

Marquette University: Launches student-involved PR, advertising and communications agency with Trozzolo Communications Group

Posted on Thursday, Mar 10, 2022

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Diederich College of Communication partners with alumni to offer innovative experiential learning experience

MILWAUKEE — Marquette University's Diederich College of Communication has partnered with Trozzolo Communication Group of Kansas City, Missouri, to launch the [Carl Collective](#), a student-involved public relations, advertising and communications agency in Milwaukee.

The Carl Collective will be based near the Marquette campus and will partner with clients in the region on a range of services across the marketing communication mix. Founded in 1989, Marquette alumnus-led Trozzolo is recognized as one of the top independent communications firms in the Midwest. It offers a full suite of services, from advertising and public relations to branding, digital, media and video services.

“This innovative partnership is an exciting opportunity and is a great example of Marquette’s mission to engage with leading community partners and offer a transformational educational experience for our students,” said Dr. Sarah Feldner, dean of the Diederich College of Communication. “This is a big win for the students of today and tomorrow, as they can gain real-world experience they can’t get anywhere else, while adding real value to the clients of the Carl Collective. We expect the agency will serve as a strong recruitment tool for our college.”

Unlike typical student-involved agencies at the university level, the Carl Collective will offer Marquette students the opportunity to work in a professional agency setting on real client work, while being mentored by professionals in the industry. It will expose students to real-world business problems and solutions, and an opportunity to be part of developing and executing the strategies and tactics to solve those business problems for clients.

“We hope to make a significant impact and contribution to the mission of Marquette University,” said Angelo Trozzolo, Marquette alumnus and president of Trozzolo Communication Group. “At the same time, and through the same effort, we will create a well-regarded and world-class communications agency serving best-in-class Milwaukee organizations. We expect to establish a long-term presence in Milwaukee through this partnership.”

The Carl Collective will be led by Marquette alumnus Erik Brooks, owner of Brooks Communications, which is being acquired by Trozzolo Communications Group as part of the deal. Brooks has more than 25 years of experience in journalism, corporate communications and community engagement, leading his own firm the last two years. Dave Wilcox, professional-in-residence for strategic communication, will act as the staff adviser for the Marquette students.

Trozzolo and Brooks are 1997 graduates of Marquette University and met while working for the *Marquette Tribune*. They were also college roommates for two years.

“I’m excited to reunite with Angelo and return to my alma mater to help today’s students prepare for a career in communications,” Brooks said. “With the power of Trozzolo and Marquette behind us, there is a big opportunity to grow the Carl Collective into a powerhouse local agency. We start on that journey today.”

The Carl Collective plans to staff the agency with leading communications professionals and grow quickly. Marquette students will have the opportunity to apply for positions and work in conjunction with the agency’s professional staff. Besides working on the day-to-day business of the agency, students will be provided intangible opportunities such as leadership, HR issues, accounting and finances, and more.

The agency is named for Carl Schrank, longtime professor and student adviser at Marquette who passed away in 2019. Schrank earned both bachelor’s and master’s

degrees from Marquette. He served in the U.S. Navy and worked for Motorola in Chicago and Wisconsin Bell before joining the Marquette faculty. He was a member of the Public Relations Society of America College of Fellows, served as president of the Milwaukee Advertising Club, as national president of the Marquette Alumni Association, and was active in many other professional and civic organizations. He was popular with faculty and students alike.

“We cannot think of a better namesake for this new firm,” said Provost Kimo Ah Yun, who previously served as dean of the Diederich College of Communication. “Carl touched countless lives of students at Marquette, and his lasting legacy and incredible impact will live on through the Diederich College and the agency that bears his name.”