



PHI BETA KAPPA

NEWS

Spring 2018

“Love of wisdom, the guide of life”

From the President

It's been another successful year for the Alpha of Oklahoma chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. We enjoyed excellent intellectual discussions at two of our chapter's annual events: the Visiting Scholar lecture and our Founders' Day celebration. In November, Religious Studies hosted Visiting Scholar David Haberman. He presented a public lecture at the Sam Noble Museum of Natural History, titled “A Little of that Human Touch: Why Anthropomorphize?” This was followed in December by Rilla Askew's lecture at the Founders' Day event: “Through the Lens of History: Bearing Witness in a Fractured World.” Dr. Askew hails from southeastern Oklahoma and is an author of non-fiction and fiction books, short fiction, and essays. This spring we invited 238 well-rounded, outstanding students to join our society, as well as extended an honorary membership to OU's Dr. Lupe Davidson. Dr. Davidson is the Chair of the Department of Women's and Gender Studies and co-Director of the Women's and Gender Studies Center for Social Justice, as well as one of the inaugural Faculty Fellows for Dunham Residential College. She spearheaded the development and implementation of the Diversity Ally Program. The Chapter should be proud of its involvement in the intellectual life of our university community and its support of both our emerging scholars and those who have given years of service.

Best wishes,
Susannah Livingood

2018 PBK Honorary Member

Dr. Maria del Guadalupe (Lupe) Davidson, Director, Women's and Gender Studies, Co-Director of the Center for Social Justice, and a Fellow in the Faculty Leadership Academy and the Center for Teaching Excellence at the University of Oklahoma, was nominated for Honorary Membership. She is deserving of recognition based on her outstanding contributions to public service in the vital area of public education. The core of her outstanding service centers on improving the experience of students and actually bringing people together to better understand issues of race and diversity. Her activities have been transformational for faculty, staff and students alike. Dr. Lupe Davidson obtained her BA in English from St. Bonaventure University and two Master's degrees and a Doctorate from Duquesne University. This year we are pleased to present her as the newest honorary member of the Alpha of Oklahoma Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

Phi Beta Kappa Founders' Day Event

Since its founding on December 5, 1776, the Phi Beta Kappa Society has celebrated excellence in the liberal arts and sciences and championed freedom of thought. As America's most prestigious academic honor society, PBK is uniquely equipped to advocate for the value and benefits of liberal arts and sciences education. The elected members of this chapter do this because we believe the curiosity and creativity cultivated by a liberal arts and sciences education are essential to making the most of life's experiences, and that knowledge and learning frees us from the shackles of prejudice and ignorance.

We live in an increasingly complex world in which not only are science and technology rapidly changing, but also our perceptions of the world, societies and relationships. We need more than ever education that sparks the curiosity and creativity needed to meet an evolving world. One of our largest challenges is recognizing the differences between real, mostly real and fake. To aid our understanding we need to develop and use descriptive language or imagery to describe events as they truly are. Often the right word captures thoughts in ways not possible with even a plethora of lesser words.

The right word or image really matters. For our Founders' Day Lecture, we had an accomplished author who has made a career of expressing ideas and thoughts with the right words and images. Rilla Askew is a native of southeastern Oklahoma and has translated her experiences into written words that really inform how we can view complexities in our world with true understanding. Recently she joined the faculty at the University of Oklahoma in the English Department where she works with students and continues to write.

In the lecture she explored how Oklahoma's complex past and complicated present are extreme manifestations of the American Narrative in her talk, “Through the Lens of History: Bearing Witness in a Fractured World.” More information about her work is at www.rillaaskew.com.

News from Spring 2018 Chapter Business Meeting

On Wednesday April 9, fifteen chapter members were present for the spring business meeting of the Alpha of Oklahoma. Some of the business items included the following:

Consideration of Members in Course.

Dr. Thompson, presented the slate of new members under consideration for initiation into PBK. The chapter approved the list of members in course as presented. The list consisted of 215 seniors and 23 juniors. The average GPA of the 2018 slate of members was a 3.89. Please personally congratulate the students you know and encourage them to join Phi Beta Kappa. Invitations to PBK membership are extended for life. Lists of former invitees can be found on the PBK website: <http://www.ou.edu/pbk/members.htm>

Election of New Officers for 2018-2019.

Officers for 2018-2019 academic year were elected and are as follows:

Marcia Haag - President

Ron Halterman - President-Elect 2019

Nanette Hathaway - Vice President

Amy Davenport - Treasurer

Craig Hayes - Secretary

Business Discussion.

There also was discussion of the chapter's OU Foundation account for the Roland Lehr fund. The fund was created by the chapter some years ago to award a cash prize to top Phi Beta Kappa graduates who will pursue graduate work in the natural sciences, the physical sciences, or in medicine. The chapter would like to build

up the principal in the fund so that at least one annual award of \$1,000 can be offered. Until that time, the general fund will supplement the prize to ensure \$1,000 is available for awarding. Going forward, any savings from the initiation ceremony this year as compared to last will go toward the fund's principal balance. Please consider donating to the Lehr fund as we continue to build the principal.

Call for Honorary Members.

Calls were made for Honorary and/or Alumni members for consideration at the Fall 2018 business meeting. Honorary elections may be made from time to time, but they shall be limited in number and confined to persons of distinction. Additionally, alumni of any division of the University from classes of more than ten years' standing may be considered. Such graduates must be persons who have won distinction in letters, science, education, or other intellectual pursuits, or who have rendered to the nation or the region in which they live signal public service of such a nature as to manifest the possession of high intellectual attainments and scholarly interests. If you have a worthy candidate, please contact Dr. Sherry Cox, scox@ou.edu for more information on nominations.

Thank you to all who attended and participated in our spring business meeting. The chapter meets twice annually – once in the fall (usually October) and once in the spring (usually early April). We hope to see you at a future meeting. Join our listserv to get notifications of meeting details (info in "Alpha of Oklahoma Chapter Updates").

Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar

Dr. David Haberman, Professor of Religious Studies, Indiana University, visited the University of Oklahoma (OU) as a PBK Visiting Scholar from Wednesday Nov 8, 2017 through Friday Nov 10, 2017. During his time at OU he presented two guest lectures in undergraduate classes, had a lunch/discussion with undergraduate students, and delivered a well-attended public lecture titled, "A Little of that Human Touch: Why Anthropomorphize?"

Dr. Charles Kimball, Director of the Religious Studies program at OU (which sponsored Dr. Haberman's visit), wrote the following description of the visit:

Each of David's presentations—in two classes, with students during the lunch discussion, and the main university lecture—was very well received. He did a terrific job each and every time. He's a splendid lecturer and a

*delightful person. Both Prof. Deonnie Moodie (who teaches Hinduism) and I incorporated David's book, *Journey Through the Twelve Forests: An Encounter with Krishna*, into our classes last semester. So, having him in class interacting with students during the lunch gathering was particularly meaningful for students.*

David had a wonderful experience as well. He said so many times throughout the days he was here in Norman. And, I saw him again a couple of weeks later at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Boston. A friend brought him to the Harvard University reception where I and four other OU faculty had an opportunity to visit again with him at length. David, who knows the lay of the land in university Humanities programs, was incredibly impressed by what we have built and were doing in the Religious Studies Program at OU. I'm sure he provided

very positive feedback to the folks at the national PBK office as well.

David's visit met and exceeded our highest expectations. Thanks again for your help in putting the pieces in place to make this possible. Let's do it again!

In short, Dr. Haberman's visit was greatly enjoyed by the OU community. We very much appreciate Phi Beta Kappa's generosity in making Dr. Haberman available to us as a Visiting Scholar.

Dr. Haberman is the recipient of the Trustees' Teaching Award. He specializes in Hinduism and has spent many years conducting ethnographic and textual research in India. His work, supported by Guggenheim, Fulbright, and ACLS fellowships, is centered on the culture of Braj, an active pilgrimage site in northern India long associated with Krishna.

PHI BETA KAPPA Contributions

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

An annual contribution of \$50, \$75 or \$100 is suggested; however, any support is gratefully accepted.

Contribution: \$100 _____ \$75 _____ \$50 _____ Other _____

Donations using giving.oufoundation.org, will allow you to either donate by credit card (Visa, MC, Discover, and American Express), PayPal, or check (will prepare a cover sheet to mail a contribution.) To direct your donation through the OU Foundation to the Alpha of Oklahoma Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, choose the link in My Gift to write your gift designation and type "Phi Beta Kappa #0032000" in the "Search for a fund" field. You may also direct your gift to the Roland Lehr Memorial Fund #0042002.

For member contact updates return this form to:

**Phi Beta Kappa
Attention: Craig Hayes
University of Oklahoma
1000 Asp Avenue
Norman, OK 73019**



Contributions Matter

The mission of the Alpha of Oklahoma chapter of Phi Beta Kappa is to promote education in the liberal arts and sciences. Through the national Phi Beta Kappa visiting scholars program, we invite distinguished scholars from all over the world to share their work with us. We annually celebrate our Founders' Day with public lectures and discussions on a variety of timely and important topics. Perhaps most importantly, we recognize academic excellence in undergraduate students through our scholarships and annual initiation of new members.

The Alpha of Oklahoma cannot provide these events and activities without your support. Please contribute to the continued support of the liberal arts at the University of Oklahoma.

Calendar of Upcoming Activities - www.ou.edu/pbk/calendar.htm

May 11, 2018	Friday 3:30 PM	Initiation Ceremony Oklahoma Memorial Union Meacham Auditorium
	Immediately Following	Reception for New Initiates Oklahoma Memorial Union Beaird Lounge
October 2018	TBA	Fall Business Meeting
Fall 2018	TBA	Founders' Day Event

Undergraduate Research Day

Undergraduate Research Day was held on April 7th at the OCE Thurman J. White Forum Building, 1704 Asp, University of Oklahoma. At the annual conference and celebration, the Honors College hosted students who were funded in their research or creative activities from the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program and students in general who wanted to show what they have discovered in their fields. This one-day conference hosted by the Honors College showcased outstanding undergraduate research and creative activity for an audience of other students, faculty, and parents.

Mary Francis LaPorte a Senior Plant Biology major and National Merit Scholar from Bellevue, Nebraska won the Phi Beta Kappa award for her Undergraduate Research Day presentation entitled “The Effects of OsAT5 Gene Expression on Arabidopsis Cell Walls, Development and Physiology” Her faculty sponsor was Dr. Laura Bartley in Plant Biology.



Mary Francis LaPorte is shown receiving her award with Dr. Ron Halterman, Phi Beta Kappa Vice President, and Dr. Laura Bartley, Faculty sponsor.

Alpha of Oklahoma Chapter Updates

Member & Affiliate Member Moments:

Emily Johnson, Eta of California Chapter 1987, Published a book and several articles in 2017. A short excerpt from the book, “Arsenii Formakov, *Gulag Letters*, edited, translated, and introduced by Emily D. Johnson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), appeared in the April 2017 issue of *Harper’s Magazine*.

Sherry Cox, Alpha of Oklahoma Chapter 2002, and Glenn Hansen, Alpha of Oklahoma 2017, were awarded the 2017 Institutional Research Leadership in Student Retention Award, by the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE).

Join our listserv to get notifications of meeting details (info in “Alpha of Oklahoma Chapter Updates”).





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Chapter Officers 2017-2018 www.ou.edu/pbk/officers.htm

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Standing Committees

Members-in-Course

James Thompson,
Ph.D., Chair
Peggy Chambers
Lynne Levy, Ph.D.
Julia Ehrhardt, Ph.D.

Scholarship

Ron Schleifer, Ph.D.,
Chair
Nanette Hathaway
David Levy, Ph.D.
Laurie Scrivener

Chapter Listserv

If you would like to be added to the chapter's listserv to receive intermittent email updates of chapter activities, send your request to pbk-l@lists.ou.edu. Update your mailing address with the chapter by emailing Craig Hayes at rchayes@ou.edu.

Check out our new Twitter Account

PBK ALPHA of OK
[@OU_PBK](https://twitter.com/OU_PBK)

Honorary and Alumni Membership

Sherry Cox, Ph.D.,
Chair

Communications

Paula Baker
Sherry Cox, Ph.D.
Amy Davenport, Ph.D.
Susannah Livingood
Molly Strothmann

Visiting Scholars Program

Kermyt Anderson, Ph.D.,
Chair

Website Editor

Molly Strothmann

Newsletter

Sherry Cox, Ph.D.
Amy Davenport, Ph.D.
Craig Hayes