

**PRE-CEREMONY**

*This is the introduction we use for national ceremonies. Edit this to fit your circle. Remember, virtual ceremonies require more verbal instruction because individuals cannot see what other are doing at all times.*

*Good evening, I’m Tara Singer and it is my honor and privilege to serve as the president and chief executive officer of Omicron Delta Kappa.*

*In the interest of having the best experience this evening, please turn up the volume on your speakers so that you may better hear me. Also, if you cannot easily read the link for the Official Digital Record Book, you may find it on O∆K’s homepage below the rotating banner.*

*Our initiation ceremony is being broadcast from the Society’s National Headquarters in Lexington, Virginia. O∆K was founded here in 1914, at Washington and Lee University.*

*The headquarters are located in the historic Lexington train station which was built in 1883. Behind me is a portrait of the 15 founders – students, faculty, staff, and administrators – who are credited with creation of our organization. Our Society has certainly grown to be much more diverse and inclusive throughout our 106-year history.*

*Finally, throughout the ceremony, I will frequently mention the “Laurel Crowned Circle.” A laurel crown is what the first Olympians wore when they were victorious. It continues to be a symbol of achievement, and you can see it represented in our Society’s logo.*

*Thank you for joining us. I hope your involvement in Omicron Delta Kappa will a meaningful opportunity to continue to grow and develop as a leader.*



**NATIONAL VIRTUAL INITIATION CEREMONY**

**WELCOME**

As the [Title of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ circle], I welcome you to this initiation ceremony held on your behalf. Those of us who are members of OΔK value its high ideals and purposes as we strive to provide leadership in worthy undertakings and to be of service to others. We believe in the tenets of this Society and those principles for which it stands. We are pleased and honored to share them with you today as we welcome you into your school’s circle of Omicron Delta Kappa.

Let us welcome **[name and titel]** who will come forward to lead our opening moment of reflection.

**Opening Moment of Reflection: [Name]** We are grateful for the privilege of leadership in worthy undertakings and for the ideals of Omicron Delta Kappa. Give to all who are assembled to confer the honors of initiation upon these duly elected members a renewed vision of the meaning of Omicron Delta Kappa. Grant that the desire for creative thinking, for high purposes and ideals, for moral strength and integrity may ever remain close to our hearts. Grant also that we may strive without ceasing to incorporate them into our lives as students, faculty, staff, alumni, and civic leaders. Instill in us the principles of faith and courage, of honest work, and of sacrifice for the tasks that lie before us.

**HISTORY AND SYMBOLS**

You have undertaken upon yourselves the obligation of membership in the Omicron Delta Kappa Society. This means that you will ever seek to make it a real factor for good in academic and community life, not only in your own college or university, but in American educational institutions at large; as well as in the communities in which you will lead. As a member, you commit that you will make every effort to practice its high ideals, both in private and public life, so that the world may see in you a concrete, living symbol of the great principles of Omicron Delta Kappa.

Omicron Delta Kappa was founded December 3, 1914, at Washington and Lee University, in Lexington, Virginia. Our 15 founders stated that leadership of exceptional quality and versatility in college should be recognized; that representatives of all phases of college life should cooperate in worthwhile endeavor; and that outstanding students and faculty members should meet on a basis of common interest, understanding, and helpfulness.

The motives which guided the founders sprang from the desire to bring together one body for the general good of the institution, leaders from all parts of the college or university community. The success of the O∆K Idea, an essential part of which is its joint student-faculty character and a determination to maintain a consistent and high standard of leadership recognition, led to the establishment of chapters, which we call circles, at other colleges and universities.

The Society in which you are about to become a member has a three-pronged mission:

* Identify, honor, and develop leaders in collegiate and community life;
* Encourage collaboration among students, faculty, staff, and alumni to advance leadership; and
* Promote, publicize, and enhance our ideals.

We light a candle to symbolize each of the OΔK Ideals by which each of you should strive to embody. [Candles can be lit in real time in from of a camera or shown as graphics]

* Scholarship – to strive for excellence in academics and to pursue lifelong learning
* Service – to answer the call for action from one’s community or country
* Integrity – to align one’s values and beliefs with behaviors and speech
* Character – to distinguish oneself for the good of humanity
* Fellowship – to embrace those in the Society as equals seeking inclusive bonds across diverse communities and generations

It has ever been our desire and custom to try to symbolize in material form our dreams, ambitions, ideals, and sentiments. In accordance with this innate desire and feeling, Omicron Delta Kappa has also tried to express in material form, the "Key," its noble ideals, lofty aspirations, and altruistic aims. The key, which is struck in the form of a circle, symbolizes union forever and the equality which characterizes membership in Omicron Delta Kappa.

The Greek motto for which the letters O∆K represent is:

*Ho Daph-no'-kO-mos Kük'-los*

which translates as "The Laurel Crowned Circle."

Our emblem, the Laurel Crowned Circle, stands for success achieved in worthy undertakings. The shape of the Key represents the circle, which symbolizes the all-around and inclusive nature of our organization.

The five stars on the upper bar represent the five major phases of college life, for which our Society stands:

* Scholarship
* Athletics
* Campus or Community Service, Social and Religious Activities, and Campus Government
* Journalism, Speech, and the Mass Media
* Creative and Performing Arts

The number 1914 on the lower bar indicates the year in which our Society was founded.

**INITIATION CEREMONY**

We who are members of Omicron Delta Kappa have observed your habits, attitudes, and capacities, and are pleased with your success, your steady growth as leaders in worthwhile endeavors, and your appreciation of the ideals and purposes of the Society. We have asked you here today to make you members of our Society and to present to each of you the Laurel Crowned Circle, the symbol of achievement. Before we accept you into the Omicron Delta Kappa Society, please listen thoughtfully to these words.

**First Voice: [Name of Reader]** You should know that the Laurel Crowned Circle is not only a recognition of past exemplary conduct, but that it must also be to you a constant inspiration to finer and nobler living, so long as you shall live.

**Second Voice: [Name of Reader]** You should know that the Laurel Crowned Circle is not only a recognition of past loyalty to all good works, but that it must also be to you a constant inspiration to unselfish service to the Society, to your alma mater, and to your vocation, and a life-long reminder that if greatness is to be achieved, one must serve.

**Third Voice: [Name of Reader]** You should know that the Laurel Crowned Circle is not only a recognition of past achievement, but that it must also be to you a constant inspiration to spend the rest of your days climbing higher and yet higher, ever remembering that death comes apace and that the longest span of human life is all too short for the completion of the tasks that lie ready to our hands.

**President/Presiding Officer:** Will the candidates for membership please stand, wherever you may be, if you are able (*3 beats*)?

You have heard in these words the great unchanging principles upon which our Society is founded. If you are willing to accept the lofty ideals, the sense of devotion, and the spirit of aspiration represented in Omicron Delta Kappa, please respond, "I will." *(3 beats)*

**Candidates:** I will. *(3 beats)*

**President/Presiding Officer:** Then please repeat after me. *(3 beats)*

"In the presence of the Circle here assembled,/ *(3 beats)*

I solemnly promise/ *(3 beats)*

to uphold the Ideals and Traditions,/ *(3 beats)*

the Constitution and Bylaws,/ *(3 beats)*

of the Omicron Delta Kappa Society/ *(3 beats)*

and to support in loyal service/ *(3 beats)*

its local and national officers,/ *(3 beats)*

to participate in its meetings, ceremonies, and initiatives/ *(3 beats)*

and to diligently foster/ *(3 beats)*

life-long leadership." (*3 beats)*

Congratulations! *(3 beats)*

You may be seated. *(3 beats)*

**President/Presiding Officer**: You have committed yourself to the principles of the Omicron Delta Kappa Society and to our timeless values of scholarship, service, integrity, character, and fellowship. From this day forward and throughout each stage of your life, you will strive to serve as a living example of excellence in leadership.

You have been chosen to wear this emblem of distinction because of your loyalty and devotion to (\_\_\_\_\_\_ Name of Institution) and to the things that are fine and true in life. Whenever possible, wear this pin with pride to demonstrate the honor bestowed upon you today.

We will introduce the President/Advisor for each circle. The officer will give a brief history of the circle and then read the names of each initiate.

As your name is called, [you may choose to have individuals speak or just have them type “I accept” in the chat box]. This is a symbolic gesture that you have received the emblems of membership in our Society. You will sign the electronic the Official Record Book and when you have the opportunity in the future, you will sign the actual Circle Record Book.

[LIST OF NAMES]

***[NOTE: If you are inducting Officers,***

***use the traditional script available online}***

**CONCLUSION**

*(Circles should use the Benediction or Closing Moment of Reflection but not both.)*

President/Presiding Officer: To conclude the ceremony, please welcome

( Name of Individual) to conclude today’s ceremonies.

**Benediction:** Most gracious God, our eyes are open to all lovely objects of righteousness and truth, and we have been blessed with courage and enthusiasm, high impulse, and lofty thought. In this our hour of great dedication, help us as we go out into the world to keep fresh in our lives the ideals which we have affirmed here today. Amen.

OR

**Closing Moment of Reflection:** Our eyes are open to all lovely objects of righteousness and truth, courage and enthusiasm, high impulse, and lofty thought. In this our hour of great dedication, let us go out into the world and keep fresh in our lives the ideals which we have affirmed here today.

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**POST-CEREMONY DIRECTIONS**

* Thank you for your participation in this evening initiation ceremony. We hope that you will be an active member of your circle on campus and continue to stay in touch with our Society as your career progresses.
* Information about the O∆K, and our member benefits, including our annual National Leadership Conference, are located on our website at odk.org. Good night and good luck!