

# The Athenian



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### **Public Speaking Isn't a Drag, It's Something Worth Doing**

Towards the end of the semester, we decided to dedicate a meeting to the topic of public speaking. The reason is because it's a daunting idea. Not many students enjoy the labor that is public speaking because it's an environment where we can easily lose composure and harbor self-doubt. Public speaking may not be a necessary task for every individual to implement throughout their lives, but we as Phi Theta Kappans are exposed to the art of rhetoric more times than we can count. But public speaking, like any art form, requires practice and it's a skill that is imperative for any scholar and/or future leader to possess. Now, public speaking doesn't have to be thought of as one person merely speaking to a horde. Rather, it should be thought of as an individual trying to convey a message (or an idea) to many. That action of bestowing an idea, when put together with the daunting thought that is public speaking, is where mostly everyone shrivels up and draws back to their shell. However, it really isn't that difficult. Why? Because we do it every day. How? Well, to offer an example I'll use the events that transpired in our general meeting. The focus was this: in order to get everyone that public speaking isn't something we need to wrap our heads around, we had our members – along with some officers – to give 2 minute speeches about what is interesting to them. As expected, most of them pulled it off. Some spoke about what they loved, or what they hated, but it was always something they could connect to. One of members, Gabriela, resented the idea of public speaking, but when we asked her to talk, she spoke about finishing the goals we set for ourselves for a full 3 minutes – and she didn't even notice. A lot of the supporting concepts and reasons behind why we approached the topic the way we did came from TED talks and its current curator, Chris Anderson. And what we learned from TED and Mr. Anderson, along with history's greatest orators, was that a good public speech follows this criteria: find something that you're passionate about, refine it to an idea that connects with you, make it worth knowing to everyone else, and share it with the world.

### A Night on the Town – Beta Upsilon Upsilon

As summer turns to autumn, that time of year in Florida where an unrelenting furnace gradually shifts to become tolerable, a prelude of hopefully cooler weather to come, a small group of individuals each make time in their hectic schedules to gather together and take a collective breath. Mostly strangers, many are meeting for the first or second time. That being said, all are bound by a common goal to further their education, and by doing so, find themselves among an elite group of scholars, friends, and those that go the extra mile not only to continue school, but to stand out and be successful in school. To build relationships amongst one another, the group decided to fellowship at a local venue. Being from the South, and deciding that food is



the easiest bridge between strangers, Sonny's Barbeque hosted the event. Nestled in their own corner, the average passerby would never have

guessed that these were strangers based on the amount of loud, raucous laughter. The conversation naturally started with school, and moved arbitrarily, ebbing and flowing with each passing hour. Serious topics were brought up, dreams and aspirations discussed. As the entrees came out, the talk turned to food. There was large diversity in the group, and through food, individual's stories were shared. Some were well traveled, and had countless stories on the places they had been. Some were foreigners, complete strangers to the area and culture, whilst others had never left their home town. The table became a merger of people and cultures. Staying till the bitter end, conversation pausing only briefly when the food came out, and though there was no peach cobbler to be had, nor coffee creamer to be found, the group left not as recent acquaintances, but as old friends. Such is the power of Fellowship.



### **Blood Drive – Alpha Xi Eta**

On October 25th & 26th, the Alpha Xi Eta chapter of St. Johns River State College teamed up with “One Blood” to host our fall blood drive. We are pleased to say the blood drive was a success. “One Blood” was able to collect 69 units of blood. Each unit can save up to three lives. It is estimated that we helped save 207 lives from these two days alone. We have partnered with One Blood since 2008 and have aided in saving countless lives. I’d like to thank our campus community for their tremendous support. The semester is in full swing and we are all trying to manage our studies on top of daily responsibilities. So, to see our fellow students take the time out of their busy schedules and give blood is selfless and truly remarkable to witness. Though it may seem odd, each donor left that bus with a gleaming smile. I think we can all agree, they weren’t smiling for the needles. They were smiling because they committed a true act of kindness, the act of giving. The donors weren’t the only heroes. We had several Alpha Xi Eta’s volunteer their time to tend the tables and encourage individuals to donate. These volunteers also handed out refreshments and snacks to each donor. We are truly grateful to all of those who helped make this a success. Coordinating a blood drive takes a team effort and once again the St. Augustine campus has proven to be great team players. The seasons are changing, and the holidays are upon us. During this holiday season, we implore you to give the ‘Perfect Gift’. The gift of saving lives. Find your local “One Blood” and donate today.



### A Trip to Guadeloupe – Xi Pi

For Xi Pi members and alumni, a recent study abroad trip to Guadeloupe was a valuable fellowship experience. This trip included Xi Pi’s advisor, Anthony Cornett, as well as two Phi Theta Kappa alumni and six current members of Xi Pi. The team grew closer while snorkeling together in the reefs around the island, where trust was built through the buddy system. The buddy system was important during the snorkeling outings, because many of the participants were first-time snorkelers, and the reef could be full of unexpected challenges that buddies could help pull each other through. Back on dry land, one Xi Pi member served as the translator for the group during this trip, but after a few days almost everyone had learned quite a few new words in French. Xi Pi members had fun testing their new language skills as they interacted with students and professors from the Université des Antilles, as well as bartering and conversing with locals and shopkeepers. Together, the teammates scaled a volcano called La Grande Soufrière, an active volcano on the island, and three members successfully made the difficult last push to the true summit of the

volcano. They returned down the slope with a new understanding of teamwork, ambition, and perseverance... not to mention some amazing photographs!

Xi Pi members also learned a goofy new skill, lizard lassoing, and they used this skill to catch anoles, which are the colorful little lizards that live on the island. The members caught specimens with tiny palm-frond lassoes and studied them under the guidance of an anole expert. Overall, traveling together in a new country, experiencing a different language, trying new foods, seeing lovely sights, and attending once-in-a-lifetime events was an unforgettable bonding fellowship for members of Xi Pi chapter.



### **The Power of Body Language – Kappa Nu**

During the Phi Theta Kappa Florida Regional Leadership Conference on Oct 27 & 28, the officers of the Kappa Nu Chapter presented a College Project workshop on self-esteem and body language. We are using Theme 5 - Beauty and Vulgarity from the *How the World Works: Global Perspectives* book as our guiding light. In this particular workshop, we focused on talking about how body language can impact someone's life and leadership skills. In our presentation, we showed a video of someone describing different ways to use body language to get a point across to an audience, and what the body language was called. We also talked about the differences of negative and positive body language. A genuine smile is positive body language; whereas, feet pointed away from the person talking, or towards an exit is negative body language. One of the major points in our presentation that resonated with our participants was the way someone holds his or hers hand can impact how the audience accepts the information being presented. For instance, a study showed that people were more willing to accept information from someone presenting with his or her hand gestures with their palms facing up. Another point that people found interesting was the different ways we demonstrated how to shake hands with someone when first meeting them, and what the other person's hand shake says about their personality. For example, if one person turns his or her hand so that their hand is on top, they are showing dominance. In addition to doing the workshop at the Florida Regional Leadership Conference, we also have done a few workshops about different aspects of body language and how it relates to self-esteem at the College of Central Florida. Learning about body language can help students with their self-esteem and how to have better leadership skills by using nonverbal communication. These workshops have been very successful, so we have decided to continue holding these workshops in the spring.



### **Tau Epsilon Chapter Welcomes New Students**

The Tau Epsilon Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa held Fall Orientation on September 7, 2017 from 12:20 p.m. – 12:50 p.m. at South Florida State College. Chapter officers, volunteers, and advisors were prepared to welcome interested potential members with pizza, fun-sized candy, drinks, and an informative orientation power point highlighting the benefits of Phi Theta Kappa membership. Approximately twenty-five potential members attended the orientation. Officers introduced themselves providing a short biography on themselves and the position held. President Danny Sustaita started his short biography off by showing all the students his quaint briefcase and his favorite stuffed animal. He “broke the ice” in a matter of minutes. Following Danny were Public Relations Officer Erika Weaver-Coleman; Volunteer- Kelsey Pena; and Vice President Kevin Webb. Officers all stood beside Danny as the presentation began. The orientation power point contained information on broad aspects of the Honor Society ranging from its history to the different types of scholarships from which members could benefit. The three broad areas presented were scholarship opportunities, leadership skills, and recognition for outstanding achievements. The main goal of the power point was to give general information



about Phi Theta Kappa and what benefits it has to offer. For example, Kevin informed the group that the Chapter will be volunteering at Highlands Hammock State Park for their fall “Haunted Tram Ride”. Additionally, Kelsey and Erika discussed opportunities that students have to qualify for transfer scholarships. In the end, there was a Q&A session in which each speaker answered remaining questions that students posed. Most of the questions were about eligibility requirements and details on the Fall 2017 Induction Ceremony. When the event concluded, officers and advisors convened in the Honors study

room to debrief on the event and eat leftover pizza! The officers and advisors were satisfied with the orientation viewing it as a success. They were pleasantly surprised by the number of students who chose to spend their lunch break at the event and it was noted that planning future events during the middle of the day was preferable to the evening for maximum participation. Overall, after analyzing key details of the orientation, officers discerned that the success of the event bodes well for the active involvement of the Tau Epsilon Chapter members this year!

### **Upsilon Eta – Civic Round Table**

The Upsilon Eta chapter of Phi Theta Kappa is proud to announce its 47th year of being a member of the Civic Round Table of Jacksonville. The Civic Round Table of Jacksonville is an organization established in 1935 with a mission being “to provide a forum for community organizations in Jacksonville to coordinate activities for community betterment, rally and guide the initiatives of member groups, and foster networking among members to facilitate the sharing of ideas, resources, and techniques.” The Civic Round Table is comprised of various organizations wanting to give back to their communities by working as a unified organization striving to provide resources and service to the portion of Jacksonville’s community that is need of such. Upsilon Eta’s role in this organization has been to foster friendly relations with other non-profit organizations to collaboratively coordinate events for our community and chapter to participate in. For example, every year for 40+ years we have been running the Spina Bifida Christmas Party in collaboration with Spina Bifida of Jacksonville. The Civic Round Table has meetings twice a month in which a representative from each non-profit organization in Jacksonville comes to introduce themselves, their organization, and any upcoming events they may have. Each luncheon meeting has a host organization, after the first 30 minutes of the meeting of which is designated for networking, the host will give a presentation about their organization. Our Upsilon Eta chapter presented Phi Theta Kappa in November, speaking of our four hallmarks, scholarship, leadership, service, fellowship. We spoke about how the officer team and members incorporate these hallmarks in the daily life of an honors student. In the future, we hope to become more involved with the community in collaboration with these other organizations, as to fulfill one of our hallmarks, that being the hallmark of service.



# Editor's Note

Chi Epsilon

Valencia College –  
West Campus

## EDITORIAL POLICY

Chapters may submit articles between 300 – 400 words. The article MUST focus on one activity, project, or idea. No “grocery lists” of chapter activities will be accepted. No works of fiction will be published. Articles will be edited for grammar, mechanics and excessive length. It is necessary to submit articles to two different Athenian Newsletter issues to be eligible for an Honors Institutes Scholarship and the Regional Awards Program.

## FORMAT FOR SUBMISSIONS

Articles should be submitted electronically in MSWord or rtf formats. Photos can be sent as separate files. Jpeg is preferred.

## DEADLINES

	<u>Submission Date</u>	<u>Publication Date</u>
Issue #1	June 1 <sup>st</sup>	June 15 <sup>th</sup>
Issue #2	Sept. 1 <sup>st</sup>	Sept. 15 <sup>th</sup>
Issue #3	Dec. 1 <sup>st</sup>	Dec. 15 <sup>th</sup>
Issue #4	Feb. 1 <sup>st</sup>	Feb. 15 <sup>th</sup>



## SUBMISSION FOR CONSIDERATION FOR REGIONAL HALLMARK AWARDS

To be eligible to receive a regional hallmark award and accompanying scholarship to International Honors Institute, a chapter must submit articles to two different issues of The Athenian.

Articles which do not follow these guidelines will not be published nor receive credit for submission.

## SUBMIT TO:

[tbushrui@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:tbushrui@valenciacollege.edu) and put “Athenian” in the subject line.