

ΦBK KEY NOTES

The PBKAAGA Newsletter

December 22, 2021



Key Notes, the Phi Beta Kappa Alumni Association of Greater Austin newsletter highlights Association news, recent and upcoming events, and developments in the Association's continued evolution. Additional details about the organization can be found on the Association website: <http://pbkaaga.wildapricot.org/>

Our mission:

Recognizing excellence in the liberal arts and sciences through college scholarships and teacher excellence awards, as well as fostering fellowship and lifelong learning among PBKAAGA members

A Letter from the PBKAAGA President

Dear association members and friends,

As we reach the end of another interesting year, I thank you for your continued support for the Phi Beta Kappa Alumni Association of Greater Austin. During the second year of the pandemic, the general meetings were hybrid, thanks to the technical skills of 1st Vice-President, Joyce Statz.

Dr. Richard Reddick, Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy and the inaugural Associate Dean for Equity, Community Engagement, and Outreach in the College of Education at the University of Texas was guest speaker at the spring general meeting. He explained the value of mentoring and encouraged the high school scholarship recipients to seek multiple mentors in their college journeys.

At the May meeting, continuing the collaboration with Breakthrough Central Texas, the scholarship committee awarded scholarships to four high school seniors who will be the first in their family to attend college. We also awarded the Phillip F. Patman Memorial Scholarship to a student at Texas State University.

On September 12, the association sponsored a Key Connections event with financial support from the national organization. Dr. Elizabeth Richmond-Garza

arranged for a guided tour of the Blanton Museum. More than 20 people attending the event learned a new way to observe and discuss works of art. The PBKAAGA board is planning another Key Connections event in early 2022.

During the summer, Ron Luke contacted the association scholarship committee about awarding scholarships funded by their foundation to more Breakthrough Central Texas high school seniors. The association scholarship committee was pleased to assist the Luke family in distributing these funds to more very deserving students.

On November 14, Dr. Thomas Palaima from the University of Texas at Austin spoke at the fall general meeting to consider the question "Is the Examined Life Worth Living?" Part of his answer to that question focused on the lyrics and life of Bob Dylan. At this meeting we also presented the 2021 Teaching Excellence award.

The association participated in Giving Tuesday on November 30, 2021, following a successful campaign at the end of 2020. The 2021 effort raised \$8,925 which will support our high school scholarship program for Breakthrough Central Texas students in 2022. Many thanks to those who donated to this worthy cause.

At the end of 2021, the association has 140 members (including 29 life members) plus 12 complimentary student members for a total of 152 members. In early January we will be asking current members to renew for 2022 and reaching out to thousands of potential members in the greater Austin area.

In closing, I wish happy holidays and a safe and healthy new year to you and your families.

Sincerely,

Joyce Pulich

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2021 Teaching Excellence Award Winner

At our Fall General Meeting, we awarded our 2021 Teaching Excellence Award to Mr. Joseph Oleniczak from the Liberal Arts and Science Academy in Austin. Mr. Oleniczak teaches Biotechnology and Research Internship courses that are dual credit with Austin Community College. Keenly focused on individual student needs, he provides hands on lab experience in what will soon be the first of its kind DNA Sequencing and Genomics facility on a high school campus. As a research scientist with a biotechnology firm during the summer, he continues to deepen his skills and bring those into the classroom.



See more information about Mr. Oleniczak [here](#).

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#GIVINGTUESDAY

Giving Tuesday was a great success!!

Thanks to everyone who donated to our scholarship fund on Giving Tuesday, December 1. Your support makes it possible for us to fund as many scholarships in 2022 as we did in 2021!

The students really appreciate it!

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Upcoming Event – Please Mark Your Calendars

Sunday, May 1, 2022, 3-5 p.m. – Spring General Meeting and scholarship award presentations. Join us at the Neill Cochran House Museum at 2310 San Gabriel St, Austin, TX 78705. Our speaker will be Steve Saltwick, one of the founders of Austin’s Braver Angels.

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Stay in Touch

Want to stay connected with Phi Beta Kappa news and updates in the Austin Area? Visit our web site, <https://pbkaaga.wildapricot.org/> and like and follow our Facebook page, Phi Beta Kappa Alumni Association of Greater Austin, or search **@PBKAAGA** and follow us on Instagram.

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A Final Word: If you haven’t already done so, please renew your membership for this year, and consider a generous extra donation for our scholarship and teacher awards. Your donation supports the main endeavor of this organization – giving scholarships to worthy applicants and recognizing Teaching Excellence. With your help, we make a difference in the lives of deserving students and teachers.

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