out the best in every child.

Following her initiation into Delta Kappa Gamma at the first initiation ceremony, she was selected to be the “keeper of the records” for the Society. She was very involved in installing both new state organizations and new chapters in Texas.

With a lovely singing voice, she enjoyed entertaining audiences as well as leading the singing in meetings. She also enjoyed reading historical novels and found creative writing an interesting pastime.
Lalla M. Odom
April 8, 1874-April 13, 1964
Lalla M. Odom

- Earned a degree from the Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, Ohio
- Taught famed humorist Will Rogers and maintained a friendship with him
- Refused to accept discrimination when told she could not be hired as a teacher because of her marital status — Board changed the policy
- Served as teacher of mathematics and chair of Department at junior high level
- Turned first spade-full of earth for headquarters building
- Loved her sons, Texas, wildflowers and politics

After earning her bachelor’s degree by age 17, Lalla M. Odom enrolled in the Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. As a music and math teacher at Willie Halsell College in Oklahoma, she met her famous student: humorist Will Rogers, who remained a friend to her all his life.

After her marriage, Mrs. Odom’s family moved to Austin where she taught elementary school. At the end of that highly successful year, she was informed that she could not be offered a teaching position because she was a married woman; she could, however, work as a substitute. Always an outspoken person, she refused to accept this situation, and the School Board reversed its original policy.

She spent the rest of her career as a teacher of mathematics and chair of the department at Allan Junior High. She was a lifelong learner who constantly sought to expand her knowledge.

Very active in Delta Kappa Gamma activities, she served as Alpha Chapter’s first president, and she had perfect attendance for the first ten years. Later, the first spade-full of earth for the headquarters building in Austin was turned by Mrs. Odom.

Her loves included her two sons (Will and Jamie), Texas and its cultural background,
wildflowers, and politics.
Our Founders

Lela Lee Williams
July 20, 1883-February 18, 1971

Lela Lee Williams
Dallas, Texas, welcomed Lela Lee Williams to its schoolrooms in 1908, and she spent the next 45 years serving the students there in a variety of positions. She believed in experimentation, always seeking to expand her knowledge and skills so that she could improve teaching. She served as the first president of the Dallas Grade Teachers Association.

Miss Williams felt a particular passion for the advancement of the profession of elementary teachers. To this end, she worked for stronger certification requirements, increasing the basic education required for teachers, and upgrading rural schools. She was instrumental in promoting increased salaries for educators.

In addition to her teaching load, she was Director of Auditorium Activities, and she became very active in this field, writing a book to assist others who held such a position.

The first recording secretary of the Society, Miss Williams understood from the beginning that Delta Kappa Gamma had the potential to offer much of value to women educators.

Aside from her love of education, she enjoyed entertaining her many friends and colleagues.
Conclusion

As we consider the many achievements of our founders, let us live the legacy that these visionary women began. Let us continue to clarify the vision of the Society, have enduring faith in the work of the Society, and find the courage to review, question and refine precedents. Thus, we will expand Delta Kappa Gamma’s positive impact across the globe.