



FALL/WINTER 2022

# The LOOP

## YOUR NEXT CHALLENGE

2018 WORLD CHAMPION OF PUBLIC SPEAKING  
RAMONA SMITH ENCOURAGES US TO GROW, LEARN,  
AND HAVE FUN AS SHE SHARES HER JOURNEY

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**A periodical of District 103 Toastmasters covering Downtown Chicago along with the South and West sides of Chicago & suburbs. Providing inspired information since 2022.**

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#### Cover Photo

Ramona J. Smith, 2018 World Champion of Public Speaking



## EDITORS' NOTES

I believe we all love a good challenge. Let's be honest, it's why we joined Toastmasters in the first place.

I guess I'll speak for myself. Initially, I joined Toastmasters to improve my speaking skills so I could prepare to take on the challenge of addressing large audiences. It was a big challenge indeed, especially for someone who very much identified as a shy person. But I knew that the exposure and environment of Toastmasters would put me in a position to accomplish this goal.



Alhaji Abubakar  
2022-2023 Loop Editor in Chief

Here we are, three years after I first joined. You may be wondering what my progress looks like. Can I address a large audience? Yes! Will I be nervous while doing so? Oh yes! But this is just one of the lessons I learned on this journey... the more engaged you are as a Toastmaster the greater the challenges you face. And the greater the challenges you face the more you grow. As a result of using Toastmasters as an opportunity to challenge myself I have grown in ways I would have never imagined. For instance, I can now say I am developed in the skill of giving last minute speeches. I have realized that nerves are a natural part of presenting. I also look forward to my speech evaluations and feedback so I can continue to improve.

As you dive into our latest issue, here is my message to you: Never forget the original challenge which led you to become a Toastmaster. And always be open to the additional challenges that arise during your Toastmasters journey.

*Alhaji Abubakar*  
2022-2023 Loop Editor in Chief

Human nature is such that we like challenges and conquering them.

Although Toastmasters provides many challenges, life tends to provide others. As Toastmasters, it's not always the conquest of a challenge that we find stimulating. It is sometimes the fight itself. It is that fight that may provide a lesson that we can carry further and provide the strength we need in order to power through it. In the cases of Dr. AlyceAnn and Martha, each of them have some very tough challenges to plow through. Those are challenges that can't be dealt with alone. They are both going to need our support not only as Toastmasters, but also human beings.



Prince Leftridge, II; DTM  
2022-2023 D103 Loop Layout Editor  
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*Prince Leftridge, II*  
2022-2023 Loop Layout /Graphics Editor

# Where the Magic Begins



*Shanita Akintonde*

*2022-2023 District 103 Public Relations Manager*



As Toastmasters, storytelling is in our DNA. Who doesn't love a good story? That was the question asked to participants of the Toastmasters International 2022 Conference. For those who need to jumpstart their ability to share tales, here are three (3) suggestions:

- 1) Please pick up a book and peruse its pages of prose (I recently read Viola Davis's biography, *Finding Me* — highly recommend!).
- 2) Make an audible selection – listen to a lovely literary litany.
- 3) Call an old friend and communicate memorable moments.

Regardless of format, seek stories.

I've been reading, listening to, and telling stories since I first learned to spell bologna's first name. For as long as I can remember, my beautiful mother — Mary Catherine — read to me. My maternal manuscript magistrate would reenact stories with such passion that my mind would orbit her inspiration galaxy; my body was suddenly forced to watch

and wave. Our story time rituals brought me so much joy that after each turned page, a cacophony of bubbles burst overhead, showering my mother and me with messy squeals. Not to be outdone, Mary Catherine would promptly mop my face with a tsunami of kisses before we toppled over into a basket of giggles.

Words matter. Books are one way, and speaking another way that words matter. I encourage D103 clubs to create space for storytelling this fall. Consider telling a tale to fellow Toastmasters, whether original or recycled. Scary is cool, but nice is alright, too. For October, think of it as a Toastmasters Trick or Treat Storytelling Session. In November, consider Gobble, Gobble Tall Turkey Tales.

Stories are an excellent way to connect with audiences, as our brains are hardwired to hear them. I've improved at sharing stories and weaving at least one into every keynote speech or client presentation I deliver. The results are transformative. Toastmasters is where my storytelling journey began. I invite you to take that trip with me this fall. Dig into your speaker suitcase, pull out a story, and FALL in love with stories this fall!

## District 103 Toastmasters

*For VPPRs, VPMs and other special Invitees*

On select Tuesdays, from **6-7:30 pm**, Toastmasters International, Inc. (TMs) VPPRs and special guests are invited to join **2022-23 PRM Shanita Baraka Akintonde, DTM**, to dish, LISTEN, and learn how to figuratively BURN the TM brand on hearts, minds, and souls around the world so others can see something good communicators already know —how great it is to be a Toastmaster!

For more details contact [D103PRnow@gmail.com](mailto:D103PRnow@gmail.com).

# TABLE TALK TUESDAYS








# Grow, Learn, HAVE FUN

*Interview of Ramona J. Smith by Jessica Thompson*

It took Ramona J. Smith three years to get to the World Championship stage. She competed in several club contests and even placed 3rd at the District Level. However, she still felt defeated during the process. "I was ego driven," Ramona said. "I wanted to win. I wanted the trophy, and I wanted to say I was the World Championship Speaker." It was not until she had a complete mind shift that she began to climb the ladder to the World Championship stage. "I started to firmly believe in myself by achieving goals," she said. "Taking that energy into 2018 helped me not to lean so much into the trophy, because whether you gave me the trophy or not, I already knew I was a champion."

On August 25th, 2018, Ramona surpassed ~30,000 other speakers from around the world to become the 2018 World Champion of Public Speaking in Chicago, IL. Her speech, titled "Still Standing," delved into how she overcame several life challenges such as dropping out of college, divorce and falling short during a few speech contests. "We are all Toastmasters, and we all experience ups and downs but even though we go through those challenges we still overcome. We still rise up," she said.

Ramona's journey began in 2010. In her hometown Cleveland, Ohio, she joined her local Toastmasters club to polish her skills as a motivational speaker. "I loved the culture of the club," she said. "Everyone was friendly, everybody was happy, and it was fun. And I was doing something I loved to do." She later moved to Hawthorne, California, and joined a corporate Toastmasters club where she started to become interested in participating in club contests. In 2015,

Ramona was sponsored by a friend to attend the Toastmasters' World Championship of Public Speaking at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada, as a spectator and see the magic of public speaking unfold on the World Championship stage. "When you have a dream and you really want to experience it, you have to put yourself in that environment."

Ramona knew early on that she wanted to be a public speaker, even before knowing she could turn it into a profession. "I always loved being on the stage and just having that control. I love bringing that energy to a large group of people. I love the impact. I love the results." When she witnessed World Champion Mohammad Qahtani win on the World Championship stage in 2015, the spark was lit. "I know I can do this. I know I want to do this, and I am going to do this," she said at that time.

Her mantra during the 2018 contest was "Grow, learn and have fun." It is a mantra she believes will help other fellow Toastmasters participate in their club contests. "I think when people think about competing, they are thinking about the International contest only," she said. "Go up there and release anything about winning and do not worry about that. Prepare and do the best you can and either way you're going to learn something, you're going to grow from it, and you're going to have fun."

After winning the World Championship of Public Speaking contest, Ramona moved on from teaching and jumped into becoming a full-





# Grow, Learn, HAVE FUN

*Interview of Ramona J. Smith by Jessica Thompson*

time motivational speaker. With this shift in her career, she said she was “finally able to take myself seriously as a public speaker.” Ramona visited various countries such as Dubai, Oman, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Kuwait, India, Malaysia, Brazil, India, Saudi Arabia and other district conferences as the newly minted World Champion. “Toastmasters gave me that exposure,” she said. Ramona was the second African-American woman and the fifth woman overall to win the public-speaking championship since it started in 1938. Another historic first was that three women took the top three spots: Zifang “Sherrie” Su (2nd place) and Anita Fain Taylor (3rd place). Additionally, the Toastmasters International President was a woman that year: Lark Doley, DTM. Ramona is proud to be part of this historic year: “I’m in the history books for that one, this made me walk in my purpose fully.” She also wants her fellow Toastmasters to do the same — to walk in their purpose and take advantage of the available tools Toastmasters International has to offer. “You need to take full



advantage of everything this organization has, otherwise you are wasting your money,” she said. “No one is saying you must make it to the World Championship stage, but it’s going to develop your skills. So, why not take advantage of this investment you have been making for all these years.” As Ramona continues to accelerate towards her public speaking and entrepreneurial goals, she also plans to assist others to do the same. She wants to train children in public speaking and continue to educate future leaders. Not only does she have a YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/monalisa110>) and website (<https://www.ramonajsmith.com/>) where she gives tips and coaching services regarding public speaking, but she has also inspired her 10-year-old son to do the same. “I put the microphone in his hand,” she said. “I don’t want him to have that fear.” Moreover, the support she receives from her husband, family and friends also makes the experience that much more rewarding. She has no plans for slowing down when it comes to public speaking and focusing on becoming a brilliant businesswoman. “I’m going to always be a speaker ... and I’m even going to learn sign language — in case something happens to my voice — because I was born to do this.”



## CLUB CONTEST SEASON IS UPON US!!

### Benefits of competing in the upcoming Evaluation & International Speech Contests

- Speech contests are a great way to further develop your speaking and leadership skills
- Speech contests are a challenge in areas such as time management and other things we learn in Toastmasters
- Stretches your creativity and sharpens your storytelling
- An achievement all can take pride from being a part of and enjoy as well, while building a network of companions



**Won't you take your next challenge and compete?**

# RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE OF COMPETING

Barry Mixon, Robert McKenzie, Melody Byrd, Yvette Beasley, Maren Jenkins

We asked D103 members to tell us about their learnings, growth and the overall challenge of taking part in speech contests.



**Barry Mixon, District 103 International Speech Champion, 2022-23**

**Home Club:** Broadview Toastmasters

**Which level(s) of the Toastmaster Speech contest have you participated in?** Club, Area, Division, District, Regional Quarterfinal and Semifinals

**Why did you initially decide to participate in the speech contest?** I joined Toastmasters in January 2009. During my first meeting they mentioned that the club was looking for members to compete in the International Speech Contest (ISC). I am a competitive person, by nature, so signed up. I never thought anything would happen. It just sounded like fun.

**What was your biggest takeaway from taking on the challenge of competing? Did you learn anything about yourself?** For me, the best part about competing in any of the Toastmasters contests is learning how to tell a story. I love the whole concept of having only seven minutes and thirty seconds to bring everything all together. All your feelings and emotions, right there, for one brief and shining moment. It is an absolutely indescribable feeling, to stand there on the stage, just you, the audience and your story. For me, the contests took away decades of anger and self-esteem issues. Competing in the contests taught me that I had something to say that people actually wanted to listen to.

**Are you planning on participating in future speech contests? Why or why not?** Absolutely! In my mind, the best thing about Toastmasters are the speech contests. I love the challenge of competing, it is epic. I especially like competing against people who seem to think it's easy to win a Toastmasters speech championship. Even after winning a total of six District-level championships, I can assure you that it is not.

**What is one piece of advice you would give a Toastmaster who has never competed in a speech contest?**

To have any hope of winning at any level, especially at the District level, then you have got to tell a story. A speech will never beat a story! You have to TELL A STORY; something that has meaning for you. Something that you are passionate about. If you tell a story from your heart... you will be very difficult to beat. I got to the District level of ISC only after being in Toastmasters for four months... Why? Because I talked about something that I loved: "Star Wars. It was a life-changing experience for me.



# RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE OF COMPETING

Barry Mixon, Robert McKenzie, Melody Byrd, Yvette Beasley, Maren Jenkins

We asked D103 members to tell us about their learnings, growth and the overall challenge of taking part in speech contests.



	Robert McKenzie	Melody Byrd
<b>Home club</b>	New Faith Toastmasters	Prosperity Toastmasters
<b>Which level(s) of the Toastmaster Speech contest have you participated in?</b>	Club and Area	Club, Area, Division and District
<b>Why did you initially decide to participate in the speech contest?</b>	World Championship of Public Speaking	Barry Mixon, my coach, saw something in me and encouraged me to participate. Then after attending my first TLI, I ran on stage and declared "I will be on this stage soon winning an award." So I made my declaration come true!
<b>What was your biggest takeaway from taking on the challenge of competing? Did you learn anything about yourself?</b>	I wasn't good enough	I learned that with motivation and a coach, it is possible to win and place! In 2011, I won 3rd place in the D30 speech contest! It took courage, persistence and a willingness to step out of my comfort zone.
<b>Are you planning on participating in future speech contests? Why or why not?</b>	Yes	Preparing to win a contest takes a time commitment that I cannot do again any time soon. I am not more interested now in coaching others and building new clubs.
<b>What is one piece of advice you would give a Toastmaster who has never competed in a speech contest?</b>	Just try!	Just do it! Get a good coach and an accountability partner. That will make a huge difference.

# RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE OF COMPETING

Barry Mixon, Robert McKenzie, Melody Byrd, Yvette Beasley, Maren Jenkins



Yvette Beasley



Maren Jenkins

	Yvette Beasley	Maren Jenkins
<b>Home club</b>	Toastmasters of Blue Cross Blue Shield	West Suburban club #930
<b>Which level(s) of the Toastmaster Speech contest have you participated in?</b>	Club, Area, Division and District	Club, Area and Division
<b>Why did you initially decide to participate in the speech contest?</b>	I was encouraged by my Area Director.	First time, no one else was interested in competing in the International Speech, and I wanted our club to be represented at Area, so I competed – and lost. That made me want to try again, and that second time I got up to Division level.
<b>What was your biggest takeaway from taking on the challenge of competing? Did you learn anything about yourself?</b>	Understanding that confidence is key, you are telling this story. There is no wrong way to tell your story. Tapping into the communication skills developed during Toastmaster's journey will equip you for success. I was able to conquer my fears, speak with passion and tell my story.	I had to keep improving my speech for the next level. I learned that I have way too much to say in 5-7 minutes, and it's challenging to get enough time and focus to really hone a speech for competitive purposes, but it was worth it – I got much more audience engagement (some good laughs!) the last time I gave that speech.
<b>Are you planning on participating in future speech contests? Why or why not?</b>	Yes, I want to try again. I made it to the District level and believe I can grace that stage again.	Not at this time. I'm more focused on helping put on contests, so others can have the opportunity to compete.
<b>What is one piece of advice you would give a Toastmaster who has never competed in a speech contest?</b>	In the words of my Granny, "Nothing beats failure but a try!". You will never know what's in you until you try. The fact that you faced your fears, took the stage and gave your voice a platform, this will become your motivation and strength over anxiety and fear of failure. You tried it!"	Figure out your memorable message. Support this message with every word, story and sub-point – then close crisply reiterating what you want your audience to remember.



# PROGRAM QUALITY DIRECTOR'S NOTES

SAM SUKUMAR, DTM



Fall is here and surely is having its signature way of announcing its arrival — a play between dampness in the air and the bright sunlight, the rustling sound as we walk on dry leaves and the vibrant colors of the leaves just before they glide down. As Toastmasters, the fall season is a reminder for us to fast track and achieve the 2022 goals we set for ourselves.

As Program Quality Director (aka PQD), I have been constantly monitoring members' progression through Pathways — enrollment, engagement and excellence. I am proud to share our District is doing well with all these 3 Es. All credit to the Vice Presidents of Education of our clubs for their commitment and work done in this space. Thank you, VPEs.

A few of our members are so very driven and committed along their Pathways journey. They truly deserve to be applauded for their high Pathways level completions this Toastmasters year. The top three level completion achievers are:

1. 10 levels completed - Sheila Edens-Brown, EC5, PM5, Toastmasters of Palos Heights (Sheila has also

completed the Pathways mentor program)

2. 6 Levels completed - Christine Gomez, DL5, PM1, The Lynda Morrill Club

3. 5 Levels completed - AlyceAnn Crump, DTM, Extreme Possibilities Toastmasters Club

From July 2022 to September 2022, we had 108 level completions for 87 clubs in our district. This is a good achievement. However, it averages to just over 1 level completion per club. I strongly believe we could be doing better.

For District 103 to be a viable district, we would need to achieve a certain number of level completions for each level (Table 1).

Pathways Level	Goal to achieve by June 30, 2022	Monthly avg. needed to achieve goal
Level 1	176	15
Level 2	176	15
Level 3	88	8
Level 4	44	4
Level 5	44	4

Table 1: Pathways Level Completions for D103 clubs, July 2022 - June 2023

## 25 FOR 25 BY 25

**First 25 clubs to achieve 6 DCP goals before December 25, 2022, will receive a gift of the club's choice valued at \$25**

For more information, visit

<https://www.d103toastmasters.org/education-training/programs/25x25x25/>



# PROGRAM QUALITY DIRECTOR'S NOTES

SAM SUKUMAR, DTM

Table 2 tells us where we are for the first quarter of the current Toastmasters year, and also where we should be. We are doing extremely well on completions for levels 4 and 5, great job! Keep it up, and let's all encourage and support our fellow members who are working through levels 1, 2 and 3. As you can see, doing the math to achieve our target totals for the year, we should have 15 level 1 completions, and 15 level 2 completions, across D103 every month. With this in mind and knowing your club's composition, I am sure you all can come up with appropriate strategies to complete more levels 1 and 2.

Table 2: Quarterly Level Completions as of September 30, 2022 – Targeted Compared with Actual

Pathways Level	Level Compl. Targeted by Sept 30, 2022	Actual Compl. as of 9/30/2022	Difference
Level 1	45	28	-17
Level 2	45	19	-26
Level 3	24	20	-4
Level 4	12	25	+13
Level 5	12	16	+4

A club-wise breakdown lookup indicates 53 of our clubs do not yet have a single level completion this Toastmasters year, which started in July 2022. We hope this means that members are giving their speeches – but perhaps have not remembered to log back into Base Camp and complete the post-assessment? If so, easy enough to remind members, and have them trigger the level completion process when they have done all their speeches for that level! Please reach out to your Club Officers, Area Directors and myself should you need any support to progress through Pathways. Find your leaders and their email addresses on our D103 leadership page: <https://www.d103toastmasters.org/about/leadership/>.

Remember that another key resource for our district is the D103 Pathways Specialist team: <https://www.d103toastmasters.org/education-training/programs/pathways/gurus/>. Training sessions are scheduled throughout the year; check your email for information from District 103, or check the D103 website calendar: <https://www.d103toastmasters.org/calendar/>.

Wishing you well as you cruise along your Pathways journey.

Kindest regards,  
Sam Sukumar

## WINTER 2022 CLUB LEADERSHIP TRAINING MAKEUP SESSIONS

**DIVISION S**  
HOSTED BY: MELODY BYRD  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2022



**DIVISION B**  
HOSTED BY: SAMUEL BROOKS  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2022



**DIVISION C**  
HOSTED BY: ALYCEANN CRUMP  
MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 2023



**DIVISION F**  
HOSTED BY: CHERYL LANE  
MONDAY, JANUARY 25, 2023



If you missed the dynamic TLI session on November 5th, don't worry. Scan one of the four QR codes to register for one or all of the makeup sessions. Each of these sessions is designed to supercharge your club toward becoming Distinguished or better.



# 2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

## UPDATE: Save-the-Date!!

The 2023 District 103 Annual Hybrid Conference is set for **April 21-22, 2023** at the beautiful and classy Elements by The Odyssey, 16232 LaGrange Road, Orland Park, IL 60467. Overnight accommodations at the adjacent Homewood Suites by Hilton are available to attendees at a conference reduced rate.

D103 Conference Manager, Elizabeth L. Stevenson, DTM, announces this year's theme is: "**Drive Your Vision to a Higher Ground.**"

Conference registration will open next month and members will be able to sign up to attend the Annual Conference. Benefits of attending include: networking opportunities with fellow Toastmasters and District Leaders; opportunities to hear proficient speakers compete in the Evaluation Speech and the International Speech Contests; and the chance to elect the 2023-2024 District leadership team.

The keynote speaker and education session speakers will be announced at the time of registration. New this year: sponsorship opportunities.

Plan to "**Drive Your Vision to a Higher Ground**" at the 2023 D103 Annual Virtual Hybrid Conference!

There are also opportunities for you to be a part of the conference planning. Volunteers are needed in multiple roles. Simply contact Elizabeth L. Stevenson at [confmgr@d103toastmasters.org](mailto:confmgr@d103toastmasters.org) for more information.

A gallery of venue photos is on the next page.

Check back with the D103 *The Loop* for more updates, opportunities to volunteer, and details on sponsorship opportunities. Don't forget to save the date: **April 21-22, 2023!!**

Yours in service,  
Elizabeth L. Stevenson, DTM<sup>2</sup>, MS5  
[confmgr@d103toastmasters.org](mailto:confmgr@d103toastmasters.org)

2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID  
CONFERENCE  
DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

## VOLUNTEERS WANTED!



THERE ARE MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO BE A PART OF PLANNING THE 2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE. VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED IN MULTIPLE ROLES TO HELP DRIVE THE VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND. SIMPLY CONTACT ELIZABETH L. STEVENSON AT [CONFMGR@D103TOASTMASTERS.ORG](mailto:confmgr@d103toastmasters.org) FOR MORE INFORMATION.

*Volunteers needed in the following areas:*

*Registration • First Timers • DTM Ceremony • Floaters  
Tech Committee • Awards*

*.....and many more*

# 2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND



# CLUB GROWTH DIRECTOR'S NOTES

DUSHUN MOSLEY, DTM



This is the time of year when we turn our attention to helping people and realizing “what is our place in life.” Believing in ourselves is key to open the door to success in our lives — doing things we haven’t done before, and making sure that what we have done is successful.

Nature reminds us that there is an orderly process by which things work. Plants blossom in the spring and summer; in the fall, they lose their flowers, but the fall foliage breaks out in brilliant colors.

Everything has a process, including

Toastmasters. In Toastmasters, October signals a new membership dues cycle; we practice and have speech contests; and we even bring in new members and help them blossom into better speakers and leaders.

Remember the promises you made when you first became a Toastmaster. It’s not just about being a member. It’s about belonging. It’s about working on how to make better speeches. How to be better leaders, and help others do the same. Doing the work when called upon. Acting within the core values of integrity, respect, service and excellence during the conduct

of all Toastmasters activities. And inviting guests to meetings, for them to also benefit.

Just being a member is not enough – yes, we must pay our dues, and step up to leadership when called upon within our clubs and district. For speech contests, if you’re not stepping up to compete, take a role to help facilitate the contest. Study to be a successful leader – in your club, your district, at home, in your community. And enjoy this learning journey – as Toastmasters founder Ralph Smedley said: “We learn best in moments of enjoyment.”

The Toastmasters Pathways educational program can help us reach our personal communication and leadership goals. And by reaching our personal goals, our clubs will reach their goals, and our Areas and Divisions will reach their goals. With our clubs, Areas and Divisions reaching their goals, can you just hear District 103 bursting out in song to celebrate our members’ achievements!

This is the season to grow not die, please stay on top of WHY you wanted to be a Toastmaster. Remember: “Ain’t no half stepping.” Be the best you can be. Make the most of your membership.

## CLUB COACHES NEEDED

*Ready for Your Next Challenge?*

### *Benefits of being a Club Coach*

- *Using your skills to rebuild or strengthen a club*
- *Getting credit toward your DTM for Coaching*
- *2022-2023 District Service Credit*

*If you are interested in taking up this challenge, please contact the D103 Club Retention Chair, Martha Brock-Leftridge for more information.*





# 2022 - 2023 District 103 Club Growth Committee

The Club Coach Program is intended to partner experienced Toastmasters with a club that may be struggling. The purpose of this program is to help clubs increase their membership and improve the quality of their meetings. This year, Toastmasters International has revamped the Club Coach program and has added a greater incentive for members to coach clubs.

This 40–90-minute module is divided into two chapters.

Chapter I: Introduction to the Club Coach Program provides an overview of the program for club members, club officers, District leaders, and prospective club coaches.

Chapter II: Becoming a Club Coach looks more deeply at the requirements of the program.

Completion of both chapters is a requirement to participate in the Club Coach Program. Other eligibility requirements include:

Have completed, at a minimum:

- Level 2 in a path, Advanced Leader Bronze, or Advanced Communicator Bronze
- Are not currently coaching any other club
- Are not a current member of the club they wish to coach

- Have not been a member of the club to be coached during the past 6 months

Assuming the prospective club coach meets the eligibility requirements, they will:

- Be appointed by Toastmasters International headquarters to start their club coach term
- Serve as a club coach for a minimum of 6 months, up to a maximum of 2 program years
- Help the club reach Distinguished status (or better) in the Distinguished Club Program (DCP) during their club coach term

Clubs that are interested in needing a coach must meet the following requirements:

- Must have between 3 and 12 members
- Cannot be suspended
- Cannot have 2 club coaches currently appointed

Once a club has reached Distinguished or better, the coach is not only eligible for the coaching credit but also the credit for District Service. For more information, register to attend the club coach training on Thursday, December 1, 2022, at 6:00 pm CST to get more information on being a club coach.

## CLUB COACH TRAINING

*Are you interested in becoming a club coach but have questions or don't know where to begin?*

*Are you a club wondering a club coach is needed to steer the club toward success?*

Both of these pertinent questions and many others will be answered during the Club Coach Training Session scheduled for Thursday, December 1, 2022 at 6:00 pm Central Time

If you are interested in attending, please scan the QR code to register.

### *Requirements to be a Club Coach*

- Have completed, at a minimum: Level 2 in a path, Advanced Leader Bronze, or Advanced Communicator Bronze
- Are not currently coaching any other club
- Are not a current member of the club they wish to coach
- Have not been a member of the club to be coached during the past 6 months
- Be appointed by Toastmasters International headquarters to start their club coach term
- Serve as a club coach for a minimum of 6 months, up to a maximum of 2 program years
- Help the club reach Distinguished status (or better) in the Distinguished Club Program (DCP) during their club coach term



**Scan Me to Register**







# District 103 Statistics

Below, see a comparison of D103 statistics as of November for current year 2022-23 compared to prior years 2021-22 and 2020-21. These statistics capture the number of paid clubs; the number of member payments (received in the international website, via Club Central), and the number of distinguished clubs. Note that at this point in the Toastmasters year, there are typically very few clubs who have already achieved Distinguished status (5 of the 10 DCP goals).


## 2020-2021 District 103 Statistics



Paid Clubs	
Base	To Date
82	83
Goals	
Distinguished	84
Select Distinguished	85
President's Distinguished	87
Smedley Distinguished	89




Payments	
Base	To Date
2,892	100
Goals	
Distinguished	2,936
Select Distinguished	2,979
President's Distinguished	3,037
Smedley Distinguished	3,124




Distinguished Clubs	
Base	To Date
82	0
Goals	
Distinguished	33
Select Distinguished	37
President's Distinguished	41
Smedley Distinguished	46


## 2021-2022 District 103 Statistics



Paid Clubs	
Base	To Date
94	94
Goals	
Distinguished	96
Select Distinguished	97
President's Distinguished	99
Smedley Distinguished	102




Payments	
Base	To Date
3,351	182
Goals	
Distinguished	3,402
Select Distinguished	3,452
President's Distinguished	3,519
Smedley Distinguished	3,620




Distinguished Clubs	
Base	To Date
94	0
Goals	
Distinguished	38
Select Distinguished	43
President's Distinguished	47
Smedley Distinguished	52


## 2022-2023 District 103 Statistics



Paid Clubs	
Base	To Date
86	71
Goals	
Distinguished	86
Select Distinguished	87
President's Distinguished	89
Smedley Distinguished	91



Payments	
Base	To Date
2,893	1,330
Goals	
Distinguished	2,922
Select Distinguished	2,980
President's Distinguished	3,038
Smedley Distinguished	3,125



Distinguished Clubs	
Base	To Date
86	0
Goals	
Distinguished	35
Select Distinguished	39
President's Distinguished	43
Smedley Distinguished	48

Source: District Performance, <http://dashboards.toastmasters.org/District.aspx?id=103>



## Pathfinders Toastmasters Club - Diverse, Dynamic, and Dedicated to Excellence

For nearly 65 years, the [Pathfinders Toastmasters Club](#) has brought its members together from all walks of life to pursue excellence in community public speaking. Located in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago, Pathfinders is a highly diverse club, with its members hailing from different states and countries, including India, Malaysia, Peru, Thailand, and Vietnam. Members also belong to different generations and have different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Today, the majority of Pathfinders club members are women.

Professionally, Pathfinders club members represent a wide range of industries and sectors, from academia, law, and philanthropy to computer science, consulting, and engineering. Some of Pathfinders' members are still pursuing their education. For example, one of the club's newest members, Don Assamongkol, is a senior at the University of Chicago. While Pathfinders members may be at different stages of their careers and engaged in different professional journeys, they all share the same goal of becoming stronger and more effective communicators.

"Diversity is one of our club's greatest strengths; our members come from around the globe," said Pathfinders President Sandra Washington. "We have a member who's an undergraduate in college and members who are retired. Each member brings a unique perspective."

In addition to being a highly diverse club, Pathfinders has

remained a dynamic club during the pandemic by quickly pivoting to virtual meetings and, more recently, hybrid meetings. It continues to attract new members each year and has received the President's Distinguished Club award for three years in a row. In 2022, Vice President of Public Relations, Maria Zepeda-Godinez, was recognized by District 103 for her consistent posting on social media on behalf of the club.

What is the secret to Pathfinders' success? Consistency and discipline are two key ingredients. For example, at the end of every meeting, Vice President of Education Yesenia Guerrero assigns roles for the next meeting and shares the club's progress with its members on a regular basis. Pathfinders club members know that every time they give a speech, they are helping the club achieve its Distinguished Club Program goals. The effort is a collective one and enables Pathfinders to remain one of the most successful clubs in District 103.

It is clear that Pathfinders is dedicated to excellence, not only for its club members, but also for District 103. Multiple club members serve in District-level roles, including President Sandra Washington as the Pathways Program Manager and Sergeant at Arms Jessica Thompson as the Media Relations/Instagram Manager.

If you are interested in learning more about visiting this diverse and dynamic club that is dedicated to excellence, please visit the [club's website](#) and follow Pathfinders on social media ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)). Guests are welcome to attend club meetings on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 7pm.





# Club Spotlight

*Spotlighting clubs and their events  
For entries, please email [newsletter@d103toastmasters.org](mailto:newsletter@d103toastmasters.org)*

# Welcome

DISTRICT 103's

# NEWEST CLUB!

The members of newly chartered Leading Ladies club are ready to make their MARQUEE on the world! Founded by our very own Public Relations Manager, Shanita Baraka Akintonde, MBA, M.Ed., DTM, Leading Ladies work hard and are in charge! The 25-member female-focused group is the FIRST club chartered in D103 history with content centered on topics about women, for women, and created by women or those who love and support them.

We SEE you, Leading Ladies! Here's a warm welcome to the Toastmasters family.



# BELLWOOD TOASTMASTERS



<https://bellwoodtoastmasters.com>

## START THE NEW YEAR WITH SUCCESS!

### OPEN HOUSE

TUESDAY JANUARY 10, 2023

6:45 PM CENTRAL TIME

#### LEARN TO

- Organize your thoughts
- Think quick on your feet
- Develop Meeting Skills
- Build Confidence
- Practice Leadership Skills
- Speak with Clarity & Fluency
- Provide & Receive Positive Feedback

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

Mamie Burks

[vpm@bellwoodtoastmasters.com](mailto:vpm@bellwoodtoastmasters.com)

(708) 595-4933

Martha Brock-Leftridge

[vpe@bellwoodtoastmasters.com](mailto:vpe@bellwoodtoastmasters.com)

(480) 570-1118



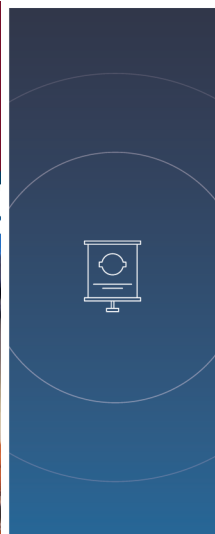
# Club Spotlight

*Spotlighting clubs and their events  
For entries, please email newsletter@d103toastmasters.org*

**47<sup>th</sup>**  
Anniversary

## Congratulations to Broadview Toastmasters!

**BROADVIEW TOASTMASTERS  
CLUB #3303**



**TOASTMASTERS  
INTERNATIONAL**

### CLUB ANNIVERSARY CERTIFICATE

presented to

**Broadview Toastmasters**

for the achievement of the club's

**47th Anniversary**

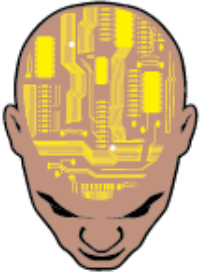
on

August 2022

*Matthew A. Kinsey*  
Matt Kinsey, DTM  
International President

*Daniel Rex*  
Daniel Rex  
Chief Executive Officer





# Tech Tips

## Prince Leftridge, II

This section of the newsletter is designed to give you, the reader, tips on how to effectively use technology and various technological topics when applicable.

It is getting close to that most wonderful time of the year where sleigh bells and coins in pockets will be jingling. This year, let's take some of those coins and invest in upgrading your technology.

I know a large majority of you will wait until Black Friday or Cyber Monday so you can get the best deals. However, one thing I am urging you to pay close attention to when you are making a computer purchase is the specifications. I realize that many of the specs may look like Greek (or Geekspeak). However, in learning those specifications, you will be able to purchase a computer you can enjoy for years to come.

Just like joining Toastmasters, there has to be a "why". Why should I spend a fair chunk of my hard-earned money on a new computer?

First, let me start with the system requirements for Zoom Virtual Background:

### Windows

#### Image only without a green screen

- Zoom desktop client, version 5.2.0 or higher
- Windows 7, 8, and 10 (64-bit)
- Supported processors
  - Intel Core i3-5000 or higher
  - Intel Core i5-3000 or higher
  - Intel Core i7-3000 or higher
  - Intel Core i9-8000 or higher
  - AMD
    - 8 logical cores
    - 2.0Ghz or higher

The above is the requirements for using a virtual background

or blur background in Zoom. For Mac OS users, your computer must be on MacOS 10.13 or higher. Processors must be i7 or i9 4th Generation or higher.

However, that is only the tip of the iceberg. You also want to upgrade that computer for security reasons. Older computers have hardware based security holes that can be exploited very easily. Another benefit is more efficient performance. For instance, many of those older machines use platter-based hard drives (HDDs) which transfer data slower than the newer solid state drives (SSDs). Some of those Black Friday specials may have a HDD and 4 GB of (RAM {Random Access Memory}) which may be barely sufficient for very light duty but is woefully inadequate when doing other functions.

It is recommended to purchase a computer with a minimum of 16 GB of RAM. As for processors, look at computers that have a 10th, 11th, or 12th generation i5, i7, or i9 Intel processor. For those who like AMD processors, go for a Ryzen 5xxx or the newer Ryzen 7xxx. MacOS computers would need to have an i7, i9, or the new M1 processor. The memory requirement would be the same.

Speaking of RAM, phrases like DDR4 and DDR5 may not mean anything to most folks but those are the latest forms of memory. DDR5 is the fastest you can get currently. Anything that has specifications for older memory such as DDR3 is not worth purchasing because it will be using older componentry that may have security risks.

After purchasing that new computer, make sure it is updated to the most current patches possible before you start using it. Most of the time, customers don't know whether a computer is imaged with an updated version of the OS and all software. Updating this computer will make sure that any software based security holes are patched before you put this computer on the Internet. This also includes hardware updates. Computers such as HP, Dell, and Lenovo each have tools to easily update the hardware drivers.

# KEEPING YOU IN THE LOOP

INSPIRED AND PERTINENT INFORMATION YOU WILL NEED



DISTRICT 103

# PATHWAYS

TRAINING TEAM

## What's Your Next Challenge in Pathways?

By Sandra Washington, DTM, D103 Pathways Program Manager

In October, the Pathways Specialists invited you to dig deeper and become more familiar with all the projects and assignments in Pathways. Congratulations to our winner for the Pathways Halloween Scavenger Hunt, Gina Sumpter! She successfully searched through the Pathways projects to find the items on the scavenger list.

Also in October, Sandra facilitated the class "How to Get Pathways Credit for Things You're Already Doing." Attendees discovered how easy it is to complete projects in Levels 3, 4 and 5. For example, it's possible to get Pathways credit for organizing a speech contest, facilitating a session at a Toastmasters conference, or doing the PR work for your Toastmasters club. You can also get credit for projects at work and in the community.

If you missed these activities, you can still get help on Pathways. Contact Sandra to arrange a Pathways training session for your club by emailing [pathways@d103toastmasters.org](mailto:pathways@d103toastmasters.org).

*District 103 End of Year*

# Membership Extravaganza

**November 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022**

Any club that gets:  
1-4 new, dual, or reinstated memberships:  
Awarded: Club Banner Ribbon

5-10 new, dual, or reinstated memberships:  
Awarded: Club Banner Ribbon & Button

Please send the name(s) of the new, reinstated, or dual members to the Club Growth Director at [egd@d103toastmasters.org](mailto:egd@d103toastmasters.org)

For more information, please visit <https://d103toastmasters.org>



# KEEPING YOU IN THE LOOP

INSPIRED AND PERTINENT INFORMATION YOU WILL NEED

## DCP Changes

In the past, many of our clubs have had the goals to be Distinguished but are missing the 5 net new members. This prevents the club from officially achieving Distinguished status. As of July 1, 2022, your clubs now have a better chance as becoming Distinguished or better. Enlarge your membership by 3 net members (after replacing any lost members) and get 5 or more goals and your club will be Distinguished. This change runs until July 31, 2024 (two full years).

Now with 3 net new members needed, you can achieve the Distinguished status and bring your club the recognition it deserves.

None of the other requirements have changed. Make sure your club is getting the goals required to complete the Distinguished requirements listed below.

- Distinguished 5 Goals and Net 3 more members as compared to baseline at June 30, 2022
- Select Distinguished 7 Goals and Net 3 more members as compared to baseline at June 30, 2022
- President's Distinguished 9 Goals and Net 3 more members as compared to baseline at June 30, 2022



Are you interested in working with youth? Would you like to teach young people the art of public speaking? Do you want to learn how to become a coordinator of a Youth Leadership Program (YLP)?

If you have any questions about the Youth Leadership Program, feel free to review the details on the Toastmasters International website. Visit <https://www.toastmasters.org/education/youth-leadership-program>

For details about the informational meeting, call Ivory Gwin at 847-217-0864 or e-mail [ig2387@att.com](mailto:ig2387@att.com).



# HELP WANTED

DO YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH THE FOLLOWING TOOLS?

- › ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR
- › ADOBE PHOTOSHOP
- › ADOBE CREATIVE CLOUD
- › ADOBE EXPRESS
- › CANVA
- › MICROSOFT PUBLISHER\*

DO YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH THE FOLLOWING SKILLS?

- › PAGE LAYOUT
- › GRAPHIC DESIGN
- › TYPESETTING

*We are looking for an Assistant Layout Editor!*

*Requirements:*

- *\* The candidate must have a Windows PC with a minimum of 16 GB of RAM. (Publisher does not run on a Macintosh nor does Macintosh have a program that can read Publisher (.pub) files {unless you have Parallels installed with Windows}).*
- *Candidates will need to furnish proof of their page layout and graphic design abilities to be reviewed by the Newsletter Team and Public Relations Manager*
- *Candidates may need work with tight deadlines and understand printing, graphic design, and other terminology.*

*If you are interested, please email [newsletter@d103toastmasters.org](mailto:newsletter@d103toastmasters.org) with your samples so we can review them and make our determination.*



# The LOOP

## Guidelines for Article Submission

- *Articles may be submitted to [newsletter@d103toastmasters.org](mailto:newsletter@d103toastmasters.org).*
- *Articles must be a maximum of 500 words or less, but not limited to that number dependent on content (Editors' discretion)\**
- *All high resolution (Minimum 1280x720) photographs, graphics, and artwork must be attached at the time of submission.*
- *If you have questions, please email [newsletter@d103toastmasters.org](mailto:newsletter@d103toastmasters.org).*
- *Next issue to be released by January 9, 2023*
- *Articles must be in by December 15, 2022*
- *Upcoming Schedule*
  - *Winter/Spring Issue drop date: March 13, 2023*
  - *Conference Issue Drop Date: May 8, 2023*
  - *Summer/Final Issue Drop Date: June 26, 2023*

**Note:**

- *Editors reserve the right to edit photographs, graphics, and submitted articles at their discretion*
- *Articles submitted after the stated deadlines may be slated for the next issue. No exceptions!*



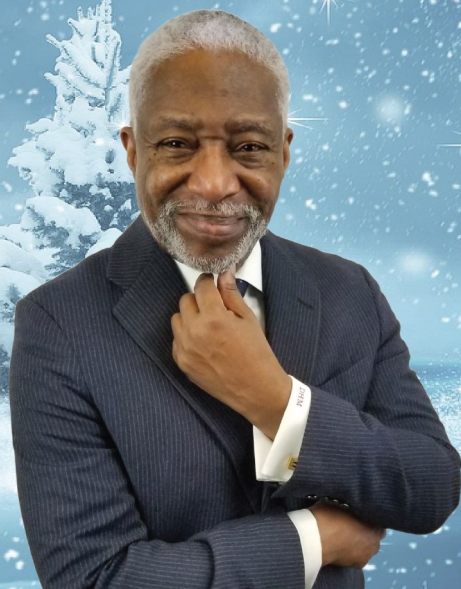
# Happy Holidays



*Dionne Leggin  
District Director*



*Sam Sukumar  
Program Quality Director*



*Dushun Mosley  
Club Growth Director*

*District 103 wishes all members and officers a very happy holiday season  
and a prosperously wonderful New Year!*