

The Matrix Messenger

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"Power exists when women sit in circle."

This was the defining statement for me from the AWC national meeting earlier in September. Power....women....circle.

From our childhoods, I am sure most of us can remember our mom and grandmothers, aunts and cousins sitting in circle. We sat in circles around coffee, in story time, in the kitchens creating holiday fare. The women in my family were very poor and sat in circles eating meager meals while taking a break from picking cotton. Quilting bees, wine on the back porch, standing on the sidelines watching kids play sports or standing around a crib where a newborn sleeps. We just naturally make circles.

Our power comes from the relationships in the circle. Even if those with whom we disagree are in the circle, a relationship exists. Perhaps we can learn from them or perhaps our opinion becomes even more solid. The ideas in the circle have the power to change lives. Surely the suffragettes sat in a circle deciding how to change a culture. I can see Rosa Parks sitting in her kitchen with other women dedicated to changing the racial texture of our country. And Anne Frank sitting in circle hidden from the Nazis.

And so, for our group of 80 plus women communicators, let us sit in circle. Let us bring ideas and thoughts and change and reason to our circles, wherever they may be. Form relationships inside the circle. Let others in, or if need be, keep some out. Build new circles, renew old ones. It's what we do!

~ Chapter President Jo Langston



AWC Heritage



1909

Seven female students establish a women's edition of the college newspaper *The Pacific Daily Wave* at the University of Washington, only the second college in the nation to establish a journalism department. The experience inspires assistant editor Georgina MacDougall to start an honorary women's journalism fraternity, the Alpha chapter of Theta Sigma Phi. Its mission to raise the standards of journalism, improve the working conditions for women in the profession, and inspire the individual to greater efforts is symbolized by the reproduction of a linotype machine's matrix, chosen for its meaning as "a place where something takes form or develops."

The Alpha chapter grants a charter to the Beta chapter at the University of Wisconsin, marking the beginning of Theta Sigma Phi's history as a national organization.

1910

1915

Theta Sigma Phi's Alpha chapter publishes Volume 1, Number 1 of *The Matrix*, "a magazine for women in journalism."

World War I brings more women into newspaper jobs as their male colleagues join the fighting. Theta Sigma Phi holds its first national convention at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas.

1918

1920—Members form an employment bureau, "The Woman's National Journalistic Register, Inc.", resulting in a 200% increase in journalism job placements.

April 1921—Matrix Table, the first formal banquet, is held by the Pi Chapter at the University of Illinois to raise money for Chicago's occupational bureau for women in journalism. Still celebrated today.

1923—National Convention delegates adopt the 1st resolution, in support of raising the standards of the journalism profession.

1928—Theta Sig Ray Louise Hanger founds the Associated Press's Photo Library, which under her supervision grows to 5 million photographs in the next 26 years.

Women in journalism are here to stay.

1920s



Heritage, cont.

Opportunities for women in other fields of communications increases and Theta Sigma strengthens as a national network.

1934—To aid female journalists, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt closes her weekly press conferences to men, forcing many organizations to hire women. She is named an honorary member.

1934—Theta Sigma Pi celebrates its 25th Anniversary.

1939—Members are selected for the first Headliner Awards, celebrating accomplishments and continued excellence in the field.

1930s



1940s

Theta Sigma Phi has 39 student chapters and 23 alumnae chapters.

World War II brings unexpected opportunities for women, and many are promoted to editors and hard news reporters. Others join the war effort by becoming Women Accepted for Volunteer Service (WAVES), and some even serve as overseas correspondents. Chapters in the US organize into emergency units under the Director of Civilian Defense, and others establish news bureaus at USO clubs to send stories to hometown newspapers.

1946—Theta Sig Elizabeth Fontaine founds the Hospitalized Veterans Writing Project (HVWP), a national organization “through which hospitalized veterans who wish to write for a publication or as a hobby can be assisted by professional writers.”

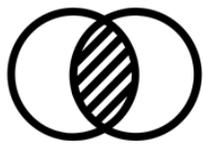
“Theta Sigma Phi has a challenging job to do, in enhancing the place of women in journalism and in setting the sights in filling that place, high standards of quality and integrity will be maintained.”

—Janette Harrington, Theta Sigma President

1949

Next edition...1950-1979

Rebranding AWC



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**NETWORKING
& MENTORING**

This year's National Conference kicked off with an overview of the AWC rebranding initiative. Traditional networking and professional associations are facing a turning point—evolve to accommodate, or risk relevancy and viability. The timing couldn't be more prime for AWC to facelift our brand and marketing approach to ensure timeless success for years to come.

Together with Revel Advertising (headquartered in Springfield, Missouri), the National Rebranding Committee went through a discovery exercise, in question form. These were the results:

What are our unique brand benefits?

The networking of intelligent, professional women on a state and national level • Socials/networking/relationships • Learning through workshops/webinars • Professional development through other women in communications • Supporting careers of women • Clarion Awards

What are our brand values?

Gender equity • Promote leadership • Equip women to navigate challenges they face in the industry • Help each other grow and advance in industry • Inspiring/uplifting/supporting • Connecting • Respect • Sharing knowledge • Mentoring • Creating an atmosphere of acceptance within a professional setting • Integrity • Equality/fairness/diversity

What is our brand voice?

Inspiring • Professional • Knowledgeable • Empowering

And now introducing, the new AWC!

The logo's type is welcoming, with softer curves and angles, and simple, to reflect the common verbiage of members. The icon represents mentorship and growth, in that the small conversation bubble is gaining knowledge from the large conversation bubble.

Together, their points form a letter "w" to represent that women are having these conversations and leading the charge of the organization. The bubbles also create a Venn diagram effect to show the level of diversity within the group and to represent networking and real, meaningful personal interactions.

The result was not a revolution, but a reinvention of the brand to take AWC from traditional to relevant, from standard to standout, and from reserved to bold. To ensure a smooth and successful transition, a full roll-out plan is coming in January 2018, including style guides and templates, and chapters will receive \$300 to help offset the costs of print materials with the new logo. Stay tuned for more updates!

