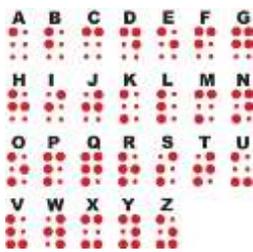


# Chapter Project Information - Gamma Alpha and the Community

Gamma Alpha demonstrates we are Key Women Educators, “United in Purpose” through our commitment to our Delta Kappa Gamma sisters and our service to others. Although we have worked with other organizations, we are now concentrating our efforts on three organizations.



**Seedlings Braille Books for Blind Children** has become an important organization Gamma Alpha supports. *Seedlings* is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to increasing the opportunity for literacy by providing high quality, low cost Braille books for children. In 1984, when Debra Bonde founded Seedlings, Braille materials were scarce and expensive. Her goals were to increase the availability and lower the cost of Braille books for children in order to promote the children’s literacy skills and the love of reading. Gamma Alpha members volunteer

at *Seedlings Braille Books for Children* and work closely with the founder of this non-profit organization. An important part of *Seedlings’* mission is to increase the opportunity for literacy for blind children as well as exposing sighted family members to Braille materials. In 2008, Gamma Alpha presented a project to DKG Educational Foundation and Seedlings received \$1500 grant for the “Hooray for Braille” project. The funds purchased materials for early intervention kits for visually impaired preschool children. Gamma Alpha chapter assists and cooperates with the *Seedlings* organization in supporting, encouraging, and improving the education of visually impaired preschool children. We volunteer Braille binding books, volunteering our time at Bowling for Braille fundraising event, and coordinating their Christmas card sales.

**Beverly House for Young Girls** is a community service projects Gamma Alpha sponsors. We have collected personal hygiene supplies, back to school supplies and clothes. We have made summer fun bags for the girls and purchased winter coats and hoodies. We donated a Smart TV and purchased Disney streaming service. We sponsored outings to the corn maize, Greenfield Village, Wayne Recreation Center, lunch, and mani-peds. Fun items are collected at our annual Birthday Dinner for the teen for summer vacation.



**Kids 4 Afghan Kids** is a non-profit organization that seeks to establish schools and address health conditions for Afghanistan children and their families. It was started in 1998 by a group of 6th graders in Northville, Michigan. The program is officially called the 'Multi-Ethnic Afghan Schools and Humanitarian Assistance' and has raised over \$100,000 toward their efforts. So far a 6-room school, a medical clinic, a guest house, a community well, and a bakery/kitchen

have been built for persons living in Wonkhai Valley, in the mountains 3 hours southwest of Kabul. The school building was originally designed to house 150 students and six teachers were hired. When it opened in March 2001, 465 students showed up the first day of school. Currently, the school has 16 teachers and 650 students. In addition, 40 orphans currently live at the school facility. Because of cultural issues boys and girls attend the school at separate times. Fund-raising is currently under way to build all-girls high school. The director of the *Kids 4 Afghan Kids* program, Khris Nedam, is the

teacher behind the project. Nedam taught school and lived in Afghanistan in the early 1990s. For her work, she received a 2007 National Award for Citizen Diplomacy. Khris Nedam addressed the Sarasota World Affairs Council in April, 2014. Gamma Alpha has made monetary donations to K4AK and made and served soup for the “Empty Bowls” fundraiser.

**Schools for Africa** became the Society's first official international project in 2010. Since that time, members have donated approximately \$445,134.90 since the inception of the partnership with UNICEF USA. Currently the project works with 21 countries in sub-Saharan Africa including 21 countries: Botswana, Burundi, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. The SFA mission involves providing access to quality basic education for children, focusing on girls, orphans and other vulnerable youngsters. UNICEF works through this project with governments, local authorities, communities and other partners to:

- Foster community participation in school management
- Build and improve classroom buildings and equipment
- Create safe and protective environments where children can learn and play (CFS, Child-Friendly School programs)
- Provide access to clean water and separate sanitation facilities for boys and girls in schools
- Supply exercise books, pens, proper furniture and other school and sports materials
- Train teachers to provide children with quality education and basic life skills
- Educate children about proper hygiene and HIV prevention: this knowledge is passed on to siblings, parents, and the community at large
- Provide other interventions, including but not limited to health check-ups, immunization and scholarships
- Insure a stimulating start in life to children below age five

According to UNICEF's most recent annual report on the Schools for Africa project, major gains have been made in:

- Early childhood development
- Access and retention to quality primary basic education
- Non-formal education
- HIV prevention in schools
- Education in emergencies

Gamma Alpha holds a Holiday Auction each year. The proceeds of the auction are used to support our Grant-in-Aid Awards for early career women educators and our community service projects. Gamma Alpha makes a chapter donation to Members Supporting Members Fund and baskets for the Fall Workshop and State Convention auctions.