



## WPC luncheon: Bonita Gooch Pushes *Community Voice* Statewide

Wichita native Bonita Gooch has grown *The Community Voice* from a small local monthly publication to one of the largest and most widely circulated nondaily papers in the state of Kansas. Join us on May 1 at our monthly luncheon to hear from Gooch on the importance of niche publications and how she has worked to establish the paper as a critical voice in the African-American community and beyond.

Gooch is a publisher, editor, writer, business owner, community activist, concerned citizen and mother of one. A native of Wichita, Gooch left home after high school and returned 23 years later, ready to rest and raise a family. As should be evident from her list of responsibilities, Gooch hasn't rested yet.

Since November 1996, she's worked to grow *The Community Voice* newspaper from a fledgling publication to a force within Kansas. When her family purchased the paper, it was a small monthly publication with limited distribution. Under her leadership, the paper's distribution has grown into one of the state's largest circulation nondaily newspaper.

Gooch increased the publication's frequency from monthly to bi-weekly but is most proud of the reputation the paper has developed across the state for quality and integrity in journalism. She is particularly proud of the advocacy, education and community-building role the paper provides for its primary target, Kansas' African-American community.

When issues impact the community both directly and indirectly, Gooch can be found attending city, county, school and state governmental meetings. The important issues from these meetings often find their way onto the pages of *The Community Voice*, as news pieces or as the subject of an editorial. In photo at top left, Gooch relaxes for a photo with Kansas State University's Willie the Wildcat when she was a guest speaker Feb. 14 in Manhattan. Gooch delivered the 2019 Huck Boyd Lecture in Community Media. Her lecture was "The Grind: Using Journalism as a Community Builder."

Gooch received her B.S. in journalism and a master's in public administration, with an emphasis in urban management, from Kansas University. She is a single mother of young, independent daughter Lauren who resides in New York City.

Please RSVP **no later than noon Tuesday, April 30.** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wpc-monthly-meeting-and-luncheon-may-2019-tickets-60832409374> Remember, the RSVP deadline is firm, and individuals must pay for cancellations received after the deadline.

**DATE:** Wednesday, May 1

**TIME:** 11:30 a.m. *sharp*

**PLACE:** Larkspur Bistro, 904 E. Douglas

**COST:** Members \$15, students \$10, guests \$20

**There is a \$5 walk-in fee for members and nonmembers if you did not make a luncheon reservation.**

### **Reservations/cancellations required:**

Go to [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wpc-monthly-meeting-and-luncheon-may-2019-tickets-60832409374) by noon Tues., April 30  
Payment may be made online, or you may pay at the door.

## Words from the WPC president: Let's celebrate some winners

It's time to celebrate some winners.

At our April meeting, we announced the winner of our \$2,000 scholarship: junior **Courtney Klaus**, a communications major at Newman University who is also the student newspaper editor there. (Read more about her in an article on Page 3).

WPC also has cause to celebrate some winners among our members. WPC member **Angie Prather** is representing Kansas Professional Communicators as its 2019 Communicator of Achievement and is going on to compete with other state affiliate COAs for the prestigious NFPW COA honor. (Read more about her accomplishments in an article on Page 2.)



And this year, five WPC members won seven awards in the NFPW communications contest. I think that might be a record number of national-winning entries for our group – at least in recent memory.

Works by **Beth Bower**, **Madeline McCullough** (and her students), **Cheryl Miller**, **Jill Miller** and **me** that had placed first in their respective categories at the KPC level were forwarded to compete in the national contest.

Beth's documentary, which she talked about working on at our April meeting, had some stiff competition. "The Pie Way" beat out a documentary about Joe Biden and was edged out by a seasoned TV veteran. Beth's accompanying cookbook to the documentary took second, as well. Madeline McCullough's brochure placed second, as did Jill Miller's blog about being "Heart Broken." Cheryl Miller earned a third-place honor for her less-than-500-word personality profile on the Wichita State Fairmount College dean. A newsletter I edit won second-place and a garden story written for The Eagle won third.

If you have good news to share – whether it's an award, a new job, attending or presenting at a conference or anything else, we'd love to celebrate with you. Please consider emailing that good news to our nwsbrfs editor, **Wilma Moore Black**, to include in an upcoming issue of nwsbrfs.

– Amy Geiszler-Jones

### **KPC announces Angie Prather as 2019 Communicator of Achievement**

Angie Prather is a gifted communicator who can "relate to a room full of Rotarians, connect with 20-somethings on social media or craft a pointed message for a legislative agenda." With more than 30 years in her marketing and communications career, she has served and strengthened her Kansas communities. Prather was recognized for her career accomplishments March 23 in Emporia when she was announced as the 2019 Communicator of Achievement (COA) by the Kansas Professional Communicators.



Prather is vice president of marketing and communications for the Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce in Wichita. She brags on her WPC colleagues who have proved to be excellent resources for providing insight and guidance on best practices in employee communication and rebranding throughout her career.

"I am honored to accept this award," said Prather who will now compete in June at the National Federation of Press Women (NFPW) conference in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The NFPW COA award is the highest honor given to an individual winner recognized for achievement in the communications field, service to KPC, NFPW and in the community.

During the awards presentation at the conference, KPC's COA director Wilma Moore-Black introduced Prather as a communicator and leader who is a dedicated professional, widely known and respected on the job and in the community. Her work with well-known, effective and creative grass-roots campaign for the Wichita flag (shown in photo with Prather) tops the list at the Chamber.

"It's exhilarating to see an idea championed or a new solution embraced as a result of a well-crafted message," Prather explained. "I'm thrilled every time I witness the spark from a connection that eventually results in a flame of activity and progress. It confirms my belief in the power of human connection and communication."

Prather became acquainted with the WPC, KPC and the NFPW during her tenure at Botanica. The WPC held their monthly meetings there and one of the members invited Prather to attend; she joined the organization and began to participate in the state contests. Joining the WPC board in 2004 was a natural extension of her interest in the organization, and she eventually served as the group's vice president of programs. Prather scheduled relevant speakers for the monthly WPC meetings and attended the annual KPC conference. It was during this time period that she won several NFPW awards including a first place in advertising photography in 2005 as well as awards for news releases and a photo essay. In 2017, she was KPC's sweepstakes contest winner.

With a marketing degree from Wichita State University, Prather has been on a mission to make a difference in the communications field, media organizations and her presence in each community project. She is energized by connecting people with ideas, stories, solutions and each other.

"Angie exhibits all the traits of a leading PR professional. She operates with the highest integrity, builds relationships, follows through on commitments, thinks creatively, writes clearly, plans strategically and advances organizational goals. All with a smile on her face," stated Deanna Harms, executive vice president, GretemanGroup Marketing Communications and one of many endorsers of Prather for the NFPW COA award.

## WPC Programs & Calendar 2019

May 1	WPC monthly luncheon program, 11:30 a.m., Larkspur Bistro, 904 E. Douglas, Bonita Gooch, Editor in Chief, The Community Voice
May 13	WPC board meeting, noon, Watermark, 4701 E. Douglas

WPC offers professional development and major networking opportunities for working communicators, freelancers and career-directed students. Membership is open to any person who is paid as a communicator. We welcome visitors to our monthly luncheon meetings. Members \$15, students \$10, all others \$20. Check in and pay at the WPC table inside the banquet room or prepay through Eventbrite. Members: please leave your name tag with our check-in hostesses. In times of inclement weather, WPC will follow the status of USD 259 closures in deciding to cancel a monthly program meeting.

### Student, editor, legal eagle wins scholarship

Courtney Klaus, a Newman University junior majoring in communication and history with a minor in journalism, is WPC's 2019 scholarship winner. She serves as editor-in-chief of the university's weekly student newspaper The Vantage, previously working as a Vantage reporter, then managing editor.

As Vantage editor, Klaus is a fierce advocate of the First Amendment and has covered LGBT+ censorship and lawsuits facing the university. The lawsuit story meant asking Newman's top leaders, including the university president, tough questions about being served with five lawsuits from former employees accusing all of the top administrators of harassment, discrimination and retaliation. She addressed each of the five suits, even when pressured to back off the story.

To further the newspaper's reach, Klaus developed a professionally produced and popular cartoon strip called DisAdvantage, which comments on happenings on the Newman campus. She also revamped The Vantage's website for breaking news. Her work led to an internship over winter break with The Wichita Eagle.

Meanwhile, Klaus is also a resident assistant, student ambassador, lector for Campus Ministry, and trumpet soloist in both the concert and jazz band. She also works for the university's Reacting to The Past Consortium website, writing "Campus Spotlights" to highlight different universities across the nation.

In her scholarship application, Klaus wrote "I want to use my communication skills as part of my personal mission to make a difference in my community - not just in the future, but right now as a Newman student." She wants to become an attorney and plans to graduate from Newman in May 2020.



Klaus, left, Shannon Littlejohn, WPC scholarship chair

### Community resources for communicators

WPC strives to offer networking opportunities, help fulfill professional development, provide insight to issues and be a resource. With an eye on the latter, we will make you aware of other resources available in the community that can benefit or may interest you as communicators.



#### Social Media Day ICT

Digital Wichita is bringing back Social Media Day. The daylong conference is happening Wednesday, June 12, and will feature sessions on brand storytelling, social media analytics, video for social media and messenger marketing. Early bird pricing through May 3 is \$100, then \$125 until May 24 and then \$150 until June 12. For the event schedule and to register go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/social-media-day-ict-2019-tickets-59953313976>

#### 1 Million Cups

Find out about new businesses, ventures and upcoming entrepreneurs in Wichita at the weekly 1 Million Cups presentations that happen 9-10 a.m. Wednesdays at the Advance Learning Library. Could your business be featured?

#### Upcoming library workshops

Remember to check out programming and events offered through the Wichita public libraries. Some upcoming workshops include community poetry (May 2), bullet journaling (May 7), and using Google ads (May 8).

## Renew or join for 2019

You can still join Wichita Professional Communicators. WPC has maintained a diverse, vibrant membership, and we want to build on that success, as well as contribute to yours. Membership in WPC is by the calendar year, so please remember to renew or join for 2019, if you haven't already.

Download the 2019 app from the WPC [website](#), fill it out and mail it or bring it to the May 1 meeting. We'd also appreciate your help in letting other potential members know about WPC.

JOIN OR  
RENEW  
NOW



### A WPC Celebration: Obama and Powell high on Wilma's bucket list

Seeing and hearing former President Barack Obama and retired Gen. Colin Powell speak in the same week and same room is like a dream come true. You never know what it's like to be so high that you *have* to pinch yourself to calm down. That's exactly how I felt April 10 and 11 while in Dallas, Texas. I was attending the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Diversity and Leadership conference sponsored by the National Diversity Council (NDC).

Those attending this non-publicly advertised conference encountered highly secured protocols on days both dignitaries were in the Hilton Anatole Hotel. My younger sister Annette Sears, in photo above, invited me to volunteer assisting the NDC staff sponsoring the event. My assignment was to work at the conference registration desk and to usher VIP guests to an area where they waited to be escorted to the "Meet and Greet" room for interviews and photographs with Obama.

What a rewarding feeling to see Obama because I missed the opportunity to attend his inauguration before his term as the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. It was my goal to attend one of his post-presidential speaking events.

Secret Service, hotel staff and a special security firm were on duty. There were clean sweeps of the hotel and nearby businesses and buildings. No problems were announced, and both appearances were highly received. I'm still on a natural high from my days in Dallas.

## COMM LINKS

Wichita Professional Communicators: [www.wichitaprofessionalcommunicators.com](http://www.wichitaprofessionalcommunicators.com)

Kansas Professional Communicators: [www.kansasprofessionalcommunicators.org](http://www.kansasprofessionalcommunicators.org)

National Federation of Press Women: [www.nfpw.org](http://www.nfpw.org)

NFPW Agenda newsletter: <http://nfpw.org/pdf/currentissue.pdf>.

## 2019 WPC Board

President: Amy Geiszler-Jones, [algj@64@sbcglobal.net](mailto:algj@64@sbcglobal.net)

Vice president: Adrienne Churchill, [nachurch11@gmail.com](mailto:nachurch11@gmail.com)

Secretary: Darcy Gray, [dgray5@kumc.edu](mailto:dgray5@kumc.edu)

Treasurer: Rebecca Funke, [rfunke3@cox.net](mailto:rfunke3@cox.net):

VP, membership: Emily Christensen, [emily.christensen@wichita.edu](mailto:emily.christensen@wichita.edu)

VP, programs: Nadya Faulx, [faulx@kmuw.org](mailto:faulx@kmuw.org)

Courtesy/reservations: Naomi Shapiro, [naomi@anchorwichita.com](mailto:naomi@anchorwichita.com)

Newsletter/enews editor: Wilma Moore-Black, [wilma.black@wichita.edu](mailto:wilma.black@wichita.edu)

Webmaster: Melinda Schnyder, [mvschnyder@gmail.com](mailto:mvschnyder@gmail.com)

Scholarship chair/historian: Shannon Littlejohn, [shannon.littlejohn@gmail.com](mailto:shannon.littlejohn@gmail.com)

At-large members:

Elizabeth Bower, [beth@goodlifeguy.com](mailto:beth@goodlifeguy.com)

Jennifer Eaton, [jeaton2@kumc.edu](mailto:jeaton2@kumc.edu)

Kerry Johnston, [kerryjoh42@gmail.com](mailto:kerryjoh42@gmail.com)

Cheryl Miller, [cheryl.miller@wichita.edu](mailto:cheryl.miller@wichita.edu)

Annie Welsbacher, [awelsbacher@gmail.com](mailto:awelsbacher@gmail.com)



**June 27-29, 2019 ~ NFPW Professional Communicators Conference**

**To register: [nfpw.org](http://nfpw.org)**