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THE **Circle**

OF OMICRON DELTA KAPPA



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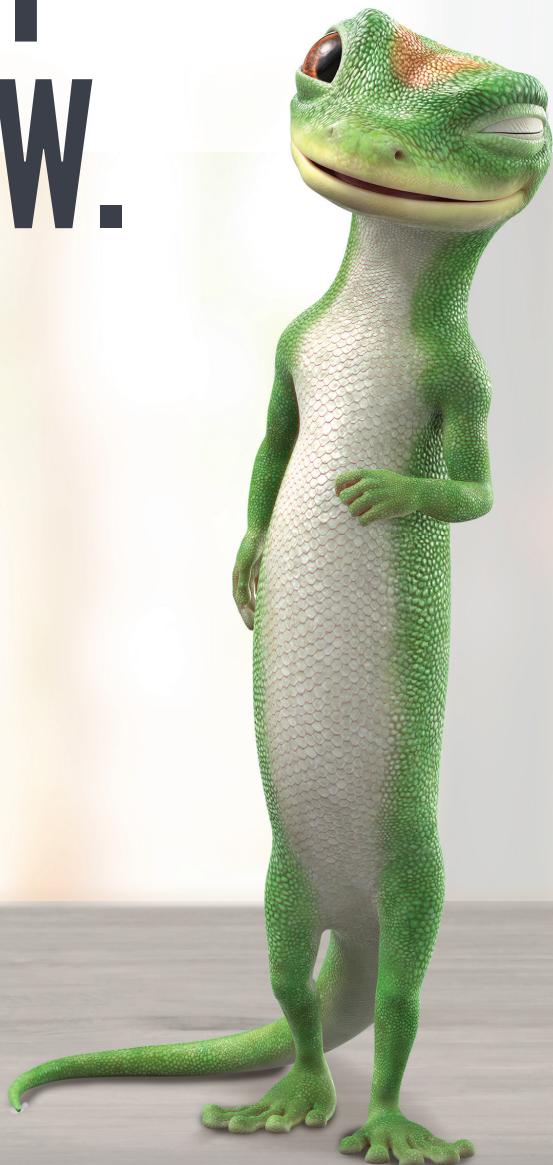
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NOTABLE ENTREPRENEUR

Lara O'Connor Hodgson

This issue of *The Circle* is devoted to entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial leadership. Numerous members of Omicron Delta Kappa have started and / or own their own businesses. One of the Society's notable entrepreneurs is **Lara O'Connor Hodgson** (Georgia Institute of Technology, 1993). Hodgson is the co-founder, president, and CEO of NOWaccount Network Corporation (Now®) based in Atlanta. Now provides an innovative payment solution, called NowAccount, that enables businesses to get paid immediately on invoices without using risky loans or factoring, enabling them to "Grow Fearlessly." Hodgson developed the solution when she experienced the challenge of trying to grow a business while being a free bank to her customers. She decided there had to be a better way! Hodgson, the 1993 OΔK National Leader of the Year and a former circle president, also serves as an entrepreneur in residence at the Harvard Business School where she enjoys helping aspiring entrepreneurs start and scale their businesses.

ON THE COVER:

The sculpture, both created and photographed by Jim Rennert, is called Entrepreneur. Photo credit is given to Jim Rennert and Cavalier Galleries.



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Read about the Society FY 2022-24 strategic plan's emphasis on recognizing and connecting leaders



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When you become a member of OΔK, a digital subscription to The Circle is included in your membership. You can access the digital version online at odk.org/get-involved/thecircle.

Where to send a notice of a death:

Please contact Michelle Dilk, michelle@odk.org, with the news of a recent death of any member of O&K.

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Omicron Delta Kappa Society, the National Leadership Honor Society, was founded in Lexington, Virginia, on December 3, 1914. A group of 15 students and faculty members established the Society to recognize and encourage leadership at the collegiate level. The founders established the ODK Idea—the concept that individuals representing all phases of collegiate life should collaborate with faculty and others to support the campus and community. ODK's mission is to honor and develop leaders; encourage collaboration among students, faculty, staff, and alumni; and promote ODK's ideals of collaboration, inclusivity, integrity, scholarship, and service college and university campuses throughout North America. The Society's national headquarters are located in Lexington, Virginia.

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Trending Now



THE BACK FORTY

Darrell Gurney (University of Texas at Austin, 1983) is an author, motivational speaker, and executive / entrepreneurial career coach. He has spoken to numerous university MBA and undergraduate programs and professional groups, and he led an online O&K workshop on career transitions. A special niche of Gurney's expertise is managing one's career after the age of 40. For many individuals, exploring career and life options in this phase of one's leadership journey involves not only greater self-expression in traditional corporate roles but also entrepreneurial opportunities. Gurney's most recent book, *The Back Forty: 7 Essential Embraces to Launch Life's Radical Second Half*, explores the possibilities each individual has to review their past and present, learn the hidden clues from them, and use those new insights to plot a course for future personal and professional success. Members may learn more about Gurney's work at www.careerguy.com and www.thebackforty.com.



Editor's Note: Omicron Delta Kappa recognizes and celebrates an average of 8,000 collegiate leaders each year who excel in areas such as scholarship, athletics, service, communications, and the arts. For this issue of The Circle, we have chosen to highlight our entrepreneurial members.



Believe in Yourself

Dear Member,

This issue of The Circle is focused on entrepreneurial leadership. There are many reasons to consider becoming an entrepreneur and probably lots of reasons not to. Most importantly, an entrepreneurial leader needs to develop an idea for something usable, in demand, or unique—and then figure out how to produce and finance it.

Perhaps you've watched an episode or two of the popular show "Shark Tank" on TV. Some presentations are fantastic, others fall short. The participants are all looking for a lucrative funding source. Still, most contestants haven't put together a logical business plan, nor have they figured out how to successfully launch their products or attract customers.

In thinking about establishing your own entrepreneurial enterprise, you might consider the following questions:

- Do you want to establish a small startup business of your own?
- Do you hope to grow slowly or quickly?
- Do you need to sign-up outside investors?
- Would your talents and product fit well within the context of a larger, already-established company?
- Must you generate large profits, or are you more interested in making positive social changes while taking on some risk?

My husband, Jay Althouse, and I created a business a year before we got married. We explored these questions on our way to producing five books and a poster set. Our business grew quickly enough that we had to find other strategies for the sale and distribution of our product line. Fortunately, we were able to partner with our then-employer, an educational music publisher. From that point onward, they took care of taking orders, shipping, invoicing, the works.

These questions are also ones that Omicron Delta Kappa asks as it investigates ways in which the Society can be entrepreneurial. OΔK has partnerships with organizations that provide internships and other learning experiences for our collegiate members and recent graduates. The Society also collaborates with other businesses to generate revenue from merchandise, insurance services, and other member benefits. These entrepreneurial endeavors support everything from circle services to the National Leadership Conference.

I know that as an entrepreneur, it is important to believe in yourself, your vision, your product, your path, and your talent. Focus on the future while judiciously dealing with every step of the process needed to reach your goal. And make sure you enjoy the ride!

Yours in Leadership,

Sally K. Albrecht

Sally K. Albrecht
Chair, Board of Trustees
Omicron Delta Kappa Society
and Educational Foundation, Inc.

OΔK MEMBER NEWS



BOARD OF *Trustees*

- Board Chair Sally K. Albrecht (Rollins College, 1975) has been selected as the 2021 Rollins College Distinguished Alumni Award recipient. She was recognized at an event in March.

- Board Chair-Elect Willie L. Banks, Jr. (University of Georgia, 2002) has been appointed as an at-large member of the Board of Directors for NASPA: Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education.

- Trustee Marc J. Slotnick (University of Miami, 1987) has been appointed chairperson of the West Virginia Commission on Holocaust Education by Governor Jim Justice.

Congratulations HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS

- Michael T. Benson (Southern Utah University, 2012) is the new president of Coastal Carolina University. Benson was instrumental in establishing the OΔK circles at Southern Utah University and Eastern Kentucky University.



- R. Charles Byers (West Virginia State University, 1998) was recently named provost at WVSU.

- Maria L. Cronley (Ohio Northern University, 2018) has been named provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at Austin Peay State University.

- Muhlenberg College announced that Kathleen E. Harring (Muhlenberg College, 1987) is its new president.

- Lloyd A. Holmes (University of Mississippi, 2000) has been selected as the new president of De Anza College, a two-year institution in California.

- William C. Hubbard (University of South Carolina – Columbia, 1972) has been named the incoming dean of South Carolina's School of Law.

- Donna A. Lee (University of Tampa, 1988) is the incoming vice president for student affairs at Rollins College.

- Kathy L. Murphy (Troy University, 1981) has been appointed president of Gadsden State Community College in Alabama.

- Teresa A. Nance (Villanova University, 1993) was recently named Villanova University's vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion.



- Karen K. Peterson (Middle Tennessee State University, 2010) has been named the new dean of the Kendall College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Tulsa.

- Donald M. Stansberry (Old Dominion University, 2000) has been named vice president for student engagement and enrollment services at ODU.

- Robert M. Valli (Long Island University – Post, 2017) is the new president at Sierra Nevada University.

- Hampshire College recently named Zauyah A. Waite (University of Missouri – Kansas City, 1999) its new vice president for student affairs and dean of students.



- Susan R. Wente (University of Iowa, 1982) has been announced as the incoming president of Wake Forest University.

- Alisa White (University of West Georgia, 1998) is the new president of Sam Houston State University.

- Matthew J. Wilson (University of Akron, 2017) is currently serving as the dean of Temple University Japan.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND *Honors*

- **David A. Bader** (University of Maryland, College Park, 1995) was recently selected as a Fellow of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics.
- **Joel S. Davis** (Samford University, 2004) is featured in a new CD, Alabama Strings Quartet, by the Amernet String Quartet. The Amernet String Quartet is the Ensemble-in-Residence at Florida International University. Davis is one of the advisors to the Samford University Circle.
- **Aaron S. Gilani** (Hampden-Sydney College, 2013) has joined with several other medical students and residents to create Prescribe It Forward, an online mentoring program developed to assist the next generation of physicians.
- **G.C. Murray** (Florida State University, 2011) was recently named the Young Floridian of the Year by the Bob Graham Center for Public Service at the University of Florida.
- **David A. Puleo** (University of Kentucky, 2015), who is currently serving as the engineering dean at the University of Mississippi, was recently named to the National Academy of Inventors.
- **John F. Schindler III** (Ohio University, 2010) embarked on making a short film entitled "Fatima, the Forbidden Legend" based on a script he wrote. Fatima tells the forbidden legend of a woman from the desert who must defeat three attackers before nightfall.
- **Gleaves Whitney** (Grand Valley State University, 2008) has been named the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation's executive director.
- Virginia Governor Ralph Northam has named **Clifford L. Yee** (University of Richmond, 1995) to serve on the commonwealth's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism. Yee previously served Omicron Delta Kappa as the Society's national treasurer.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

News

- The American College Personnel Association (ACPA) selected its Diamond Honorees for 2021. This year's recipients included OΔK members **Eileen N. Merberg** (Buffalo State College, 2004), **Dian D. Squire** (University of Maryland, College Park, 2011), and **Nanette Vega** (University of Miami, 2007).
- ACPA also recently announced its 2021 award winners, including recognition of **Steve D. Mobley, Jr.** (University of Maryland, College Park, 2013) with its Emerging Scholar designation. The professional association also recognized **James "Jamie" E. Washington** (University of Maryland, Baltimore County, 1994) with its Esther Lloyd-Jones Professional Service Award.
- NASPA announced its annual Pillars of the Profession Honorees for the year. They include **Kathy L. Guthrie** (Florida State University, 2009), **Walter Diaz** (Eastern Connecticut State University), **Georj L. Lewis** (Georgia Southern University, 2006), **Christopher S. Meiers** (Washington State University Tri-Cities, 2017), and **Tonantzin Oseguera** (University of California Riverside, 2012).
- NASPA also announced its 2021 award winners in January. **Terry C. Mena** (Florida Atlantic University, 2011) has received the AVP/Senior-Level Student Affairs Professional Award. **Helen Grace Ryan** (University of Louisville, 1999) was named the Fred Turner Award for Outstanding Service to NASPA winner. **Terry W. Hartle** (Hiram College, 1972) and the American Council on Education received the Outstanding Contribution to Higher Education Award. The George D. Kuh Outstanding Contribution to Literature and/or Research Award was presented to **Mary Howard-Hamilton** (University of North Carolina Charlotte, 1986). **Kathy L. Guthrie** (Florida State University, 2009) is receiving this year's Robert H. Shaffer Award for Academic Excellence as a Graduate Faculty Member. NASPA also recognized **Jamie Washington** this year with its Bobby E. Leach Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Award. Leach was a 1981 initiate of the Florida State University Circle.



IN Memoriam

Congratulations LEADERS IN U.S. GOVERNMENT



- President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. is a 1981 initiate of the University of Delaware Circle. Past U.S. presidents who were initiated into Omicron Delta Kappa include Franklin D. Roosevelt (University of Maryland, College Park, 1940), Richard M. Nixon (Duke University, 1951), Gerald R. Ford (Florida Southern College, 1994), James E. Carter (Georgia State University, 1972), and George H. W. Bush (Harding University, 1997).



- Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett is a 1993 initiate of the Rhodes College Circle. OΔK members Hugo L. Black (University of Alabama, 1969), Abe Fortas (Rhodes College, 1929), Arthur J. Goldberg (Illinois State University, 1966), and Lewis F. Powell, Jr. (Washington and Lee University, 1928) also all served on the country's highest court.

- There are currently nine OΔK members serving as U.S. Senators and 15 members serving in the House of Representatives. The complete list will run in the next issue of *The Circle*.

RHODES Scholars

- Asma Rahimyar (the current president of the Southern Connecticut State University Circle) has been named a 2021 Rhodes Scholar. She is planning on studying global governance and diplomacy, as well as refugee and forced migration studies.



- Elizabeth Kiss (Davidson College, 1982) is the warden and chief executive officer of the Rhodes Trust, which oversees the Rhodes Scholar program. Kiss was also a Rhodes Scholar following her graduation from Davidson. She previously served as president of Agnes Scott College.

- Herman Cain (University of Nebraska, 1990), founder of Godfather's Pizza, died in July 2020.

- The long-time executive secretary for Phi Beta Kappa, John H. Churchill (Rhodes College, 1971), died in November 2020. John retired from his position at PBK in 2015. In addition to being a great champion for the liberal arts and sciences, he was also a true advocate for OΔK.



- Beloved W&L faculty member Theodore C. Delaney (Washington and Lee University, 2001) passed away in December 2020. Delaney faithfully attended Alpha Circle and national OΔK events in Lexington, and he was a friend to many.



- Winston F. Groom, Jr. (University of Alabama, 1964) also passed away in late 2020. Groom was the author of the book upon which the movie Forrest Gump was based.

- E. Bruce Harrison, Jr. (University of Alabama, 1953) passed away in December 2020. Harrison, an accomplished public relations executive, was credited with significantly raising the awareness of the field of environmental communications.

- Billiee Pendleton-Parker (Georgia Institute of Technology, 1996), the long-time devoted advisor to the Georgia Tech Circle, died in January 2021. She was a 1996 recipient of the Society's Cheryl M. Hogle Award for Distinguished Service.



John E. Sallstrom HONORED BY GEORGIA COLLEGE

The State of Georgia recently approved naming the Honors College at Georgia College for **Dr. John E. Sallstrom** (Georgia College, 2001).

Sallstrom is a respected leader within his community, the State of Georgia, and in higher education. This year marks his 54th on the faculty of Georgia College, where he is a professor emeritus of philosophy and religion and retired associate vice president for academic affairs. He previously served as chairman of the Department of Philosophy and Religion and was founding director of Georgia College's honors program. Sallstrom is a distinguished leader in honors education and was instrumental in establishing both the Georgia Collegiate Honors Council and Southern Regional Honors Council.



Sallstrom, who is also an ordained minister, exemplifies the values of Omicron Delta Kappa. He founded the middle Georgia chapter of Habitat for Humanity and continues to volunteer in service of safe, equitable housing. He previously served as co-chair of the community relations commission, promoting equity and addressing systemic wrongs of racial discrimination.

OΔK Members WIN NCAA HONORS

Each year, the National Collegiate Athletic Association selects a group of former-student athletes as the organization's Today's Top 10 Award winners. This award celebrates the athletic, academic, and community achievements of former student-athletes. Two Omicron Delta Kappa members were recognized at the NCAA convention in January 2021.

Brittney Ellis

A 2018 initiate of the University of Miami Circle, Brittney Ellis is an accomplished indoor and outdoor track and field athlete. After becoming a registered nurse in 2019, she was the first licensed nurse to compete on a Miami team. In addition to being a member of OΔK, Ellis was inducted into the Iron Arrow and the Sigma Theta Tau nursing honor society at Miami. She also received a NCAA post-graduate scholarship.



Ellis earned five first-team U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association All-America honors in 2016, 2017, and 2019. As a five-time Atlantic Coast Conference individual and relay champion, she also led Miami in winning the indoor ACC championships in 2016, 2017, and 2019. She recently completed her master's degree in health informatics at Miami.

Juah Toe

Two-year team captain Juah Toe (West Chester University of Pennsylvania, 2018) led her school's women's rugby team to the 2019 National Intercollegiate Rugby Association Tier II Championship title. She served her circle as its vice president, and she was also a member of the Abbe Society honorary women's service organization. Toe's service activities include volunteering at a soup kitchen and working at a hospice for children and mothers with HIV / AIDS in South Africa.

Toe was a semi-finalist for the 2020 MA Sorensen Award, which is presented annually to the nation's top women's rugby player. She received NIR All-America recognition in 2019 and NIR All-Academic Team honors in 2020 and 2019. Currently, Toe is working on her master's degree in applied sport psychology at the University of North Carolina Greensboro.





An Entrepreneurial Educator

It's not every day that a trained philosopher becomes more known for his entrepreneurial endeavors than his ability to discuss Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates – although he's really good at both.

Grant H. Cornwell (St. Lawrence University, 1979), the president of Rollins College, is known as an entrepreneurial educator. Since becoming Rollins' president in 2015, Cornwell has transformed the physical campus as well as the institution's reputation all while focused on advancing Rollins' mission of educating students for global citizenship and responsible leadership. The college has an annual budget of \$145,000,000, an endowment that exceeds \$450,000,000, and more than 640 employees supporting 3,100 students on campus.

Previously, Cornwell served as the president of the College of Wooster. Before assuming that presidency, he was the vice president of the university, dean of academic affairs, and a professor of philosophy at St. Lawrence. During his time at St. Lawrence, his wife, Marguerite "Peg" Cornwell (also pictured above) (St. Lawrence University, 1997), served as the faculty advisor to the circle there.

In his six years at Rollins, Cornwell has led the college's largest fundraising campaign, increased enrollment, expanded the diversity of the student body, and guided the construction and renovation of facilities that have transformed the campus. He has also embarked on several leadership journeys involving private/public partnerships, and he's quite philosophical about his approach to these opportunities.

He says, "Entrepreneurial opportunities need to be grounded in the college's mission and emerge from strategic planning. It is easy for colleges to get distracted by good and attractive ideas that emerge from all corners, but the way you really move an institution forward is through an integrated and highly intentional strategy, based in research and rigorously grounded in the core educational mission. Whether an opportunity holds promise to be beneficial is neither guesswork nor intuition; the answer comes from a combination of analysis and creativity. The only reason to undertake a strategic initiative is because there is a clear case that it will advance the college's ability to deliver on its educational promises to students."

ART, GARDENS, ACCOMMODATIONS, DINING, AND A LIBRARY ALL ROLLED INTO ONE

One of the things that attracted Cornwell to Rollins is that the college demonstrated an entrepreneurial spirit, as evidenced in the board of trustees having undertaken a visionary project to build a hotel next to campus to serve the college and beyond. With the support of a \$12.5 million grant from the Harold Alfond Foundation, the college built The Alfond Inn (thealfondinn.com), a boutique non-profit hotel across from the campus. Profits from the hotel support the Alfond Scholars Program at Rollins, which provides full-tuition, room, and board merit-based scholarships for students who might not otherwise be able to attend. The property has meeting spaces, a library, gardens, and a fine dining restaurant. It has enjoyed over ninety percent occupancy and has been ranked by Conde Nast as Florida's top hotel.

The Alfond Inn houses a rotating collection of contemporary American art. According to Cornwell, this collection is designed and curated "to



provoke reflection on and conversation about the central issues of our diverse democracy.” The hotel’s mission and purpose are consistent with that of the college’s, which is why Rollins embraced this entrepreneurial opportunity. Cornwell observes, “Colleges have deep expertise in education – curriculum, pedagogy, learning outcomes, assessment, student and faculty development – this is our wheelhouse. Public/private partnerships are attractive only to the extent that they demonstrably contribute to the educational purpose. We should seek innovation and creative opportunities that fall within our ken and advance our mission.”

A NEIGHBORHOOD BY THE LAKE

Numerous studies have shown that students who live on campus have higher retention and degree completion rates. However, Cornwell and his colleagues appreciate that today’s students desire residential facilities that embrace the richness of the collegiate experience, balancing the need for both privacy and community and balancing student mental health and well-being. In partnership with private developer and trustee of the college, Alan Ginsburg, the college built a residential community, known as the Lakeside Neighborhood, to provide housing for 500 students. While

Cornwell cautions against “mission drift” in evaluating public/private opportunities, he explained that the development of the new residences is consistent with the institution’s focus.

He says, “Rollins College is a residential liberal arts college on purpose. We believe that living and learning together on campus deepen students’ engagement with their education, which is the totality of their experience inside classrooms, laboratories, studios, and libraries, but also through athletics, student organizations and activism, and the myriad conversations and relationships that comprise a campus community. We undertook the project as an intentional and strategic approach to address student well-being holistically.”

MISSION SPACE

In describing what it takes to be an entrepreneurial leader, Cornwell notes that one needs to be “always listening for good ideas and have the agility and courage to support them when they emerge.” He says, “Campus communities are fertile grounds for ideas; they come forward with great enthusiasm from faculty, students, trustees, alumni, and parents. An entrepreneurial leader keeps an open mind but a rigorous discipline of supporting ideas that align with the mission and strategy.”

One of the best examples of an excellent idea emerging from a campus community and embraced by an entrepreneurial educator is the renovation and construction of Kathleen W. Rollins Hall at Rollins. This campus center, which was created from renovating an existing facility combined with constructing new square footage, houses ten programs representing the college’s commitment to an applied liberal arts education. In addition to classrooms on the third floor of the building and meeting space, the facility is the home to career and life planning, student media, study abroad, international programs, and scholarship advising. It is also the location for several units that support the social/entrepreneurial mission of the school, including the offices for the sustainability program and leadership and community engagement. The college’s Department of Social Entrepreneurship, which offers both a major and minor in this field, is also found in this building.

According to an interview Cornwell gave for Tradeline (tradelineinc.com), the facility was designed “to be the home of our mission, which is to educate students for global citizenship and responsible leadership.” He went onto say, “We never had the idea that this would be a student affairs space or an academic space or a co-curricular space. This would be a mission space.” ●

**IT'S NOT
WHAT HAPPENS
IT'S HOW
YOU HANDLE IT**

Q&A



BACKGROUND

Verne Harnish (Wichita State University, 1980) was an outstanding undergraduate who was named the 1981 Omicron

Delta Kappa National Leader of the Year, the Society's highest collegiate honor. He is the founder of the Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO), which has more than 14,000 members around the globe. For 15 years, Harnish chaired EO's "Birthing of Giants" top program for chief executive officers held on the campus of MIT. He still teaches in that program today.

Harnish is the author of *Mastering the Rockefeller Habits* and *The Greatest Business Decisions of All Time*. His most recent book, translated in more than 20 languages, is the award-winning *Scaling Up (Rockefeller Habits 2.0)*. Harnish's company, Scaling Up, is a global executive education and coaching company that has more than 190 partners on six continents. He is active on several boards including the non-profit Million Dollar Women and currently serves as vice chair of The Riordan Clinic. He is also the co-founder and chair of Geoversity, an executive education program which brings together leaders and organizations to collaborate in the pursuit of breakthroughs in human design, enterprise, and creative expression, all inspired by nature.

Q: What were you involved in as a student leader at Wichita State University?

In addition to four years of various roles in student body leadership, I led our university's organization which lobbied the regents and state capital on behalf of student needs. I also held different leadership roles in our fraternity system and received the Fraternity Man award. In addition, I led several initiatives, including bringing awareness and change to make the campus more accessible.

Q: Do you have any specific memories about being named the 1981 Omicron Delta Kappa National Leader of the Year?

To my delight, the keynote speaker for the awards ceremony was David J. Schwartz, author of *The Magic of Thinking Big*. It was the first book my father gave me to read in middle school, and it profoundly impacted my approach to life.

Q: Tell us about the Young Entrepreneurs Organization (now EO) and the Association of Collegiate Entrepreneurs (ACE).

It may come as a surprise to some, but in the early 80s, it wasn't fashionable to be a student or young entrepreneur. Most parents' reactions were, "that's cute, but when are you going to get a real job!" Yet, with Steve Jobs' rise to prominence, whom I consider the original "young



with *Verne Harnish*

entrepreneur," and President Ronald Reagan's emphasis on economic growth, my timing for first launching ACE, which went global by 1986, and then YEO (now EO) was fortuitous. We just rode the growing wave of entrepreneurial activity around the world.

Q: If you had some advice to give to your 20-something self, what would it be?

I would buy versus build if I were in my 20's right now. It is so hard to get from zero to one – and with the aging of the baby-boomer population, it is estimated that more than three million decent-sized businesses need to exchange hands. My partner scaled his firm through 24 acquisitions – a much quicker way to scale. I would do the same.

Q: Tell us about Gazelles, Inc. and Scaling Up.

Gazelles, an economic term for growth companies, was the original name of our global training and coaching firm – but it proved too hard to spell!! So, we recently changed the name to something easier to remember and spell, Scaling Up (also the title of my latest book). In addition to coaching, we have a robust online series of executive education offerings. We also have technology platforms that help manage the chaos that comes with scaling up an organization. In summary, we provide coaching, training, and technology to support scaleups, the "first responders" of our local and global economies as we recover from the latest economic downturn.

Q: During this recent and challenging year, how has the pandemic changed your business or your approach to business?

We were able to increase our reach by tenfold. For instance, we set a goal to host 2,020 CEOs/CXOs in 2020 (clever, huh?) at our in-person Scaling Up Summits. Going virtual, we hosted more than 18,000 in 2020.

Q: Is there something uniquely different about being an entrepreneur in the U.S. than in other parts of the world?

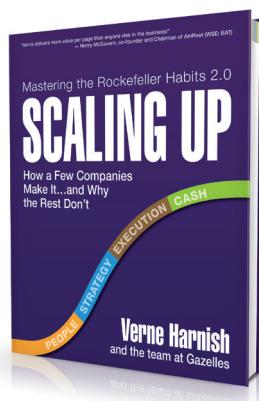
The significant advantage entrepreneurs have in the U.S., over much of the rest of the world, is our society's acceptance of failure. In fact, failure is almost a requirement to earn your stars and stripes as a successful entrepreneur in the U.S. Unless you've experienced failure in other cultures, it's hard to appreciate how wonderful it is to be an entrepreneur in the U.S.

Q: What is the Million Dollar Women's movement, and why are you passionate about it?

Julia Pimsleur's non-profit is focused on helping a million women, particularly women of color, who have been hardest hit by this latest crisis, scale their businesses to over a million in revenue – a multi-trillion-dollar impact (that's The Magic of Thinking Big!). The million-dollar mark is the threshold for gaining membership into EO, which has too few women members. I'm honored to be on her board and support Julia's important work.

Q: What is your philosophy of leadership?

In a word, my philosophy of leadership is based on the importance of care (or love). In the context of business, set a big vision, then care for the people that are going to help you reach that vision – the customers, employees, and community. No one is going to truly care for your customers or your company unless they feel cared for by you. I recommend reading Professor George Kohlrieser's book *Care to Dare* to get more details. ●





In Your Words...

BOLSTERING FAMILY RESILIENCE

||||| by Linda Davis Taylor |||||

Much has been said about the effects of the pandemic on family life. As shutdowns and social distancing led to homeschooling and remote work, we've all worried about the impact on our family's well-being. While some have relished the opportunity for more quality time together, even those fortunate enough to maintain their health, jobs, and relative stability have been thinking, "How is this time of ongoing isolation and alienation harming our family?" Even as we begin to look ahead with hope to a return to more normal times, what can we do now to bolster our family's resilience?

We all have the sense that resilience is a desirable attribute, but what exactly is resilience? Broadly speaking, resilience is the ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, or stress. We cannot control all of the external circumstances and events that come our way. But we can take proactive steps within our families – such as forging open communication and dialogue – preparing to respond and adapt to challenges. Unfortunately, uncertainty is likely to be with us for the foreseeable future, but how we manage well with that reality is within our control when we openly share our vulnerabilities and grow together as a family.

SHARE THE STORIES

Understandably, it is easier to discuss family successes rather than setbacks. But research suggests that it is the whole family story that we need to embrace. Emory University psychology professors Dr. Marshall Duke and Dr. Robyn Fivush have studied families for decades, including after the national trauma of

9/11. These researchers found that "those who knew more about their families proved to be more resilient, meaning they could moderate the effects of stress."

Dr. Duke asserts that it's the "oscillating family narrative" that contributes the most to the family's resilience. This observation means that it's important to share both the good

times and the painful ones that are a part of any family's history. Dr. Duke offers an example of such a family story, "Dear, let me tell you, we've had our ups and downs in our family. We built a family business. Your grandfather was a pillar in the community. Your mother was on the board of the hospital. But we also had setbacks. You had an uncle who was once arrested. We had a house burn

down. Your father lost a job. But no matter what happened, we always stuck together as a family."

In times like these, I often wonder how some topics can still be considered taboo. Many families are having frank discussions about current events and how these affect different facets of their lives. Every family has its own narrative, including some chapters that might be difficult to talk about, formed by the individual and collective stories of multiple generations, past and present. Perhaps the pandemic's shared stresses provide us with an opportunity to reassure our families by telling them more about our histories, happy times, and sad ones. In knowing about other times when family members faced adversity and somehow the family endured, we can deal with our own fear and anxieties with greater confidence. Even if it's during a Zoom meeting, it helps to connect with family members, near and far.

TALK ABOUT MONEY, TOO

Money should also be part of the family's dialogue. With the disruption everyone has experienced, it's time to rethink the family's financial preparedness and ask, "Do we have any hidden financial vulnerabilities? Even if we have not faced significant economic stress now, what could go wrong in the future?" As a family, use your financial EQ (emotional intelligence) to uncover any anxieties family members might be feeling and discuss how family members can support each other.

How can you tackle the money topic during your next family conference call? Have an unfiltered conversation about where you may have financial

blind spots. Beforehand, designate each family member as an expert for a specific topic that may affect the family. This discussion may be when family members can share how the pandemic caused unexpected changes in someone's employment or education, raised challenges for the family business, or increased anxiety about retirement planning due to stock market swings. Have each "expert" present their findings, and as a family, discuss whether these affect any family members and how the family's financial plans can address them.

Not only will such conversations allow you to explore vulnerabilities, but they will also build each member's skills and confidence in tackling financial challenges together. In my book, *The Business of Family*, I write about the difficulties families have in thinking about potential threats and failures — it's more natural and exciting to envision a positive future. But, just as major corporations have experienced, unexpected crises can occur that dramatically alter finances and futures. Just as businesses invest in risk management strategies, a family must have an emergency plan ready to deploy that not only addresses the immediate concern but recognizes potential future challenges.

FIND OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN TOGETHER

A truly resilient family is one that manages its situation with a consistent awareness of both potential risks and rewards of the changing environment around them. Each family member should do a scan of their individual circumstances periodically and ask themselves — what is different in my life, and how should I

adjust my plan? These conversations should not only be left to the parents, but they should include ideas from everyone in the family. From there, seek an outside perspective. Share favorite books, articles, and podcasts with each other. Many of us have been with the same professional advisors for years because we trust them and are comfortable with them. When was the last time you had your advisors meet with the whole family? Have a candid discussion that engages both knowledge and emotion — the family's "IQ and EQ" — and pay attention to any flags raised. This conversation is not an exercise focused only on your challenges. It will help bridge your gaps and foster a shift in your mindset, allowing you to spot opportunities where your family resilience can be fortified and securing you against future shocks.

Building family resilience requires that we always think about the next step, the next door we open, and the next road we choose. Succession planning has always been critical for many family businesses, but it will not safeguard against the constantly changing environment in which we find ourselves without deeper insight. Harness the know-how and skills of each member of your family. Doing so will help ensure that your business, wealth, and relationships grow more resilient. ●

Linda Davis Taylor is a 1977 initiate of the Emory University Circle of Omicron Delta Kappa. She is the author of *The Business of Family* and the host of the Money Stories with LDT podcast. Taylor is the former CEO and chairman of Clifford Swan Investment Counselors. More information about Taylor may be found at her website: www.lindadavistaylor.com.



CIRCLES IN ACTION



ADELPHI UNIVERSITY

The Adelphi University Circle supports, promotes, and attends leadership certificate programs. The circle is also an active partner with the university's mentoring program. The circle recently received a Clay Grant to continue its work with the mentoring program.



DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

At Duquesne University, the circle coordinates an annual recognition day for all graduating seniors, including fifth-year pharmacy students. The day begins with a Mass, followed by receptions hosted by the deans, and then a dinner which family members are also invited to attend. University administrators, faculty, and staff also participate throughout the day.



FONTBONNE UNIVERSITY

The Fontbonne University Circle sponsors a day-long summit during which students are encouraged to work together and discuss various topics related to activism, inclusion, and more. A keynote speaker is invited each year to facilitate conversations. Also, for an eighth consecutive year, members of the circle spent a morning volunteering with a local community garden.



LAKE FOREST COLLEGE

LAKE FOREST COLLEGE

Every year, the Lake Forest College Circle invites accomplished professionals, including OΔK members, to campus to talk to students about their experience. These speakers share their pathways and hurdles they had to cross in their leadership journeys.



OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

On reading day each semester (the day before the start of final exams), the Old Dominion University Circle members head to the library to distribute exam care kits and provide studying and test preparation advice to their fellow students.

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

RIDER UNIVERSITY

The members of the Rider University Circle have the opportunity to be the guest of the school's president to have an exchange about leadership opportunities, accomplishments, and challenges. On occasion, in addition to the president, members of the university's board of trustees also join these conversations to provide their own leadership insights and lessons.



RIDER
UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF AKRON

Each year, the University of Akron Circle members join with three other honor societies on campus to coordinate the Passion awards ceremony. Four professors are recognized for their passion for their discipline as well as teaching and research. The program allows

collegiate members to learn more about what it has taken for these individuals to become successful academic leaders.



UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS – LOWELL



Learning with Purpose

The UMass – Lowell Circle held an event where the institution's "Experts" group was invited to speak to the members on topics such as mentoring, resume building, critical thinking, and perseverance. Members of the circle also assisted with COVID-19 vaccination efforts, developing and reading custom audiobooks, and providing online tutoring services.

UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

The Epsilon Circle at the University of Richmond has continued to sponsor its annual Last Lecture Series. Each year, the circle's executive board chooses speakers who demonstrate sincere dedication to student development and contribute significantly to Richmond's academic culture.



UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

The University of Southern Mississippi Circle hosted an interactive workshop on personal leadership traits and qualities. This program was designed to help individuals better understand their strengths and weaknesses.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN
MISSISSIPPI.

WESTERN COLORADO UNIVERSITY



numerous other campus and community volunteers. During this event, the circle partners with local non-profit organizations around Gunnison and serves as site leaders for the various projects.

The Western Colorado University Circle coordinates a campus-wide day of service each year, involving

 **UNIVERSITY**
of
VIRGINIA

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

The circle at the University of Virginia has hosted a number of speakers in the last several months. A state senator spoke to the members about how politics impacts one's ability to lead. Other speakers addressed the challenges in leading divided populations and the complex negotiations with other leaders.

Necessity Breeds Innovation

The Story Behind Start-up Buenos Aires Founder Lisa Besserman

by Kristen N. Hart



One does not typically set out to build the start-up community of the future. Instead, most individuals learn and grow along their journey of following their passions; and sometimes, it just so happens, this future is where it leads.

So goes the story of Startup Buenos Aires founder Lisa Besserman. A 2005 initiate of the SUNY Plattsburgh Circle, Besserman forged her own path from the very beginning and has quite the portfolio to show for it. Named as one of Business Insider's "Top 100 Most Influential Women in Tech" and credited as "The Woman Behind Argentina's Start-up Revolution," she continues to collect accolades. Aside from creating Startup Buenos Aires, Besserman was a Google Mentor, has assisted as a judge for numerous global start-up competitions, and served as the head of program for Indeed's Global Incubator.

I know I can't change the world, but I can certainly impact my corner of it by investing in and supporting entrepreneurs.

Besserman began her journey as an international business major, fueled by her passion for global travel and her interest in business. She was drawn to organizations, like Omicron Delta Kappa, the Student Honors Association, and the Outdoor Adventure Club. She was also active in Delta Phi Epsilon, which supported her desire to expand her worldview and, ultimately, shaped her into the leader she would become. Although Besserman yearned to travel the

world, she always saw herself graduating from college and working in the corporate world of high finance.

After graduation, Besserman set off on a backpacking trip through Europe, where she learned that she could pursue travel in a fulfilling and different way. Her first job outside of college, teaching English in Japan, opened her eyes to the incredible world of living abroad and introduced her to a wide-range of opportunities. This experience was just the start of Besserman's career in international business, and it shaped her in ways she could never have imagined.

After returning from Japan, the financial crisis of 2008 struck, and Besserman was hired as an economist for the U.S. Department of Labor. She soon realized that government work was not for her. This change in career path led her to the world of start-ups, which altered her trajectory completely. At the age of 25, Besserman worked at a mobile app

Necessity breeds innovation and failures are the best learning experiences, understanding these concepts enabled me to be a malleable leader and it provided a strong foundation for our organization's impact.

development start-up as the director of product operations. However, her urge to travel the world encouraged her to request a temporary remote work placement and book a one-way ticket to Buenos Aires, Argentina, a country where she knew no one and could not speak a word of Spanish. All Besserman knew was that a world of possibilities awaited.

The city and culture captured Besserman's heart immediately, but she knew she needed to connect with like-minded people and decided to do so through the local start-up community. All of the elements for a robust start-up community already existed, but Besserman noticed a flaw. Everything was fragmented, and there was a lack of resources. This realization is where the idea for Startup Buenos Aires was born – a place where company founders and start-up enthusiasts could connect, build a community, help one another scale their endeavors, and serve as a conduit to global opportunities.

Besserman never expected Startup Buenos Aires to evolve as much as it did. Almost overnight, the news about the project spread throughout the community. People wanted to become a part of the mission. Through building this central hub within Buenos Aires, entrepreneurs now had the support they needed, and the start-up community began to flourish. Eventually, Besserman realized the potential impact of the organization. She formalized it to become a



start-up accelerator, providing tools, resources, education, support, and access to financial capital for early-stage start-ups in Argentina.

Being an entrepreneur is extremely challenging in and of itself; doing so abroad is nearly impossible. It involves navigating a new market, different cultures, foreign languages, and an opaque business landscape. However, Besserman truly believes it is partly because she was not a native that the organization scaled the way it did. She was able to bring the business culture and network from the U.S. while also respecting and adapting to Argentina's entrepreneurial nuances.

The impact Startup Buenos Aires has had exceeded all of Besserman's aspirations. The organization has created thousands of jobs, brought millions of dollars into Argentina, worked with various government entities, and provided education and funding opportunities for many start-ups during its six years of operation. One

of Besserman's beloved quotes is, "be rigid in your vision, flexible in your execution." In order to be the malleable leader that Startup Buenos Aires required, Besserman had to learn that failures are the best learning experiences. To all the aspiring and existing entrepreneurs, Besserman's words of advice are "fall in love with the problem, not the solution."



While Besserman enjoyed her work with Indeed's Global Incubator, she has her sights set on the horizon. She recently transitioned from the corporate world to the venture capital side. She has accepted a role as the managing director of an early-stage start-up accelerator within a venture capital firm. As a builder at heart, Besserman cannot wait to travel down this new path in venture capital investing, continuing to impact entrepreneurs' lives globally. ●

Kristen N. Hart is a 2019 initiate of the Millersville University of Pennsylvania Circle. She is currently serving O&K as a communications assistant.



ENTREPRENEURIAL BRIEFS

A number of Omicron Delta Kappa members are successful entrepreneurs.
Please read below to learn about some unique businesses.



ELISABETH CARDIELLO

Caffe Unimatic, Inc.

Elisabeth Cardiello (Wagner College, 2004) is the founder and owner of Caffe Unimatic, Inc., based in Soho, New York. The company sells the last original Italian-made Unimatic coffee pots as well as a line of roasted coffee blends. The heart-warming origin story of the business is detailed in the Netflix documentary, "Coffee For All." One of the unique things about Cardiello's business is that it is partnered with her consulting company to host BRAVE Conversations Over Coffee for organizations, entrepreneurs, and families using coffee as the catalyst that inspires deeper listening, safer spaces, and hence, greater access to creativity, connection, and fulfillment. The research-based framework she created gives organizations a way to address sensitive topics such as inclusion, burnout, and mental health in order to build trust and unlock greater productivity through virtual workshops.

MATTHEW PRIMOUS

Integrity Intrigue Innovation, Inc.

Matthew Primous (SUNY Brockport, 2015) is the founder of Integrity Intrigue Innovation, a company that partners with technology evaluation centers to provide software selection resources. He is also an accomplished author whose book of poetry, *Simply Imagine: A Lifetime of Poetry*, is available from RoseDog Books. Primous is active with national and local politics and advocating for minority-owned businesses in New York. He recently won an Accolade, one of the world's most prestigious awards recognizing his work in the film industry.





JOE JOHNSON *Ostra Cyber Security*

After earning his law and master's degrees from the University of St. Thomas, Joe Johnson (a 2002 St. Thomas Circle initiate) began a career in business and went on to hold a number of executive leadership positions. Today, he is the president of Ostra Cybersecurity, a company that protects small and medium-sized businesses from data breaches and ransomware attacks. Johnson is also a founding partner of Colonial Park Partners, a company that supports other entrepreneurs with strategic business growth.

CASSANDRE DAVILMAR *Lakou*

In 2017, Cassandre Davilmar (University of Miami, 2009) co-founded Lakou, a café located in Brooklyn's historic Weeksville neighborhood. The restaurant, which also serves as a community space, serves salads, juices, crepes, and smoothies. In addition, Davilmar works as an independent restaurant consultant, helping other businesses with marketing, operations, business development, and training.

PHILIP LIVINGSTON *Precision Camera and Video*

Philip Livingston (University of Maryland, College Park, 1979) and a group of investors acquired Precision Camera and Video in 2019. With two stores in Austin, Texas, Precision Camera was named 2020 Camera Dealer of the Year by Digital Imaging magazine. The pandemic spurred their sales of streaming video and audio gear. Precision Camera offers the latest mirrorless cameras from Canon, Sony, and Fujifilm, as well as workshops and rental equipment to the booming Austin market. Previously, Livingston was the CEO of LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell, a well-known legal industry marketing company. He started his career in finance and was CFO of some notable companies, including Celestial Seasonings, World Wrestling Entertainment, and Catalina Marketing. He is a lifelong amateur photographer.



THE POWER OF

Minority Entrepreneurship



by Holly D. Gordon

Over the last ten years, minority business enterprises accounted for more than 50 percent of the two million new businesses in the U.S. and created 4.7 million jobs. According to the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, there are more than four million minority-owned companies with annual sales totaling close to \$700 billion.

However, according to the National Small Business Association, 41 percent of small businesses say a lack of capital is hurting their ability to grow. For America's Main Street businesses, having access to capital means the difference between hiring or layoffs.

Bob Crawford (Dickinson College, 1960) agrees. After selling his business when he was in his mid-seventies, Crawford wanted to invest in companies. He realized he didn't want to do extensive research about large companies but wanted to connect more directly to the people involved. In talking to the CEO of the Chicago Community Trust (CCT), a 100-year-old community foundation that funds and supports the work of change-makers with an eye toward racial equity, Crawford had an idea.

Crawford spent six months touring disadvantaged areas to understand the needs of the communities and went to nine entrepreneurial programs in disadvantaged communities to understand the needs of small businesses. It was clear there was a widespread need to support small entrepreneurs. "The issue isn't only about adding jobs. The issue is about stabilizing the community

through providing opportunities for entrepreneurs to build businesses and then add the jobs," Crawford says. "Capitalism is the answer in these areas."

With support from CCT, this research led Crawford to form the Neighborhood Entrepreneurship Lab (NEL) five years ago. They partnered with Accion Chicago (now called Allies for Community Business or A4CB), which was already in the business of investing in entrepreneurs through loan programs. Accion identified new entrepreneurs and recommended those with growth potential to NEL for a nine-month program with mentoring, training, and developing a business plan. When that business plan, with specific investment needs, is approved, a \$20,000 grant is provided for use in implementing the plan. Crawford's primary role now is to raise funds from individuals, foundations, and corporations. Last year, he and his team raised \$600,000.

Crawford said he had a realization. "If you get more high-quality small business people to start a business, they'll stabilize the neighborhoods. They'll be coaches, Sunday School teachers. It's capitalism. It's the people invested with their own economic drive," according to Crawford.



Bob Crawford providing coaching to a future entrepreneur (right wearing red tie).

Across the board, a key element of the success of entrepreneurship seems to come from lived experience and the human aspect. Who does well in these accelerators? People with drive and determination, and high social skillsets, notes Crawford. "They're people-people. They're fighters. Gutsy."

Crawford's description of successful entrepreneurs is accurate for **Ashlee Ammons** (Baldwin Wallace University, 2009) and her mother and business partner **Kerry Schrader**. Their company, Mixtroz, simplifies human connection by creating serendipity and real-time data insights both live and virtually.

When Ammons and Schrader started, they were considered what Ammons refers to as quad outsiders: black, female, non-technical, and tech founders. Her expertise was in events; her mother's was in human resources.

The common thread was the human element. Ammons noted that there were many kinds of software being developed to attempt to make networking better. It was "heavy on the tech and paid no attention to the human using it," she remembers. "Because we didn't lead with tech, we built a tech that supports the human instead of the other way around."

The U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship notes there are more than 11.3 million women-owned businesses in America – representing 38 percent of all firms and growing at five times the national average. This growth is encouraging but happening despite institutional barriers facing women entrepreneurs, including a funding gap estimated at \$300 billion for female-owned small businesses worldwide.



Ashlee Ammons



Of the 41 entrepreneurs that have gone through his program, 75% were women, says Crawford. "They're the stabilization of the community."

Ammons said she never faced discrimination until she became an entrepreneur. "Because I was coming into a tech space, as black female founder ... in 2014, that was unheard of – especially in the Southeast. They weren't ready, back then, for founders that look like my mom and me."

"We challenged people's status quo. It made them uncomfortable. It's not just a feeling; there's data to back that up," notes Ammons. She was the 38th black female ever to close a \$1 million round of funding (her mother being 37th). "How are we even still counting that number," she asks.

"If a supporter or funder doesn't understand racial inequity and the reckoning happening in the U.S., I'm pretty unapologetic in sharing my thoughts on the topic. If you are someone trying to help entrepreneurs of color – we are over-mentored and under-funded. We don't always need another homework assignment or program to complete. Send the wire, make the hire, or keep moving," Ammons asserts.



Maurice Jones

Maurice Jones (Hampden-Sydney College, 1984) is the former president and CEO of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). This national community development financial institution is 41-years-old and has invested \$24 billion in communities around the country. He thinks minority entrepreneurs need both funding and mentoring.

"Our experience is that you've got to do more than money. Big businesses have multiple areas of support – a CPA firm, banks, lines of credit. [Businesses] need an ecosystem to be successful. The challenge for entrepreneurs is they don't have the resources to build that ecosystem or the other services they need to survive and grow."

Jones notes that a key gap is that if you're black or brown in this country, you're likely not to have as much access to friends and family with wealth. "I don't want to underplay what's needed in addition to capital," says Jones. "This gap means when you're trying to launch an entrepreneurial exercise, where friends and family fund the first chapter, you're at a disadvantage," according to Jones.

Ammons from Mixtroz agrees with this. "Pay attention to your network. Deals get done not only because of who you know but who knows you. Many times, the most extraordinary doors get opened because of a touch you had 2.5 years ago."

Jones recently took the helm at OneTen, a newly formed venture launched by more than 40 Fortune 500 corporations working to hire and advance one million Black Americans without four-year college degrees into family-sustaining jobs and careers over the next ten years.

"There's a huge wealth gap. On average, white families have ten times more wealth than black families. This is one of the biggest risks to the American project--period," reveals Jones. A living-wage and family-sustaining jobs are foundational to all the issues in America: the homeownership gap, wealth gap, and the health gap, according to Jones. He's concerned we no longer have multiple pathways to get to family-sustaining careers. 60 percent of the population does not have a college degree. "[If we depend on that] that's setting ourselves up for economic disaster. OneTen is going to start with blacks and move on to other cohorts," Jones notes.

He continues, "We've never had a private sector commitment of this scale – money and jobs. What's different about this effort is the demand side is coming to the table first – making these jobs and promotions available. With this information, the job to be done is to prepare Black talent and provide the wrap-arounds to make them successful. It's an exciting opportunity."

Ultimately, all the success of entrepreneurship comes down to the people, the ones Crawford was chasing as he moved into his "retirement" career. As Tope Folarin, vice president of content and storytelling at LISC, said in a published conversation with Jones, "I believe we are all walking stories, and so many of us are just waiting for an opportunity to announce that we exist, to be heard, and for our humanity to be recognized by others." ● *Holly D. Gordon is a 2001 initiate of the University of Richmond Circle.*



OΔK KEY FUND

Celebrating Collaborative and Inclusive Leaders

Since our founding in 1914, the hallmark of OΔK has been its ability to bring together and celebrate leaders representing a wide range of campus and community involvement.

The Society's Key Fund has been created to support scholarships and the gift of membership for students from historically underrepresented and marginalized populations.

Through the provision of membership in OΔK, these collegiate members will have access to other opportunities, including internships, leadership development programs, and career resources.

Please consider making a gift today:

odk.org/donate



OMICRON DELTA KAPPA

FY 2022-24 *Strategic Plan*

Early in 2020 and in response to changing trends in the higher education environment, the Society's Board of Trustees authorized the development of a new strategic plan at its January meeting. In May 2020, RISE Partnerships was retained to help guide the process to develop the OΔK's next strategic plan. The following individuals served on the Strategic Planning Task Force:

Cynthia C. Cochran

*Co-Chair, Member, Board of Trustees
(University of Miami, 2001)*

Tara S. Singer

*Co-Chair, President and Chief Executive Officer
(University of Louisville, 1981)*

H. Randall Capps

Member, Board of Trustees (Western Kentucky University, 1980)

Peter A. Christiaans

Member, Board of Trustees (University of Miami, 1993)

Marguerite K. Cornwell

Lifetime Member (St. Lawrence University, 1997)

Jonah L. Robison

Lifetime Member (Clemson University, 2016)

Gene P. Siegal

Member, Board of Trustees (University of Louisville, 1973)

Leslie A. Werden

Member, Board of Trustees (Morningside College, 2008)

Jeffery M. Wilson

Lifetime Member (University of South Carolina, 1990)

The task force met throughout the second part of 2020 to develop this plan. The plan itself was shared with various stakeholders in early 2021 for additional feedback. It has been further revised and edited to provide greater focus and definition to the goals and initiatives based on the extensive feedback received. It was approved by the full board at a meeting on March 10, 2021.

THE PLAN REAFFIRMED THE SOCIETY'S THREE-PRONGED MISSION, ALSO KNOWN AS THE

OΔK Idea

Identify, honor, and develop leaders in collegiate and community life.

Encourage collaboration among students, faculty, staff, and alumni to advance leadership.

Promote and publicize our ideals.

IN ADDITION, THE PLAN AND THE BOARD ADOPTED A REVISED
VISION STATEMENT AND SET OF LEADERSHIP VALUES:

OΔK *Vision*

Omicron Delta Kappa is a multi-generational society that excels in recognizing and connecting collaborative and inclusive leaders.

OΔK *Values*

- *Collaboration*
- *Inclusivity*
- *Integrity*
- *Knowledge*
- *Service*

THE THREE GOALS AND 12 OBJECTIVES OUTLINED IN THE PLAN ARE BELOW.

Goal One

Provide an excellent, relevant campus member and circle experience

- A. Provide greater support for advisors
- B. Unify and standardize circle programming
- C. Invest in a targeted redevelopment plan for under-performing circles in order to develop a sustainable culture that offers a premium and relevant experience
- D. Redefine extension practices to ensure new circles establish a sustainable culture and the desired reputation on campus
- E. Develop strategies to assess and encourage high-level circle performance

Goal Two

Build a more diverse and inclusive organization

- A. Create incentives for circles to recruit, induct, and engage more graduate, professional, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members including honorary members
- B. Develop and implement policies that ensure equitable access to membership for historically marginalized and underrepresented individuals
- C. Establish new pathways for non-campus individuals to join Omicron Delta Kappa

Goal Three

Champion and celebrate collaborative and inclusive leadership

- A. Develop strategies for greater celebration and engagement of individual members
- B. Develop a national marketing campaign to clearly communicate the Society's mission and impact among all audiences, including those not on campus
- C. Develop a national communications program (free and paid media) on the topic of collaborative and inclusive leadership
- D. Sponsor events, prizes, and activities that celebrate and recognize collaborative leadership

This plan is specifically intended to guide Omicron Delta Kappa over the next three fiscal years (through the end of FY 2024).

The plan has been crafted with an intention to stabilize and develop the organization in preparation for leadership transitions. The next round of strategic planning will commence in early FY 2024 to guide the next five years of activity.





Omicron Delta Kappa National Headquarters
224 McLaughlin Street
Lexington, VA 24450-2002

OΔK Member Benefits

Whether you are a current collegiate member, recent graduate, or lifetime member, Omicron Delta Kappa helps you improve your leadership skills, share your ideas, and continue to make a difference in your community. You have the opportunity to expand those leadership skills through the National Leadership Conference, continue your education through post-collegiate scholarships, receive discounts on valuable products and services, and much more with our member benefits.

TO LEARN MORE VISIT:

odk.org/members/benefits-membership

