

# The Matrix Messenger

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### "No grass growing under our feet."

As I look back over our last program meeting where we talked a great deal about volunteerism, I remember sitting in my chair being so very humbled to be a part of this group. Many of you spoke about the passion you have for helping others through schools and other nonprofits. You spoke of your need to help others, to be that outstretched hand to help a child, an elderly person, an unwed mother, a cancer victim, and so many more. Decades of service to others were present in that room that day.

Sharon Bass with the Volunteer Center was our speaker that day, and she professed that she should be taking notes from us as she knew of our involvement in our community. What a great reputation for us to have! I was just about to bust my buttons!

Thankfully, we live up to that reputation. We are passionate about our community, our schools, and those who share this world with us. We see ways to help, and we take action. We work diligently each year to help our members, and to raise scholarship funds for Texas Tech communication students. No grass growing under our feet.



So, as we embark on this precious season of harvest and glad tidings, let me say thank you for your passion for others, and for our organization. We have energy without bounds, and we do make a difference every day in the circles we inhabit.

~ Chapter President  
Jo Langston



# AWC Heritage



1950s

The decade was challenging for female foreign correspondents with the aftermath of World War II and the beginning of the Korean War. Theta Sig President Margaret Withrop calls for a global view “to improve communications among ourselves, our immediate neighbors, our fellow Americans, and humans across the world,” the AWC goal for the 1950s.

Back home, Theta Sigma Phi adopts the Hospitalized Veterans Writing Project to teach veterans in local hospitals how to write, awarding cash prizes for their efforts. The program is an AWC national service project for the next 20 years.

With 88 members living abroad, AWC expands internationally, forming Theta Sigma Phi Internationale. Articles featured in *The Matrix* focus on members living and working abroad.

1954

1959

Theta Sigma Phi celebrates its golden anniversary at the University of Washington State in Seattle, where the organization began. Attendees meet founding members Blanche Brace, Irene Somerville, and Georgina MacDougall Davis, who pass the torch of leadership on to the next generation. “From your strength and progress will come our greatest honor.”

Theta Sigma Phi continues to identify new job opportunities for members and initiates the Talent Sparks Program to recruit promising high school students for communications careers.

1961

1963

AWC Convention delegates learn what the space age can bring to journalism with computer typesetting and news transmission via satellites.

Members choose “Facing the Issues” as an annual meeting theme to address growing racial unrest. *The Matrix* publishes “Negro News—Why Isn’t More on Women’s Pages” by Theta Sig Ponchitta Pierce, editor of *Ebony* Magazine.

1968

# Heritage, cont.

The Vietnam War, another tumultuous issue of the decade, affects members. Esther Van Wagoner Tufty covers the turmoil as a correspondent, and Natalie Best becomes the first female war correspondent for a television station.

late  
1960s

1970s

The decade begins with more “firsts” by members: Science writer Jean Pearson becomes the first female reporter to go to the South Pole. Helen Thomas, White House correspondent for United Press International, is the only female print reporter to accompany President Nixon on his landmark trip to China.

Members discover that the organization’s Greek letters limit their acceptance as a professional organization. Conference delegates vote to change the name to Women in Communications, Inc. (WICI). Founding members approve the change, since “the original concepts for the society held strong and true.” Members also vote to admit men as full-time members rather than honorary members.

1972



1973

WICI establishes the National Awards Program, designed to recognize excellence in all areas of communications, to provide an incentive for further achievement, and to demonstrate the role of communications in dealing with current issues. The program is renamed the Clarion Awards in 1974.

Women’s rights emerge as the biggest challenge of the decade. Recent laws lead businesses to hire men and women on an equal basis, but women are not promoted at the same rate as men. WICI throws its support behind the struggle to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. In partnership with 11 other organizations, WICI founds the First Amendment Congress, which works to preserve First Amendment Rights.

1979

Next edition... 1980-today

# AWC Student Chapter Officers



**Casey Bushner,**  
President

**Jasmine Stevens,**  
Vice President

**Hope Lenamon,**  
Secretary

**Sarah Cardona,**  
Treasurer

**CASEY** is a senior electronic media and communications major, and plans to graduate in May 2018. She serves as a member of the Chancellor Ambassadors, External VP of the Student Alumni Board, for the Women's Leadership Institute, and Delta Gamma. Her work experience includes the Dallas Mavericks, Texas Rangers and FOX34. She currently interns for Texas Tech Athletics Communications and Fox Sports and ESPN on Texas Tech game days. Highlights include many Big 12 Conference Championships and the 2017 College World Series. Following graduation, she hopes to work for a major sports network or team or pursue a master's degree in broadcast journalism from Syracuse University.

**JASMINE** plans to graduate in May 2018 with a bachelor of arts in journalism. Outside of AWC, she is a member of Sigma Phi Lambda, and she runs "ToyallyKate," a self-made social media account for Twitter and Instagram, with 25,000 and 10,000 followers, respectively. Posts provide support, news, and photos of the Duchess of Cambridge. Last summer, she interned with Love Advertising in Houston, Texas. Post-graduation, she plans to attend Syracuse University for an advanced degree and hopes to work in entertainment news or reporting, or as an editor or creative director for a large media conglomerate.

**HOPE** will graduate in Summer or Fall of 2018 with a major in journalism and a double minor in electronic media and communications and women's and gender studies. She is a member of the Honors College and Raiders Helping Others. She enjoys traveling and recently participated in a study abroad in New Zealand, where she refined her photography skills and learned about medical tourism. She hopes to freelance or work for a local publication while pursuing a master's degree. Afterwards, she plans to find a job with a print publication where she can share her passion for women's studies and pass the art of journalism on to the next generation.

**SARAH** is a sophomore advertising major. In addition to her role with AWC, she serves as social chair for the Tech Advertising Federation. She's typically glued to her laptop, but enjoys spending time with her friends and family, and playing with her cat Buddy. In the future, her goal is to work for The Richards Group in Dallas, Texas.