



Why is Managing Diversity at the Core of Leadership Today?

This question is answered in Chapters 2 & 3 of *Cultural Diversity in Organizations: Theory, Research & Practice* by Taylor Cox (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1994). His scholarly compendium of knowledge related to organizational behavior and human resource management provides a holistic and inclusive conceptual framework for understanding diversity and its effects.

Cox cites research and develops the notions that managing diversity facilitates moral, ethical and social responsibility goals; legal obligations; and economic performance goals.

Moral Imperative—If organizations subscribe to the notion of equal opportunity, managing diversity becomes the moral, ethical, and right thing to do. Because organizations (whether for-profit or

not-for-profit) in most cultures have dominant groups in their work forces, there is a pervasive tendency to favor in-groups over out-groups. Thus dominance-subordination and equal opportunity become significant issues. Promoting fairness and improving opportunities advance social responsibility goals and, in the long run, improve economic opportunities of minority groups and national economic status.

Legal Requirements—Managing diversity is a matter of law. Discrimination is outlawed on the basis of sex, color, race, religion, pregnancy, national origin, age, or physical ability; and failure to manage diversity has been costly in lawsuits. Therefore, discrimination not only represents law-breaking but failure to manage diversity leads to

economic as well as good citizenship implications.

Organizational Performance—Tangible evidence demonstrates the effect of diversity on bottom-line performance. The perception of being valued has a significant effect on conscientiousness, job involvement, and innovativeness. But to benefit from this principle means that cultures may have to be treated differently in order for individuals to gain this perception. Minimizing barriers to performance due to diversity-related dynamics will have positive effects on quality, productivity, and labor turnover, which will have a direct impact on profitability of for-profit organizations or instrumental goals of not-for-profit organizations. Heterogeneous workers, when properly managed, will have performance advantages relating to creativity, problem solving, and adaptation to change.

To accomplish these benefits, attitudes and behaviors that reduce attractiveness of working in diverse groups must be minimized.

Thus, the research supports the beneficial relationship of diversity and organizational performance.

Last Word—The substantial commitment of Kappa Omicron Nu to cultural diversity is based upon the following premise: Personal and organizational effectiveness of leaders will be achieved only

- ♦ if the belief is held that cultural diversity in the workplace is a resource that remains grossly underutilized,
- ♦ if the phenomena of diversity and its

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MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY

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- ♦ Why Diversity?
- ♦ Personal Accounts
- ♦ Facilitating Diversity
- ♦ Tips for Leaders & Participants
- ♦ Cultural Pursuit
- ♦ President's Message

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implications for organizations are well understood,

- ♦ if participation in organizational development for managing diversity is valued.

And the Cox (1994) book is a good place to start.

Personal Accounts: Members Share Their Experiences

One Life—Many Experiences in Diversity

I was born on the Laguna Reservation west of Albuquerque, New Mexico. My father was a Presbyterian minister working with the Laguna Indians, who were farmers and shepherders. He became a very good friend of the old Governor of the tribe, Terevio Quoyoni. My father asked Terevio to take the vows with my mother when father baptized me. Terevio did and took a great interest in me. He and his family almost adopted me. I had a Native American family in addition to my own family.

As I was growing up I spent many afternoons, days, and later on, weekends with the Native American family.

As Native American children are taught and expected to be quiet and not talk much, my curiosity and inability to sit quietly was of concern to the Indian family. They transmitted their legends, values, customs, history of America from the Indian viewpoint and way of thinking to me.

They taught me to be observant of others, to watch for non-verbal communication, especially relating to the eyes

and body language. Also, I learned to listen intently to what was said and to what was not said.

The elders of the tribe compared the strengths and weaknesses of the Native Americans, the Spanish Americans, and the Anglos, the three cultures in New Mexico. They taught that all peoples on earth are the children of God and are much alike under the skin and that we should meet them as equals and respect their dignity and strengths.

When I was five, my parents became administrators of a multi-racial, church-sponsored school near Albuquerque. There were 200 children and youth from 5 to 17 years of age, many of whom were orphans or court wards or some whose parents lived in isolated areas of New Mexico and Mexico with no schools.

Many times my brother and I would be the only white children in a community for a week at a time.

We learned Spanish, the life styles, play activities, songs, customs, and legends of other peoples and what it was to be a minority.

When a person knows well several of another race, he/she is receptive to and more observant of others of that race. There are good and bad and in-between in all races. Race becomes unimportant. What is important, is the

kind of person you are talking to or working with and his/her strengths.

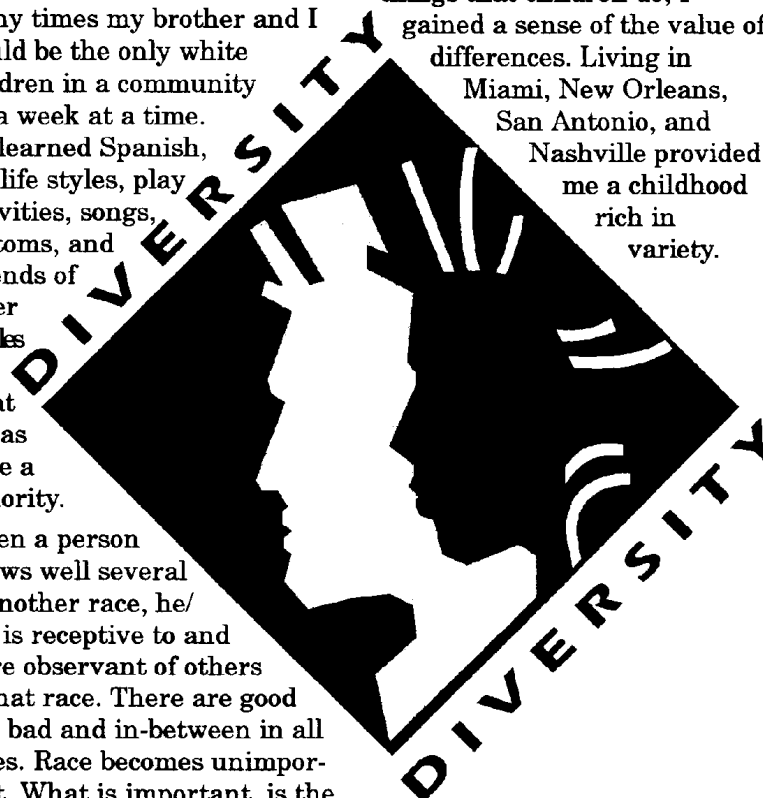
As an adult I have taught and worked with children, youth and adults of many races and tribes. All of them are interesting and unique. This is a small world inhabited by diverse people. If you interact sincerely with others as though you are all equal or level with them, they will usually respond to that. When a person is free of racial prejudice, this is communicated by voice, eye contact, body language and attitude. You are truly free to enjoy the uniqueness and diversity of the peoples of this world.

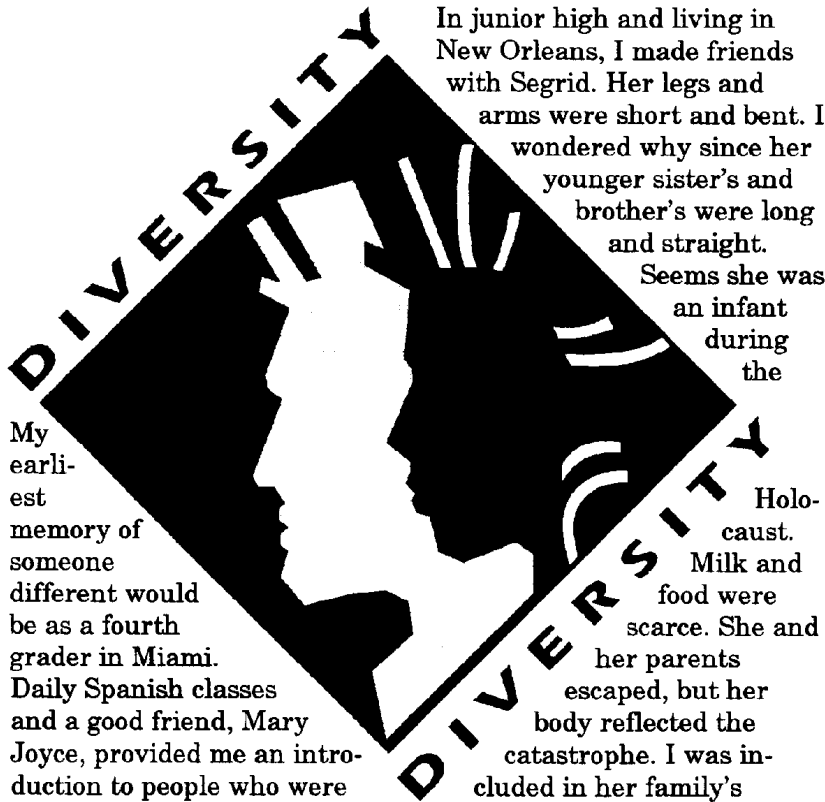
Mrs. Frances Zenor

My Childhood

At the time I suspect I did not realize the value of my experiences, but as a child doing the things that children do, I

gained a sense of the value of differences. Living in Miami, New Orleans, San Antonio, and Nashville provided me a childhood rich in variety.





My earliest memory of someone different would be as a fourth grader in Miami. Daily Spanish classes and a good friend, Mary Joyce, provided me an introduction to people who were different. Mary Joyce was adopted and of Hispanic descent. I also remember a neighbor friend who was Cuban, his name escapes me, but I remember the braces he wore. He spoke Spanish and always wanted to get into the wading pool with the neighborhood children. One day when the adults were not looking, we pulled him in—braces and all!

In fifth grade we studied three major religions. I still have the little book I made. My memory of the beautiful cathedral and the handsome synagogue joined my memories of my grandmother's Baptist church in Nashville. Seventh grade found me riding city busses to school. At the time I did not understand why black people had to ride in the back of the bus. It just did not seem fair. In my rebellious adolescent way—I had only one way to make a statement—I rode in the back, too!

In junior high and living in New Orleans, I made friends with Segrid. Her legs and arms were short and bent. I wondered why since her younger sister's and brother's were long and straight. Seems she was an infant during the Holocaust. Milk and food were scarce. She and her parents escaped, but her body reflected the catastrophe. I was included in her family's celebrations. Her brother's Bar Mitzvah was especially joyful.

San Antonio was a good place to be in high school. Many friends were Mexican and African American. My family and I celebrated a Christmas across the border with the extended family of a friend. Being included in the Posada and being welcomed, I was a part of their family for a short time. I played with their children in the park and danced with the Grandmother. It was interesting to be the only white family in a Mexican Catholic cathedral. I felt what it was like to be a minority. I never understood why the social sororities at our high school were so, well, white. Fortunately, many of us felt the same way. We decided we needed variety. During my junior year, Mexicans, African Americans, and students of different faiths were included in one sorority.

Perhaps I have the sense that I can transcend the barrier of race because of the people I have known. I realize there will be some barriers always. Getting to know individuals and their families, and getting to participate in the rituals, customs, and celebrations of different types of families made me aware of the similarities of all people and the wonderful differences of all people. As an adult my task is to find comfort in those similarities, and to enjoy, learn from, and celebrate the differences.

Linda H. Richey, Ph. D

For more personal accounts from members who've led lives rich in diversity, please see page 6!

Effective Leaders in a Diverse Society

Producing greater cultural awareness in the KON chapter, your department, your college or your university is a sequential process that happens over time. The following suggestions are intended to help our members become leaders in a diverse society, and are taken from *Leadership for a Culturally Diverse Society*.

1. Identify a small group of facilitators to serve as a support group.
2. Have a plan before trying new programs.
3. Use small groups to experiment with new programs before launching large programs for wide audiences.
4. Locate one or two people who will identify media

sources and produce campus or local newspaper articles featuring cultural awareness efforts.

5. Carrying out a few programs well in many settings is better than trying new programs for the sake of variety.
6. Prepare for conflict as awareness increases.

Facilitating Discussion of Controversial Issues

Discussions about controversial topics involve two groups of individuals who play key roles in the success of the discussion: the leader and the participants. The leader guides the group toward the goals that have been established. It is the leader's responsibility to stimulate and moderate a dialogue (not a debate) by raising pertinent questions, identifying key points, and managing the group process.

Participants have an obligation to bring to the discussion their unique knowledge and experiences and to exchange views openly. A democratic exchange among equals is important to the success of the discussion.

The following tips for LEADERS and PARTICIPANTS will be useful for all who engage in discus-



sions designed to increase awareness of others' views.

Tips for Leaders

Take Preparation Seriously

The leader does not need to be an expert on the topic being discussed but should be prepared for the discussion. This means understanding the goals of the discussion, familiarity with the subject, thinking ahead of time about the directions in which the discussion might go, and preparation of discussion questions to aid the group in considering the subject. Solid preparation will enable you to give your full attention to group dynamics and to what individuals in the group are saying.

- ◆ Make sure everyone understands the purpose of the discussion: *to share and better understand* sides of the issues.
- ◆ Consider co-moderating with someone with the same goals who is a different gender, race, or religion.
- ◆ Prepare wrap-up questions.
- ◆ Role-play hard situations.
- ◆ Use a "talking stick," which is passed around. Whoever has the "talking stick" may speak.

Establish Ground Rules

At the beginning of the discussion, establish ground rules.

Suggested rules:

- ◆ Group members are encouraged to express honest opinions.
- ◆ Though disagreement can be useful, it should not be

personalized.

- ◆ It is important to hear from everyone. People who tend to speak a lot should make an effort to let others speak.
- ◆ The leader's role is to remain neutral, guiding conversation.

Get Off to a Good Start

- ◆ Focus on differences in ideas rather than on personalities.
- ◆ Communicate the purpose of discussion.

Begin with a brief discussion about conflict. "Since much conflict is natural, the goal of a group is not to eliminate conflict, but to view it as essentially healthy. It can be healthy if it is handled and resolved constructively. [People and organizations are] enhanced by exploring differences; new ideas and new learning result. Usually when conflict arises and is dealt with openly, people are stimulated to creativity, alternatives are considered, better ideas come forth, and a better course of action results" (Jones & Pfeiffer, 1977, p. 120).

Use Effective Group Processes

Processing is a developmental step in learning. As a strategy in a group learning experience, processing encourages participants to share, reflect, and conceptualize meanings of the experience to clarify personal knowledge. Processing is encouraged by the following sentence stems:

I noticed that...; I discovered that...; I've become aware...; After some reflection, I've decided...; I'm proud of myself because I...

"You can get a mile of process from an inch of data." Don't forget that some of the most important learning occurs in the processing.

Sequencing involves all participants by encouraging them through the following activities:

- ◆ Dyad discussion of topic.
- ◆ Double dyad sharing and processing.
- ◆ Large group sharing and processing.

This sequence helps participants feel safe sharing ideas.

Active Listening can be encouraged in a group by reviewing listening skills (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1974):

- ◆ Suspend judgment.
- ◆ Resist distractions and focus on the speaker.
- ◆ Wait before responding. Too prompt a response reduces listening effectiveness.
- ◆ Seek the speaker's important themes by listening through the words for the meaning.

Guidelines help keep the group focused on the discussion and monitor participant communication. Following are some suggested guidelines:

- ◆ Consider splitting up into smaller groups to give people a chance to talk.
- ◆ Err on the side of non-intervention when deciding when to intervene.
- ◆ Don't talk after each comment. The most effective leaders say little.
- ◆ Don't let anyone dominate.

Remember: A discussion is not a debate but group dialogue. If participants forget,

don't hesitate to ask the group to reestablish ground rules.

Support Full Participation:

- ◆ Ensure that each person can speak honestly.
- ◆ Encourage different views.
- ◆ Provide notecards or paper for group members to jot down ideas (discourages interruptions).
- ◆ Confront tension. If things get out of hand take a time out.
- ◆ Encourage dialogue rather than debate to strengthen understanding.

Help the Group Grapple with Content

- ◆ Make sure the group considers a wide range of views.
- ◆ Ask participants to think about values underlying beliefs.
- ◆ Don't allow the group to focus on one particular experience.
- ◆ Summarize occasionally.

Use Questions to Make the Discussion More Productive

- ◆ What seems to be the key point here?
- ◆ What is the crux of your disagreement?
- ◆ Does anyone want to add to, support, or challenge that point?
- ◆ Can you describe an experience to illustrate that point?
- ◆ What experiences might lead people to support that point of view?
- ◆ What do you find most persuasive about that point of view?
- ◆ What is it about that position that you just cannot live with?

Reserve Adequate Time for Closing the Discussion

- ◆ Ask the group for last comments.
- ◆ Ask participants to share new ideas they've had as a result of the discussion.
- ◆ Remind the group of the subject for the next session.

Tips for Participants

- ◆ Draw all group members into the discussion.
- ◆ Ensure that all members understand that they CAN disagree without being hostile and without accusing someone of racism.
- ◆ Speak up and participate.
- ◆ Address remarks to the group not the leader.
- ◆ Clarify points and broaden understanding of others' viewpoints.
- ◆ Jot down points you want to make when it is your turn.
- ◆ Speak up and allow others to speak.
- ◆ Make sure your body language and the verbal message match.
- ◆ Maintain an open mind.
- ◆ Critically evaluate what you hear and read.

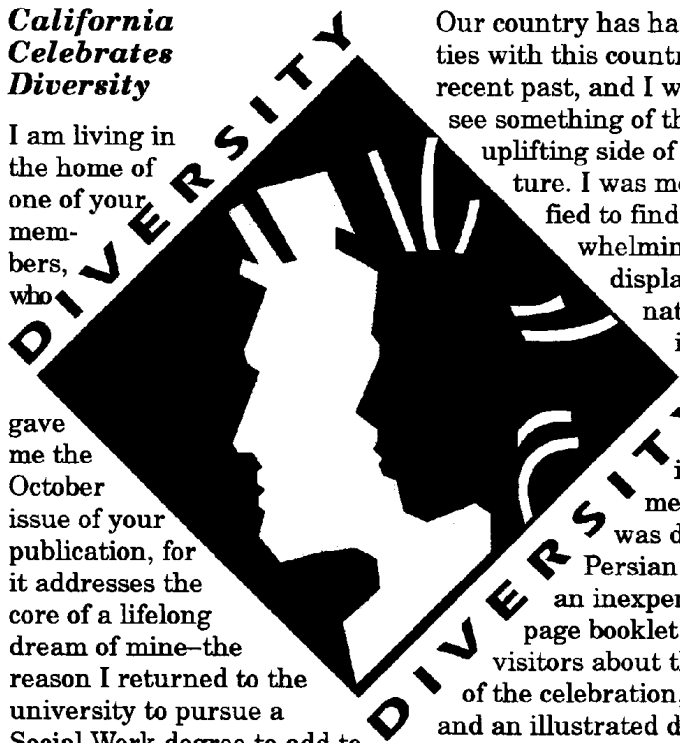
Adapted from *Leadership for a Culturally Diverse Society*. Some information taken from suggestions from SCRC staff and M. Lipshez & E. Bettmann of the A World of Difference InstituteSM, a national education program of the Anti-Defamation League, and from Pfeiffer, J.W., & Jones, J.E. (1974). *The 1974 annual handbook for group facilitators*. San Diego: University Associates.

California Celebrates Diversity

I am living in the home of one of your members, who gave me the October issue of your publication, for it addresses the core of a lifelong dream of mine—the reason I returned to the university to pursue a Social Work degree to add to my Registered Nurse’s license. I hope to open a multicultural summer camp for children.

Although I am not a member of your organization, I would like to share one of my recent experiences with a culture that I feel most privileged to have been visually acquainted with through an art and crafts adjunct to their Mehregan celebration.

California’s Governor declared October Multicultural Month. Many cultures and races of people who have chosen to make California their new home, have chosen to exhibit paintings, serve native foods, display crafts, and entertain attendees with native music to join in the celebration of customs of their former homelands. Because of the enthusiastic approach to his subject, I chose to first visit my teacher’s exhibit. He is from Persia, or Iran as the country is called today.



Our country has had difficulties with this country in the recent past, and I wanted to see something of the creative, uplifting side of the culture. I was most gratified to find its overwhelming beauty displayed in art, native costumes, tapestries, and musical instruments. There was delicious Persian food, and an inexpensive 95-page booklet to inform visitors about the purpose of the celebration, its history, and an illustrated description of many Persian crafts.

One Persian woman graciously gave me a personal guided tour, explaining the background and the nature of all the art and crafts I was seeing in each booth. I spoke with many people there and found all of them warm and pleasing.

I bought two prints and the history booklet and left with a great appreciation for these people who had decided to come to live in our country.

Betty Moffitt

Family Teaches the Value of Diversity

I was raised on a cattle ranch outside Tulsa, Oklahoma. The “hired hands” were both blacks and whites. My dad respected everyone. Our nearest neighbors were relatives of the hired hands. My dad would let me

and my brothers visit them or allow them to visit us as often as possible. We shared birthdays as well as frequent visits and always helped one another if needed. The ranch was purchased by my dad’s father with the contract sale being a handshake with an Indian woman who had built the house (with the help of her relatives). When my family purchased the house and the land, we added onto the house.

My parents treated everyone equally—with respect, understanding, and compassion—giving assistance and friendship. I had no idea that there was a “barrier of race,” nor had I ever heard negative, degrading cultural slang until I was in high school in the larger city of Tulsa.

In addition to Native Americans and African Americans, I was raised around rural families, both the low income families and the wealthy ranchers. Again, I didn’t realize the barriers that wealth and materialism create until I went to high school. My parents never judged others by what they owned, wore, or even by their status or profession.

I feel blessed and fortunate for these childhood experiences which transcend race barriers.

Rita Kukura





Cultural Pursuit

Adapted from
*Leadership for a
Culturally Diverse Society*

DIRECTIONS:

1. Fold this game card so the answers are hidden.
2. Read your pursuit card & note mentally which questions you can answer.
3. Sign your name on other people's cards and share what you know or feel.
4. Each person may sign only one square on a card.



Answers

Find Someone Who...

Knows who the first female astronaut in space was	Knows what the world's fastest growing religion is	Knows the hardest barrier to overcome for people with disabilities
Knows what month the Jewish New Year is celebrated in	Knows what the 3/5 rule was	Knows why the court case Brown v. Board of Education is important
Knows what person from India advocated peaceful resistance	Knows the first African American to have a postal stamp dedicated to him	Knows what the most frequently occurring crime in the country is
Knows who Stephen Biko was	Knows what Kwanzaa means	Knows who "El Libertador" is
Knows the significance of Cinco de Mayo	Knows the West Coast equivalent of Ellis Island	Knows what "Mahatma" means
Knows what Rosa Parks did	Knows what "comparable worth" signifies	Knows the significance of Eagle feathers

- ◆ Islam is the world's fastest growing religion.
- ◆ Other people's attitudes are the hardest barrier for people with disabilities to overcome.
- ◆ The Jewish New Year is in September.
- ◆ Brown v. Board of Education was the precedent setting 1954 Supreme Court case determining that segregation is illegal.
- ◆ Mahatma Ghandi advocated non-violent civil disobedience in fighting for India's independence from Great Britain.
- ◆ Booker T. Washington was the first African American to appear on a U.S. postage stamp.
- ◆ Slaves were once counted as 3/5 of a man for voting purposes.
- ◆ Wife beating is estimated by the FBI to be the most frequently occurring crime in the country.
- ◆ Sally Ride was the first woman in space.
- ◆ Kwanzaa is an African Holiday meaning first fruits or harvest.
- ◆ Yom Kippur is the Jewish Day of Atonement.
- ◆ Cinco de Mayo, the fifth of May, is Mexico's Independence Day
- ◆ "Mahatma" means "Great Soul."
- ◆ Rosa Parks refused to sit at the back of a bus, precipitating the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the first major event of the Civil Rights Movement.
- ◆ Comparable worth means equal compensation for jobs requiring comparable skill.
- ◆ Eagle feathers are a symbol of accomplishment and rank among Native Americans.
- ◆ Stephen Biko was a South African civil rights leader who fought against apartheid.
- ◆ Simon Bolivar, El Libertador, led the fight for Latin American independence from Spain and later became President of Bolivia.
- ◆ Many Asian immigrants were detained at Angel Island, the West Coast equivalent of Ellis Island.



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President's Message

It has been a pleasure to serve this year as your President. I have truly enjoyed working as a team with the members of your Board of Directors, including the Executive Director. We are pleased with the outcomes of our efforts to represent you and serve the greater good of the profession and society.

It is indeed a pleasure to announce that you've selected the following new officers to join the Board in January: **Anne Weiner** as President-Elect, **Carol Meeks** as Vice President/Program, and **Ann Vail** Secretary. Also elected were **Francine Hultgren** and **Gwendolyn Newkirk**, Editorial Committee; and **Shirley Hymon-Parker** and **Pamela Olson**, Nominating Committee.



Many thanks to Fran Andrews who developed educational materials for two themes: cultural diversity and leadership. And to Anne Weiner, thank you for your record-keeping and committee work as secretary, and good wishes as you move up to the presidency.

Our new governance model has worked well to help us be accountable for the goals we set in order to operationalize your recommendations from the membership study. A recent issue of

Home Economics FORUM featured the concept of collaboration, and I can truly say that the individual officers came together as a collaborative team to address directions for Kappa Omicron Nu. More significantly, we have sponsored the establishment of a collaborative of organizations with a goal of developing a cadre of leaders for the profession.

I am delighted with your wonderful accolades about our new *Dialogue* content and format. Dorothy and Lisa have delivered beautifully on the input you provided in the membership survey process (focus groups and survey).

An announcement—The name of our refereed publication has been changed by a vote of chapters to *Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM*. I can hardly wait to see the Spring 1995 issue in its new format.

It has taken us since 1990, at the inception of consolidation, to implement some of the things that culminated in substance this year. We are all indebted to our past leaders who envisioned a promising future.

A last challenge—The Board has a responsibility to communicate with members, and I hope you will make your views known through personal notes and membership feedback opportunities.

I know you will support Carol Avery as she takes the reins as President in January. Carol, you are inheriting the leadership of a strong and relevant organization—Kappa Omicron Nu.

Virginia L. Clark, President

Kappa Omicron Nu Dialogue, Volume 5, No. 1 - Executive Director and Editor: Dorothy I. Mitstifer, Assistant Editor: Lisa Wootton. Board of Directors: Virginia L. Clark, Carol E. Avery, Frances E. Andrews, Julia M. Dinkins, Anne M. Weiner, Angela Higgins, Ayodele Jordan, Susan Poch. Copyright by Kappa Omicron Nu, 4990 Northwind Drive, Suite 140, East Lansing, MI 48823-5031. Telephone: (517)351-8335. Facsimile: (517)351-8336.