



# 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 2023

## Connect with DCPBK Online!

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

## Special Event

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### High School Awards Program

Through the **DCPBK High School Awards Program**, each year our members select four outstanding high school seniors in the District, and nearby Virginia and Maryland, to be recognized for their scholastic achievements and community service. This Program, which has become the centerpiece of the Association's commitment to our community, is made possible by generous financial contributions from our members and supporters.

This year, we received 157 applications from an impressively talented and diverse group of high school students in the area. Stay tuned for more details on this year's awardees, and a spring reception where, in addition to their \$1,000 award, each awardee will receive a book specially chosen by the Awards Committee.

You can continue this vital tradition by contributing to the High School

Awards Program, making a current donation online or by check, payable to the DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association, with "High School Awards" in the memo field, to:

Reyna Yang

DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association

PO Box 2412

Reston, VA 20195

Questions may be directed to [treasurer@dcpbk.org](mailto:treasurer@dcpbk.org).

Legacy donations and endowments are also welcome. Please contact the Treasurer about crafting an expression of your future gift.

## Recent and Upcoming Events

### Coffee & Conversation with Mary Kadera

On March 29, we were treated to an illuminating talk by **Mary Kadera**, director of TED Courses at **TED**. Mary brings to this post a wide-ranging knowledge of the field of education, having held leadership roles in several related organizations, most recently as Vice President of Education at PBS; she also serves on the Arlington County School Board.

With such a comprehensive background, Mary spoke to us at length about the current state of American education, including how it is succeeding and falling short of preparing young people for the real world. Taking advantage of TED's philosophy and resources, she recently led a team at TED that designed and launched **TED Courses**, four-week virtual social learning experiences that bring together TED speakers and classmates from around the world to discuss and debate these issues. She also pointed out that today, when we can easily access any body of information with a few strokes on the keyboard, it is just as important to develop skills like critical thinking, in addition to the more traditional forms of American education, such as (for example) memorizing facts and dates in a history course.

With her lively style and clear exposition, Mary Kadera gave us a lot to think about, and graciously answered several questions after her formal presentation.

We look forward to the next conversation in this excellent series, sometime later in the spring. If you have any questions, please contact [nikuneshati@gmail.com](mailto:nikuneshati@gmail.com).

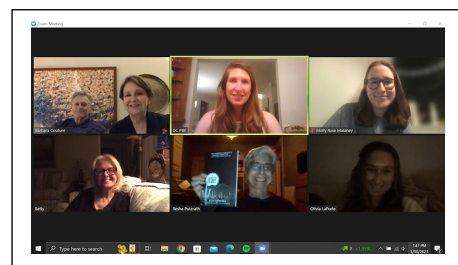
## **Book Club News and Reviews**

### **Mid-March Bonus Meeting:**

On March 20 the group met for a bonus discussion of ***Letters to Camondo* by Edmund de Waal**. Previously we read and enjoyed de Waal's *The White Road*, which traces the historical significance of porcelain, so we were eager to pick up his latest. Short but impactful, ***Letters*** details the history of several generations of a prominent Jewish family living in Paris from the late 1800s into the mid-20th century. De Waal writes to Camondo, the family's long-deceased patriarch who amassed a large collection of art and furniture, arranged it just so in his Paris home, and dedicated it as a museum homage to France's cultural and intellectual singularity. The letters, knowingly unanswerable, document de Waal's observations of Camondo's collector preferences, his family life, and in the second half of the book, what becomes of the family during World War II. We agreed that a feeling of foreboding infuses the book, and de Waal certainly shows how Camondo's "bet on assimilation" failed to overcome the vile, systematic antisemitism of the Holocaust, even in a country previously considered tolerant and welcoming to Jewish immigrants.

### **March Meeting:**

On March 30 the book club discussed another brief but powerful selection, this time an International novel from Mexico called ***Signs Preceding the End of the World***, by Yuri Herrera. Reading this book is like stepping inside a fever dream. Herrera narrates the community, journey, and choices made by the protagonist on her trip from Mexico to the U.S. to search for her brother. We discussed the author's depiction of both sides of the border, what is familiar vs foreign, the hostility of Herrera's American characters, and, as a through-line from our mid-March book, the concept of assimilation.



### **April meeting:**

Please join us to discuss ***Babel, Or the Necessity of Violence: An Arcane History of the Oxford Translators' Revolution* by R.F. Kuang (International (China, Britain) 545 pages)**. April 26th 6:30-8PM on Zoom.

**Members who RSVP Yes on the website will receive the meeting link and login information in their registration confirmation email.** We all start together, and break into smaller group chats, as needed, after introductions. Feel free to grab food and drink for the meeting, as we normally would.

I hope to see many of you there!

Selections for the remainder of our Spring 2023 Series are listed below:

- **Mid-May Bonus:** *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde, Classic, 545 pages
- **May:** *The Cartographers* by Peng Shepherd, Fiction, 392 pages
- **June:** *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean, Nonfiction, 371 pages

Happy reading,  
Kate Smith  
Book Club Coordinator

### **Spanish Language Group Changes**

The Spanish Language Group welcomes a new lead, **Molly Rose Malaney**, starting in May. We are saying goodbye to the current lead, Hadley Ashford, and thanking her, as she focuses her time on pursuing graduate school.

### **Spanish Language Group April Meeting**

Join us for a Spanish Language Group meeting on **Wednesday, April 26 at 6:30 PM** at Chaia Tacos in Chinatown (615 Eye Street NW, Washington, DC). These meetings are open to all skill levels, but note that they will be conducted in Spanish, so a basic conversational level is recommended to be able to participate in the discussion. You can find more on the DCPBK website, including a map.

Click below to register. Once registered, you will receive a confirmation message with additional details. We look forward to seeing you on **April at 6:30 PM**.

**<https://dcpbk.org/events/#!event/register/2023/3/22/march-spanish-language-group>**

This group aims to be a reflection of its members, so we will remain flexible and attentive to your interests and capacity. Please contact Hadley Ashford ([hadley.ashford@alumni.unc.edu](mailto:hadley.ashford@alumni.unc.edu)) if you have any questions about the group or have trouble registering.

### **Young Professionals (YP) Network**

#### **Billy Goat Trail Hike with the YP Network**

**Saturday, April 15, 10:00 AM, Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Towpath, Potomac, MD**

The YP Network gathered at the C&O Canal on Saturday, April 15, to hike the Billy Goat Trail in Great Falls, Maryland. With beautiful weather, it was an excellent time to connect with nature, get a great workout, catch glimpses of the wildlife in the area, and enjoy some of the best views of the Potomac River. The hike was followed by lunch at Old Angler's Inn, capping off a fun and adventurous weekend.



If you have any questions about the YP Network and upcoming events, please contact **Reyna Yang** at [reyna\\_yang@gwmail.gwu.edu](mailto:reyna_yang@gwmail.gwu.edu).

## **Announcements**

### **Spring Fling and Annual Meeting**

We are still finalizing plans for the **Spring Fling**, and will update you as soon as the date and place are confirmed.

The **DCPBK Annual Meeting** will be held at the end of June. A separate email containing the details will be coming to you soon.

## **Mentorship Network News**

Please consider becoming a mentor through the **DCPBK Mentor Directory**, which is a low-time commitment. 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! To join the Mentor Directory, simply log into your account on [dcpbk.org](https://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’re all set!

If you’re searching for a mentor, please visit the Mentor Directory and reach out to any mentor that looks like a match for your needs. If you need assistance in drafting outreach, don’t hesitate to drop me a note.

To learn more about the Mentorship Network, please visit <https://dcpbk.org/programs/mentorship>.

Elena Helmers-Wegman  
DCPBK Mentorship Network Coordinator

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

### **2022-2023 Officers**

**PRESIDENT:** Lindsay Osborne (University of Hawaii, 2021)  
**VICE PRESIDENT OF CHAPTER RELATIONS:** Catherine Stallsmith (Elon University, 2022)  
**VICE PRESIDENT OF MEMBER EXPERIENCE:** Lindsay Osborne (University of Hawaii, 2021)  
**SECRETARY:** Daisy Yu (University of Maryland, College Park, 2022)  
**TREASURER:** Reyna Yang (George Washington University, 2022)

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

**Carol Bontempo** (University of Connecticut, 1962)—Newsletter Editor  
**Paul Lubliner** (University of Oregon, 2006)—Past President  
**Liz Marshall** (Lawrence University, 2009)—Past President  
**Kate H. Smith** (Boston University, 2010)—Book Club Coordinator  
**Niku Neshati** (George Mason University, 2018)— Membership and Outreach Coordinator

### **Advisory Council**

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

### **Additional Volunteers**

**YOUNG PROFESSIONALS COORDINATOR:** Reyna Yang (George Washington U., 2022)  
**HIGH SCHOOL AWARDS COORDINATOR:** Sameer Jaywant (New York University, 2014)  
**MENTORSHIP NETWORK COORDINATOR:** Elena Helmers-Wegman (Wofford College, 2019)



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