



# THE D.C. AREA PHI BETA KAPPA ASSOCIATION

Founded on December 6, 1913

[www.dcpbk.org](http://www.dcpbk.org)

## NEWSLETTER

[suggestions@dcpbk.org](mailto:suggestions@dcpbk.org)

April 2021

### Connect with DC PBK Online!

"Like" the DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association page and follow us on Twitter at [@DCPhiBetaKappa!](https://twitter.com/DCPhiBetaKappa)

## Exciting News!

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### The DCPBK Mentorship Network has been Reimagined!

The **DCPBK Mentorship Network** program focuses on connecting DC PBK Association members with one another to not only share professional advice, but also to foster the intellectual curiosity that brings the Phi Beta Kappa community together at its core. Through connecting members of all ages, backgrounds, and experiences, the Mentorship Network aims to catalyze learning relationships among DCPBK Association members and strengthen the personal and professional lives of individuals and their connections to the Association. Our "reimagined" program keeps the best parts of our previous program, but allows more members to take advantage of the program all year long! We invite all members of DCPBK to get involved: sign up to become a mentor, check out our mentor directory to find a mentor, and participate in our mentorship mixers and workshops!

The heart of our program relaunch is our Mentor Directory, available all year-long! No more application or waiting for a match! Our Mentor Directory serves as a sort of "marketplace" for members to find mentors to meet and connect with. Only DCPBK members have access to this

directory and have the ability to contact mentors by sending them a direct message in the directory. You can sort the mentor directory list by PBK chapter, degree, and occupation. > **Go to the Mentor Directory**

Mentors and mentees once connected can meet together on their own terms— virtually, in-person, once a week, once every two months, whatever they decide!

We are always looking for more mentors of all career stages; young professionals who can support recent graduates, mid-career professionals who can help members become a supervisor for the first time, and retired members who can support members see the big picture in their careers. Everyone has the ability to become a mentor! To join the mentor directory, simply log into your account on [dcpbk.org](http://dcpbk.org), click on "Profile," and select "Check below if you would like to be a mentor." Answer a few questions, click "save" and you are all set!

Want to learn more about the new Mentorship Network? Go to <https://dcpbk.org/programs/mentorship!>

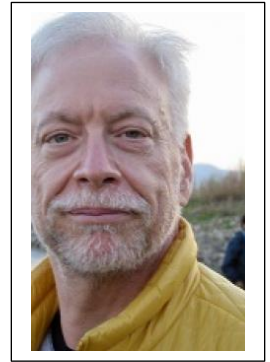
Want to join the distribution list to receive all the Mentorship Network news? [Sign up here!](#)

## Upcoming Events

*Please note that all meetings are held via Zoom unless otherwise indicated.*

### Coffee & Conversation Speaker Series presents:

**Dr. Nathan Brown on Monday, April 19 at 7:00 PM**, join us for a discussion with **Dr. Nathan Brown** entitled "**What the Arab World Tells Us About Constitution Drafting.**" Dr. Brown is an expert on constitutionalism, religion and politics, and comparative politics in the Middle East. He will be talking to us about the key issues that shape the constitutional drafting process and constitutionalism in the Arab world, how constitutions gain and maintain legitimacy in the long-term, and what the constitutional drafting process in the Arab world can teach us about our own constitution's legacy and interpretation.



Dr. Brown has received numerous awards for his scholarship, including the Oscar and Shoshana Trachtenberg Award for Scholarship from George Washington University in 2015 and the Harry Harding teaching award from the Elliott School of International Affairs in 2014. His dissertation received the Malcolm Kerr award from the Middle East Studies Association in 1987.

He has been and is currently active in many different think tanks, scholarly associations, and other institutions of higher education. From 2013-2015, Dr. Brown was president of the Middle East Studies Association, the academic association for scholars studying the region. In 2013, he was named a Guggenheim Fellow; four years earlier, he was named a Carnegie Scholar by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. For the 2009–2010 academic year, he was a fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. His previous research was funded by the United States Institute of Peace and two Fulbright fellowships. In addition to his academic work, Brown serves on the board of trustees at the American University in Cairo. He is also nonresident senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He has previously served as an advisor for the committee drafting the Palestinian constitution, USAID, the United Nations Development Program, and several NGOs. Education.

Dr. Brown received his B.A. in political science from the University of Chicago and his M.A. and Ph.D. in politics and Near Eastern Studies from Princeton University. He teaches courses on Middle Eastern politics as well as more general courses on comparative politics and international relations.

To RSVP, please click [here](#)!

### Young Professionals (YP) Network News

#### YP Network to Host Virtual Happy Hour Trivia Night!

Love showing off your knowledge? Looking for some friendly competition? If so, then join DC PBK on **Wednesday, April 21** for an exciting **Virtual Trivia Night!** Topics will range across a variety of things including science, history, pop culture, and of course Phi Beta Kappa history! So put on your thinking caps, find some friends, and let's get competitive! Best part? The event is absolutely free (so family and friends are welcome!) and there will be a prize!

[Register Here](#)

We're also planning a **Virtual Happy Hour** in May, probably on **May 19**; look for details in the May issue of the Newsletter.

If you have any questions, please contact **Hunter Hamrick** at ([hunterhamrick@gmail.com](mailto:hunterhamrick@gmail.com)).

## Recent Events

### New Year, New You Series:

#### Artistic Aspirations and Physical Fitness

On February 18, we enjoyed our Eiffel Tower painting class, inspired by the February theme of love. Each artist created a unique look, expanding from what our professional painter taught. These paintings were all so wonderful! Everyone enjoyed a fun, relaxing night while learning a new skill.

Then, in March, we focused on physical fitness through a virtual workout with a professional Hollywood personal trainer. All of our participants really exercised and worked up a sweat, and some were sore for a few days. We learned some new movements and got ideas of how to create our home workouts.

#### Coffee & Conversation Speaker Series

DC Phi Beta Kappa Association's members heard from two extraordinary speakers in March as part of the **new Coffee & Conversation Speaker Series**. The Association's very own **Resha Putzrath**, a dedicated and long-standing member, spoke to the group about risk assessment and her experience as a toxicologist and quantitative risk assessor for the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center. She took the participants through several case studies and interactive exercises to demonstrate the various ways we can all approach risk, and the questions we should ask when confronted with it. Members were so engaged with her presentation that several of them stayed on Zoom for more than forty-five minutes after the formal conclusion of the program to ask more questions!

**Professor Diane O'Donoghue**, Director of the Program for Public Humanities and Senior Fellow for the Humanities at the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life at Tufts University, delivered a presentation entitled "A Cemetery's Lament: Desecration and Responsibility along Vienna's Gurtel." It was a fascinating and inspiring talk about her efforts to preserve and revive the oldest surviving Jewish cemetery in Vienna, Austria. The lecture centered around issues raised by advocating for the cemetery's repair, and the potential and the challenges in creating an urban space of restitution, restoration, and rest.

#### Young Professionals (YP) Network News

##### DCPBK Kickoff 2021 with Virtual Happy Hour!

On February 24, 30 DC Phi Betes gathered for a fun night filled with new friends, interesting conversations, and oh-so delicious drinks! More Happy Hours are coming soon. See above for the April event, and plans for the May gathering. (Details to come soon!)

##### YP PowerPoint Party

##### **DC Phi Betes Show Off Knowledge at PowerPoint Party!**

On March 18, five DC Phi Betes came together to teach and learn about a variety of interesting topics across the academic world. Presentations were filled with exciting knowledge on things such as the history of Table Top Roleplaying Games, natural rock formations found throughout U.S National Parks, and the true power of lightning! We want to give a shout out to those who took the time to make amazing presentations!

#### Spanish Language Group

The Spanish Language Group has met twice so far (in February and March) and discussed a variety of topics, from Spanish movies to how we've been navigating the pandemic. We look forward to continuing to get to know one another through Spanish conversation!

## **April Spanish Language Group Meeting**

DCPBK will host its second **Spanish Language Group** meeting on **April 19th at 6:00 PM**; it continues to be open to all skill levels. The meetings will be conducted in Spanish, so a basic conversational level is recommended, in order to be able to participate in the discussion.

This group aims to be a reflection of its members, so we will remain flexible and attentive to your interests and capacity.

Click below to register. Once registered, you will receive a confirmation message with details on how to join the event. Note that registration is limited to 20, so claim your spot quickly! We look forward to speaking with you.

The link to the April Spanish language group registration is below:

<https://dcpbk.org/events/#!event/register/2021/4/19/april-spanish-language-group-meeting>

Please contact **Hadley Ashford** ([hadley.ashford@alumni.unc.edu](mailto:hadley.ashford@alumni.unc.edu)) if you have any questions about the group.

## **Book Club News and Reviews** **February Book Club Meeting**

On Monday, February 22, fourteen members met to discuss **Octavia Butler's novel *Kindred***. Our meeting happened to coincide with a marked amount of cultural attention paid to Butler and her works; a few months prior, Dolly Parton listed *Kindred* as a must-read recommendation. The group was quite struck by this book, billed as science fiction but quite spare in fantastical elements save the time travel which transports Dana, an African American woman living in the 1970s, back to a plantation in pre-Civil War Maryland. The reader follows Dana's struggle to adapt and survive, as well as shape the attitudes and futures of preceding generations. This book is haunting, tense, visceral, and challenges the reader to ponder what it means to be an observer versus a participant of history's progression. We reflected on how effectively *Kindred* portrays the institutions that upheld slavery in the antebellum South, including fear tactics, deliberate illiteracy, and dependency, which Butler notes, are legacies which echo in the systemic horrors of the Holocaust and Apartheid.



## **Bonus Mid-March Book Club Meeting**

On March 15, a large group of seventeen members met for a Bonus mid-month discussion, on the first of two novels by authors of Japanese heritage the group voted in for this Series, ***Convenience Store Woman*, by Sayaka Murata**. This short novel belies the depth of societal norms it throws into stark relief, including expectations of life events like marriage and children as we age, gender roles, and fulfillment in work. The titular character is wonderful at her job as a convenience store worker - she senses the needs of the store and its customers as if it were a living organism she can diagnose with a moment's notice. But her long tenure and perceived lack of attention to "normal" life trajectory, as defined by her family and co-workers, causes her to second guess her routine. At once delightful and jarring, the main character's somewhat dispassionate telling effectively lays bare the callous and hypocritical expectations we tend to put on one another in the name of normalcy and stability. It certainly packed an affecting punch for our members.



## **March Book Club Meeting**

To round out the month, fifteen of us gathered to discuss the just-released novel by Nobel Prize-winning author **Kazuo Ishiguro**, *Klara and the Sun*. No stranger to tense science fiction, Ishiguro depicts a world where parents may purchase an Artificial Friend for teenagers struggling with the pressures of higher education preparation and social acclimation. Klara is one such Friend, who is paired with a young girl against the backdrop of a world whose current events context evades the reader's full grasp, but is clearly negatively impacted by social division, climate change, and other relevant themes. We discussed how the book's events are largely seen through Klara or the children's eyes, rife with hope and promises that are not reflected in the adults' desperate maneuvers. We compared our impressions of the book's mood, and we ranged from sad and ominous to hopeful, testament to a complex selection and our group's rich grappings with its messages.



## **Upcoming Book Club Discussions:**

Our upcoming spring selections, and a link to an event currently accessible on the DCPBK website, are below:

**April: *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*** by Mark Twain (Classic, 480 pages)

<https://dcpbk.org/events/#!event/2021/4/27/dc-pbk-april-2021-book-club-meeting-a-connecticut-yankee-in-king-arthur-apos-s-court-by-mark-twain>

**May: *The Library at Night*** by Alberto Manguel (International, Argentina, 373 pages)

**June: *The Splendid and the Vile*** by Erik Larson (Nonfiction, 464 pages)

**Also, please note meeting logistics for the foreseeable future:** In light of global efforts to slow the spread of Covid-19, the DCPBK Book Club will proceed meeting via Zoom, until we can meet again in our favorite spots. **Members who RSVP Yes on the website will receive the meeting link and login information in their registration confirmation email.**

Sincerely, Kate Smith

Book Club Coordinator, DC PBK Association, [bookclub@dcpbk.org](mailto:bookclub@dcpbk.org)

## **Announcements**

### **High School Awards Committee**

#### **Support the High School Awards Program**

The High School Awards Program will be selecting our 2021 award recipients later this month, providing college scholarships to outstanding students from the greater Washington area.

**The Awards Program benefits greatly from the support of our members!** If you would like to support our student awardees, you can make a donation at <https://dcpbk.org/donate/>.

Feel free to email **Mackenzie Fusco** at [awards@dcpbk.org](mailto:awards@dcpbk.org) with any questions about the awards program.

## **International Health and Development Salon: Calling All DCPBK Members!**

Two years ago, six vibrant DC Phi Betes working on international careers created a quarterly Salon focused on international health and development. Our timing was prescient. We are now in a global pandemic. Every quarter we have a lively exchange on the most important world topics of our time.

Now we want to welcome more members of our Association who are looking to share ideas, trends, and job opportunities in the international arena. So far, we have covered career opportunities and challenges in government, NGO, or private sector; trends in epidemics, maternal health, ESG, humanitarian assistance; building a better USAID under the new Administration; and more ...

When meetings are non-virtual, an international tea will follow.

We will soon announce our next Zoom Salon meeting for May/June. Please check your emails and our Website at [dcpbk.org](http://dcpbk.org). Meanwhile, feel free to email **Dr. Deirdre LaPin** at [dlapin21@yahoo.com](mailto:dlapin21@yahoo.com) for more information or questions. Together for a stronger world.

## **DCPBK Board Meeting**

Our quarterly board meetings are open to any DCPBK member in good standing. To register to attend via Zoom, click [here](#). The Summer meeting will be held in July; date and time to be announced.

Anyone interested in attending can RSVP on our website: [DCPBK.org/events](http://DCPBK.org/events). Link will be provided upon registration.

# **DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association Board**

## **2020-2021 Officers**

**PRESIDENT: Breann Watt** (University of California Riverside, 2011)  
**1<sup>ST</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT: Rebecca DeSantis** (Washington College, 2015)  
**2<sup>ND</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT: Lynley Peoples** (George Mason University, 2013)  
**SECRETARY: Dan Rosenberg**, (George Washington University, 2014)  
**TREASURER: Pat Cascio** (Denison University, 1969)

## **At-Large Executive Committee Members**

**Nina Kuo** (Duke University, 2012)—Past President  
**Paul Lubliner** (University of Oregon, 2006)—Past President  
**Carol Bontempo** (University of Connecticut, 1962)—Newsletter Editor  
**Liz Marshall** (Lawrence University, 2009)—Past President  
**Kate H. Smith** (Boston University, 2010)—Book Club Coordinator

## **Advisory Council**

**Deirdre LaPin** (Agnes Scott College, 1967)—Past Vice-President  
**Christel G. McDonald** (George Washington University, 1986)—Past President

## **Additional Volunteers**

**MEMBER ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR: Bailey DeSimone** (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2017)  
**YOUNG PROFESSIONALS COORDINATOR: Hunter Hamrick** (Florida State University, 2015)



*Love of Learning is the Guide of Life*