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# MIZZOU

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## Free Speech(es)

At age 38, journalism graduate leads a leading professional organization.



During Angela Greiling Keane's 2013–14 National Press Club presidency, she is focusing on diversity. Photo courtesy of Angela Greiling Keane.

*Story by Dale Smith*

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**A**ngela Greiling Keane’s view of the National Press Club has evolved quite a bit since becoming acquainted with the professional organization in 1997 during her time in the School of Journalism’s Washington Program. Greiling Keane, BJ ’98, joined the club during that semester along with her fellow student journalists who were reporting from the nation’s capital under the tutelage of faculty member Wes Pippert, who covered the Watergate scandal for United Press International.

This year (2013–14), she is the club’s president. But the start was a humble one.

“Wes marched us all into the office, and we plunked down the student membership fee,” Greiling Keane says. Initially, she liked attending the press club’s free speeches by newsmakers of the day. And as a student she appreciated noshing free tacos on Friday nights. But she soon glimpsed opportunity for more than free food for mind and body.

“At the time, the club president was a man in his early 30s, Richard Sammon. I saw that it was not just a place for people at end of their careers. It was a good place for younger professionals to get involved,” says Greiling Keane, who covers transportation for Bloomberg. In addition to sponsoring speakers, the press club offers professional development for journalists and fights for free speech around the world.

In 2004, she started leading some of the club’s

committees. And now as president she is in a position not only to choose all the committee chairs but also help set club policies and priorities. Diversity, including the voices of women, is one of her passions.

The club, which started in 1908, did not accept women until 1971. “It’s not a proud history, so I will focus on that this year,” Greiling Keane says. Although the club’s record has improved, with women serving as president six of the last 11 years, Greiling Keane says, “It’s still a worthy issue.”

**Topics:** [Alumni](#), [Journalism and Communication](#), [Web Exclusives](#)

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