



**SILVER & GOLD**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
NEVADA/CALIFORNIA REGION



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***Please share your holiday recipes and traditions  
with us! Tag us on Instagram @ptk\_nvca***

***Maysa Wilson  
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# **NEVADA/CALIFORNIA REGIONAL BOARD MEMBERS**

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# MYRIAM'S CORNER

Hello NV/CA Region,

Hope you are well and that your finals went well. This is the time of year when people are resting, engaging in traditions, even breaking out those family recipes. Well, in this edition of the newsletter, you will find the board sharing some of their family traditions for this time of year. I wanted to share with you a Baklava recipe that my mom handed down to me. She would make this every Christmas and family and friends alike always looked forward to partaking in the yumminess. Now, I carry on the tradition and make it at Christmas for family and friends so they also can partake in the yumminess.

Maybe you will try some of our recipes and traditions with your family and create new memories and maybe these will spark you to do something different, something you have been wanting to try, a new tradition you have been wanting to create. Regardless, I pray this time of year is full of peace and sharing warm wishes with those you love. Merry Christmas.



**Recipe provided by:**

**Myriam Moody**

## ***Baklava Recipe***

### **Ingredients**

- 1 pound filo dough (Keep frozen until ready to use then read how to thaw)
- 1 ½ cups melted butter
- 2 cups walnuts chopped finely (I have a small food processor that only chops and grinds that works well)
- 1 cup pistachios chopped finely
- 3 cups sugar
- 1 ½ tablespoons cinnamon
- 1 cup Orange Blossom Water
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

### **Directions**

1. Prepare syrup by mixing 2 cups of sugar, Orange Blossom water, honey, and lemon juice in a saucepan. Bring to a boil for 10 minutes while stirring with a small whisk or spoon. Set aside and let cool. Do NOT refrigerate.
2. Prepare mixture for the middle of the baklava by mixing walnuts, pistachios, cinnamon, and only ONE cup of sugar. Set mixture aside.
3. Take the filo dough out of the box, unwrap it, count the number of sheets. Why? Half of the sheets are below the nut mixture and the other half will go over it.
4. Keep the melted butter warm, brush some of it on the bottom of a 13x18 inch baking sheet, then place your first sheet of filo dough down. Brush that sheet with some melted butter, then place the second sheet down; keep doing this until half the filo dough is used. It is optional to brush that last sheet of that first half with butter. I do.
5. Now take the nut mixture and spread it over the filo sheets.
6. With the second half of the filo sheets, you will do the same as you did the first half. Please that first sheet over the nut mixture, butter it, place the second sheet and so forth.
7. When the last sheet is placed, you once again have the option of buttering it. I do.
8. Now, take a sharp non-serrated knife and cut the unbaked baklava from corner to corner. Keep doing this until the entire sheet is cut in one direction, then start cutting in the other direction. What you are doing is creating diamond shapes. How large or small you want them to be is up to you.



9. Bake in a convection oven for 45 minutes at 350 degree. If your oven is NOT convection, then bake for 35 minutes on the bottom rack and 10 minutes in the middle rack at 350 degrees. The filo dough will come out a golden brown.
10. Now let the baklava cool for at least an hour.
11. Take the syrup mixture and spoon it over the cooled baklava. You will use the entire syrup mixture. If you spoon the mixture over the hot baklava, it will come out a soupy mess!
12. Cover with foil but for the foil not to stick to the top layer place toothpicks standing up in various locations in the cuts. Now place the baklava in the refrigerator overnight. This will give time for the syrup to saturate the pastry.
13. To serve, I place pieces in cupcake holders.

Enjoy!



**Recipe provided by:**

**Cathy Gillis**

## ***Homemade Egg Bread***

*My family enjoys warm, fresh egg bread for the holidays and the wonderful smell fills your house!*

**TOTAL TIME:** Prep time 30 min + rising **YIELD:** 2 Loaves (16 slices each)

### ***Ingredients:***

2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast

1/2 cup warm water (110 ° to 115°)

1—1/2 cups warm whole milk (110° to 115°)

3 large eggs , room temperature

1/4 cup butter, softened

1/4 cup sugar

1 Tablespoon salt

7 to 7 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1 large egg yolk, room temperature

2 tablespoons water

Sesame seeds

### ***Directions:***

1. In a large bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add milk, eggs, butter, sugar, salt and 3 cups flour; beat on medium speed until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough.

2. Turn dough onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, 6-8 minutes (I use our KitchenAid dough hook to do this for me! Knead until the dough forms into a ball and does not stick to the bowl--you may need to add tiny bits of liquid or flour). Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease the top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, 1-1/2 to 2 hours.

3. Punch down dough. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide into 6 portions. Roll each portion into a 14-in. rope. For each loaf, braid 3 ropes together on a greased baking sheet; pinch ends to seal and tuck under. Cover with kitchen towels; let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 50 minutes. Preheat the oven to 375°.

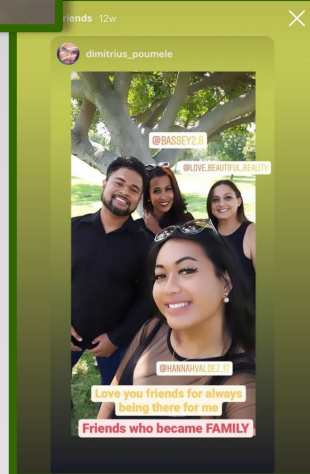
4. Beat together egg yolk and water; brush over loaves. Sprinkle with sesame seeds. Bake until golden brown, 30-35 minutes. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool.

Article provided by:  
Dimitrius Loa

Christmas hasn't been the same for quite sometime now in my family. We have experienced more losses and it gets painful and burdensome day in and day out. Putting up the Christmas lights and the Christmas trees on our house is not a family joyful occasion anymore, instead we're at the cemetery remembering my mom, my aunt and uncles. They made Christmas meaningful, they were my rock and my spirit of Christmas.

This year was different. I met some great people through Phi Theta Kappa in my Chapter of Alpha Pi Epsilon, that have become more than friends. My small intimate circle of friends have become family. They brought back the Spirit of Christmas to me and made this season one of a kind. Christmas lights and the Christmas tree is visible again in my household on Piccard Ave. Our neighbors were happy to see us decorating this year again. This Christmas season and everyday from here on out. Celebrate what's really important, be grateful with the abundance of life and people in our lives. I'm glad for the gift of friends. Merry Christmas!

Dimitrius Jake Loa  
NV/CA Regional President





**Article provided by:**  
**Enrique Baranda**

Hello Nevada/California Region!

I wanted to wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season! It has no doubt been a difficult and challenging year but feel proud of yourselves for all you've accomplished and coming out resilient scholars during these unprecedented times.

To share a bit of my holiday traditions, one of many Mexican delights for the Holidays include enjoying a cup of chocolate caliente (hot chocolate) and a piece of pan dulce (sweet bread). To battle the freezing weather, no hot beverage couldn't be complete without hot chocolate but not just any hot chocolate, it has to be Chocolate Abuelita. Chocolate Abuelita is among one of the most famous and recognizable Mexican hot chocolate brands and are an essential to have to make the holidays joyful. You can find this particular brand of hot chocolate in many reputable stores and is easy to make.

Nevada/California Region, take good care, get some rest, enjoy your break and looking forward to a great 2021!

Cheers,  
Enrique Baranda  
Southeast District Vice President





**Articles provided by:**

**Bruno Rhoades**

**Sheila Burson**

## **Holiday Traditions**

Christmas has always been about family with us, but since my father's death in 2010, we have toned down the festivities. Lately, we have been traveling during the one-month Christmas break. Last year at this time, my partner, mother, and I headed to the Mexican state of Yucatan. We rented a beach house in Progreso and had dinner in the capital city of Merida, which was 30 minutes away. It never gets cold in that region since it is on the Caribbean, and we even frolicked in the ocean a couple of times.

For Christmas of 2018, we spent it in Mexico City where my mother grew up. It gave me great pleasure to see her reunite with her friends from her adolescence. And in 2016, we spent Christmas in Lima, Peru, my partner's hometown. Since Peru is below the equator, Christmas and New Year's Eve is in the summertime. Watching fireworks on Christmas night was something new. I am thankful I have a job that allows me to take a month off at Christmas time and travel with my family. We have created lasting memories which we will cherish for a long time.

Bruno Rhoades  
NV/CA Associated Regional Coordinator

I don't have a special recipe that we do to celebrate the holidays...but (with the exception of this year, which we are doing as Facetime), this is what we do.

I take one room in my house (usually an extra bedroom) and designate it as "Santa's Workshop". About the first of December I lock the door and decorate it as a huge gift with wrapping paper, tinsel and a huge bow with my Santa's Workshop sign. No one is allowed in the room until Christmas Day.

In the room I've decorated the tree (which also keeps the little children and cats from climbing it or pulling off the ornaments). Under the tree are the gifts, of course. Then at the moment we get ready to open the door, all lights are off except the colored ones, and it is a magical time for all!

Sheila Burson  
Executive Vice President  
NV/CA Alumni Association



**Article provided by:  
Beta Mu Alpha**

## **Chapter Updates: Orange Coast College—Beta Mu Alpha**



Although the COVID-19 restrictions of 2020 significantly altered the course of our journey to five-star certification, our chapter is projected to successfully reach the destination. Our expedition began with HIA preparations last March wherein we created an action committee for the project and began reviewing the scientific literature on several topics such as energy and sports drinks, war, the developmental effects of pornography, and e-cigarettes. In April, our former officers conducted a thorough election to truly kickstart Beta Mu Alpha's pursuit of Five-Star Status in the 2020-2021 school year. Shortly thereafter we set a plan to achieve 5-Star Status and began reviewing the scientific literature on several different topics for HIA. In the following months, we sent recruitment emails to potential members and recorded a beautiful recruitment video. Additionally, we achieved Three-Star Status by coordinating with NV/CA regional officers to carry out the Fall Semester Kickoff Event and finalized our HIA topic: Theme Four with specifications on vaccines. At the outset of the Fall semester, we began holding chapter meetings, created a bylaw review committee, reached out to our School's President to begin our College Project, and started networking with prominent epidemiologists for our HIA event. In October, we held our HIA event on the efficacy of vaccines along with the mechanisms whereby they function. This event garnered 100+ participants and featured speeches and interviews from professors of USC, UCI, and OCC. Furthermore, in November, we coordinated with HOAG hospital to write thank you messages to healthcare workers. We are currently writing Hallmark Award nominations, and our College Project event—which will take the form of a presentation on how to succeed in college for the 500 students currently living on campus at OCC—is set to take place on January 6th.



Article provided by:  
Delores Loedel  
Alpha Chi Lambda

## Chapter Updates: MiraCosta College— Alpha Chi Lambda

At the Farmers Market on November 24, officers and members at the Alpha Chi Lambda chapter at MiraCosta College volunteered, delivering food to students. In addition, PTK's officer team, led by Arian Navari, raised money for supplies for students. The first fifty students received \$20 gift cards to the campus bookstore, complements of generous donations from private individuals. This event was part of the Honors in Action project by the chapter.





**Article provided by:**  
**Thanh Nguyen**  
**NV/CA Alumni Association**  
**Director of Communication**

## ***Fall Leadership Conference 2020***



During the Fall Leadership Conference 2020, the former 2019-2020 regional officer team came back and led some educational forums as part of the NV/CA Alumni Association. This opportunity helped us enjoy an old experience from a new perspective. As Sabrina, the former Vice President of Northeast stated, “I am so grateful to have the opportunity to help fellow students acquire new skills in education forums during the leadership conferences. I realized, during my experience as a regional officer, how fulfilling the task would be. Once my term was over in May of 2020, I was a bit sad that it would be my last opportunity to present an education forum. However, as an alumni member, I have been presented with new opportunities to teach new things to students. I have an avenue to help students and polish my pedagogy skills at the same time. This is very exciting for me. I'm excited about being granted this great opportunity again! This is definitely a highlight of joining the alumni association and the alumni board.”

While Jill, the former Vice President of Southwest said, “Fall Leadership Conference 2020 was a unique experience, both because of the online platform and it was my first time leading an educational forum as Alumni. I appreciated the online platform as both a presenter and a participant as we were easily able to interact and watch multiple presentations. I did miss our chant and hope people were doing it on their own at home; I know I was.”

To Geoffrey, the former Vice President of Technology, “Drafting, creating, and leading an educational forum was one of the many highlights as a Regional Officer. PTK members in our region have the natural ability to guide each other towards success. As a director in the NV/CA Region Alumni Association one year later and a transfer student, I see the same level of resilience within the members who attended the FLC. What excites me is progressing from sharing with members on how PTK has guided me through community college to how PTK continues to guide me through the years to come.”

And to me, I remember I was more nervous, but more excited when leading the educational forums as a regional officer since that was a brand-new opportunity. This time, leading the educational forum as an alumnus gave me a chiller experience since I hosted it with my fellow officer and I already did it before. In our opinion, when we are part of Phi Theta Kappa, especially the NV/CA region, we will try our best to support our regional fellows and contribute to our region as much as we can, no matter what position we are in.



Article provided by:  
Barbara A. Dimopoulos

## MERRITT COLLEGE VIRTUAL INDUCTION CEREMONY

Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 was definitely a beautiful day in the neighborhood for Merritt College in Oakland, California. Nine honor students, representing 45 Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society (PTK) Inductees from 2020, were honored by family, friends, administrators, staff and faculty from Merritt College in the first virtual induction ceremony in the history of Beta Theta Lambda Chapter.

Celeste Gonzalez-Navarro, Chapter President, was our mistress of ceremonies along with assistance from two of our advisors, Mary Ciddio and Barbara A. Dimopoulos.

The ceremony began with Dimitrius Jake Loa, President of the Nevada/California Region, teaching our region's call and response. Call: "Nevada/California, how do we feel?"

Response: "We feel good, oh so good! Huh!" And, yes, we did feel oh-so-good.

Our 20 guests were welcomed by Dr. David M. Johnson, President of Merritt College. In his speech,



**Dr. David M. Johnson**  
President, Merritt College

Dr. Johnson shared an inspirational quote from William Johnson Corey, a former President of Eton College in England. "You go to a great school not so much for knowledge as for arts and habits; for the habit of attention, for the art of expression, for the art of assuming, at a moment's notice, a new intellectual position, for the art of entering quickly into another person's thoughts, for the habit of submitting to censure and refutation, for the art of indicating assent or dissent in graduated terms, for the art of regarding my new points of accuracy, for the habit of working out what is possible at any given time for mental courage and mental soberness, and, above all, you pursue your journey

for self-knowledge..." He continued with "...I think that really encapsulates...where you are and what you are embarking on as members of Phi Theta Kappa."

Dr. Johnson was followed by our first Keynote Speaker, Dimitrius Loa, President of the Nevada/California Region who shared his wisdom with us with a quote.



**Dimitrius Jake Loa**  
President, NV/CA Region

He stated, "...stop living life like it's a race...Life isn't a race. It can't be because a race requires everyone to run the same course. You're on your own path. Where you are headed, what route you take and take and when is up to you."

*Continued on next page* →



**Article provided by:**  
**Barbara A. Dimopoulos**

Our next Keynote Speaker, Jocelyn Cohen, a Merritt College alumna, was also a past Vice President of Membership, past Chapter President (4 semesters), Northwest District Regional Vice President, and one of our most recent All-State Academic Team Awardees, winning the Workforce Pathway Scholarship for 2020. She is transferring to Western Governor's University in spring 2021 to complete her undergraduate degree, focusing on health care management. Jocelyn shared her amazing journey as an international student through membership and participation in PTK and her future goals. She commented that as a member of Phi Theta Kappa, students have the opportunity "...to open your minds and enhance your chances for success like social networking... improve your social skills and build up knowledge...to meet the challenges ahead..."



Induction, a traditional solemn ceremony, continued with the induction of nine inductees and the installation of two Chapter Officers. Inductees were given the opportunity to introduce themselves, share their college goals and thank those individuals who had supported them. Inductees in attendance: Belen Pomares, Beth Morse, Shadiyah Muhammad, Stefanie Mutialu, Alia Phelps, Hyungyu Ryu, Sabrina Sablan and Keneshia Wills.

Our Chapter also recognized officers from spring 2020, presented Leadership and Service Awards and announced the recipients for the PTK Golden Opportunity Scholarships 2020 and the recipient of the 2020 Advisors' Award for Excellence, Celeste Gonzalez-Navarro.

Rounding out our ceremony were another two Keynote Speakers: Sal Addotta, Advisor for Alpha Beta Chapter at Santa Ana College in Southern California and one of three Advisors of the Nevada/California Regional Alumni Association (NCRAA) and Kristine Lowe, President of the NCRAA.

Advisor Addotta delighted us with his wit and wisdom gleaned through many years of experience and adventures in PTK. He stated, "You define your own success...be happy with it." Kristine Lowe continued with her story: failures, changes, successes, challenges, returning to college, joining Phi Theta Kappa and then moving forward to become a successful film writer, director and producer.

The smiles, the commentary, and the esprit de corps at this ceremony is a testament to the success of the event. Chapter President Celeste Gonzalez-Navarro commented, "...having attended both in person induction ceremonies and now virtual...this didn't lack in anything. It was equally inspiring."









# HAPPY HOLIDAYS!