

COMMUNIC-8 VOLUME 23 ISSUE 4 - MAY 2025

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the Great District 8



From the Heart of the District 8 Director Charice L. Manor, DTM

Hello Fellow Toastmasters!

As my term as District Director comes to a close, I am filled with immense gratitude and pride. Serving alongside each of you this year has been an experience I will carry with me always.

At the heart of everything we do in the district is our mission — to build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence. Thank you for your dedication to our mission and to one another.

This year, our focus was to achieve Distinguished District status. We set a goal to build ten clubs and have at least 31 Distinguished or higher clubs. Unfortunately, we may be short of our goals BUT we should celebrate all the accomplishments we do have. No year is without its challenges. Yet as we adjusted through these hurdles, we assessed and leaned in to support each club to do their best. We've navigated challenges, celebrated triumphs, and grown not just as leaders and communicators—but as a community. Whether through club meetings, contests, conferences, or quiet moments of mentorship, each of you played a vital role in making this year meaningful.

To my fellow District leaders — Each of the 15 Area Directors, the Fabulous Five Division Leaders Sara, Paula, Tim, Evelyn and Burchell, our Admin manager, DTM Cal, our Finance Manager Lisa, our Public Relations Managers, Janet and Deborah, Webmaster DTM Tom, Audit Team, Alignment Team, District Leadership Committee, Education and TLI team, Club Growth and Demo Team, our Club Growth Director- Karen, our Program Quality Director- DTM Patti and every mentor by way of Past District Leaders, Region Advisors, experienced club members —thank you for your tireless service.

To our members — you are the heartbeat of Toastmasters. Your growth, your courage, and your resilience define the success of this district. Know that! The Great District 8 is not so great without you..

As we approach the end of the year, let us celebrate not just what we've achieved, but who we've become through the process. I encourage you to keep pushing your limits, supporting your fellow Toastmasters, and sharing your voice with confidence.

Though my time in this role ends, our journey continues. Thank you for the opportunity to serve "The Great District 8" as your District Director. It has truly been such an honor.

I hope to see you at the Hall of Fame Awards Luncheon on Saturday, August 9, 2025!

Many Blessings!
Charice Manor

Envision Y(our) Next Move: Toastmasters International 2025 Convention

 **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**





 **August 20-23, 2025**

 **REGISTER NOW**

The world of Toastmasters is coming together—and you are invited to take your next bold step at the 2025 International Convention, held in the historic and vibrant city of Philadelphia, PA.

Under this year's powerful theme—Envision Y(our) Next Move—Toastmasters from across the globe will gather to learn, compete, connect, and grow.

What awaits you:

-  The World Championship of Public Speaking® – where the best compete and stories change lives
-  Inspiring education sessions to sharpen your leadership and communication skills
-  Global networking with members, mentors, and new friends from every continent
-  A chance to walk the halls of greatness—both in Toastmasters and in Philly's rich history

Whether you attend in person or virtually, this is your opportunity to:

Envision new goals.

Embrace new tools.

Engage with a global movement of self-development.

 Registration is now open!

Learn more and secure your spot at:

 www.toastmasters.org/events/2025-international-convention

Let District 8 be part of the global conversation. Come be inspired, uplifted, and transformed.



🏆 Congratulations to Our District 8 Contest Winners!

We are proud to announce the winners from our District 8 Speech Contests held at the Annual Conference on April 26, 2025. Congratulations to these outstanding Toastmasters!

🏆 International Speech Contest

1st Place: Shaneice Miller Thomas
2nd Place: Seth McDonald
3rd Place: Brad Stockton

Shaneice will represent District 8 in the Region Quarterfinals. We're cheering you on, Shaneice!

🏆 Evaluation Contest

1st Place: Meg Langland
2nd Place: Patrick Hunt
3rd Place: Alexa Dickson

Thank you to all our contestants, judges, and volunteers who made the contests a success!



Pictured from left to right:

- 2nd Place: Seth McDonald
- 1st Place: Shaneice Miller Thomas
- 3rd Place: Brad Stockton
- District 8 Director Charice Manor



1st Place: Meg Langland



2nd Place: Patrick Hunt

3rd Place: Alexa Dickson

Beat the Clock Membership Drive Is On!



From May 1 to June 30, all clubs are invited to participate in Toastmasters International's Beat the Clock membership drive. Add five or more new, dual, or reinstated members to your club and earn a special ribbon for your banner—plus recognition in the District!

- ◆ Now is a great time to invite guests, follow up with visitors, and showcase the value of Toastmasters in your community.

Let's finish strong and grow together.



Achieving Excellence – PQD Update

By Patti Howard, DTM – Program Quality Director

Pathways Progress & Support

- 270 total Pathways levels completed so far!
- 23 members earned Triple Crowns (3+ levels)
- Join "Unlock the Power of Pathways" sessions to stay on track
- If your Pathways records look off, contact: pqd@dist8tm.org

Distinguished Clubs

- President's Distinguished: South County Toastmasters
- Select Distinguished: MasterToasters
- Distinguished: Ozark Orators, Centene Speaks, Crossroads, Gem City Toastmasters, and Capital City (IL)



🎉 30 more clubs are within reach! Push forward to finish strong.

Time for Club Officer Elections!

Club Officer Elections should take place during May and June. New officers begin their term on July 1st. Once elected:

- Club Secretaries must submit the updated officer list in Club Central by June 30
- Send a copy of your officer list to pqd@dist8tm.org



Don't forget: Officer training is scheduled for June 28th at the Summer TLI.

Club Growth News You Can Use

By Karen Dew – Club Growth Director

Welcome to Our Newest Club!

Congratulations to Coldwell Banker Toastmasters for submitting their Club Charter payment and working toward full charter strength of 20 members!

Renewals by Division (April Totals)

- Division A – 239 members
- Division B – 141 members
- Division C – 132 members
- Division E – 104 members
- Division F – 203 members
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🏆 Junior Padfolio Drawing Winners

Division A: Gary White, Neil D'Souza, Richard Hoelscher

Division B: Henry Bedu-Mensah, Lawson Calhoun, Melissa Kelley

Division C: Cheryl Hillman, Storm Wolff, Anwar Azeem

Division E: Deepa Sharma, Chinenyenwagbara, Amita Brahmbhatt

Division F: Dianne Johnson, Mia Ransom Harris, Christian Rowe



- ◆ Padfolios were available for pickup at the conference. If not picked up, contact the Trio to arrange delivery.

PRM Corner

By Deborah Woods, PR Manager

Why PR Matters Now More Than Ever

Public relations is more than flyers and Facebook posts—it's the way we tell our story to the world.

Each time your club shares a photo, celebrates a member's success, or posts a snippet from a powerful speech, you're planting a seed. You're helping someone out there—someone nervous, stuck, or searching—discover that Toastmasters might be their next brave step.

PR isn't just about promotion. It's about invitation. When we show our community what's possible in Toastmasters, we don't just fill guest chairs—we open doors to personal growth, career confidence, and lifelong leadership.

So here's your monthly challenge:

☀️ Share one authentic moment from your club on social media—something real, meaningful, and personal.

Because your voice matters—and the world needs to hear it.



District Events & Looking Ahead

While our Annual District Conference is behind us, there's still much to celebrate and prepare for!

Club Officer Elections

-  Held during the Month of May
- Clubs are asked to enter their incoming officers in Club Central and notify their Area Director.


Summer Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI)

-  Saturday, June 28, 2025 – All day
- Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) Granite City, IL
- Officer training, education sessions, and leadership inspiration to kick off the new year

Happy New Toastmaster Year!

-  July 1, 2025

Hall of Fame Awards Luncheon

-  Saturday, August 9, 2025
- Want to help plan or host? Reach out to the Trio!



Toastmasters International 2025 Convention

-  August 20 - 23, 2025
- Philadelphia, PA
- Education and inspiration, Global Networking, the World Championship of Public Speaking and more...

District 8 Officers Elected for 2025-2026

During the Annual Business Meeting at Elevate 2025, members elected the new District 8 leadership team. Please join us in congratulating these outstanding Toastmasters who will guide us into the next program year beginning July 1:

District Trio:

District Director: Patti Howard, DTM
Program Quality Director: Karen Dew-Poe
Club Growth Director: Pamela Davis

Division Directors:

Division A: James Zboran
Division B: Xavier Blackwell
Division C: Tim Scarbrough
Division F: Burchell McGhee

We look forward to their leadership and vision as we build upon our foundation of excellence!

Moments that Moved Us – Highlights from Elevate 2025

From powerful speeches to warm hugs and standing ovations, our 2025 District 8 Conference was filled with unforgettable moments. Here's a glimpse of the energy, excellence, and heart that made Elevate: Speak. Lead. Succeed. an event to remember.

Want to see more? Visit the photo gallery on our website: www.dist8tm.org

☀️ **Keynote Spotlight: Pamela Rodney – “LIFT: Leadership, Impact, Foundational & Teamwork Skills.”**
District 8’s own World Championship finalist delivered a keynote that did exactly what it promised—LIFT the room.

Photo 1 – Opening the Experience

Brad Adams, our Conference Chair, sets the tone with a warm introduction of keynote speaker Pamela Rodney.

Photo 2 – A Room Elevated

The audience leans in as Pamela shares the heart and humor behind her leadership journey during her keynote speech, LIFT.

Photo 3 – Defining Leadership, Powerfully

Pamela stands poised beside her slide, which defines leadership not as authority, but as responsibility—to lift and inspire.



Laughter, Legacy, and Love: The Roast of Rhonda Green, DTM

We couldn't let our Immediate Past District Director, Rhonda Green, DTM, transition quietly—not when she's led with such bold heart, fierce commitment, and unforgettable one-liners. In true Toastmasters fashion, we honored her with wit, wisdom, and a few lovingly sharpened jabs during the Roast of Rhonda at Elevate 2025.

It was a day to remember—and Rhonda took it all in stride, with grace, grit, and great laughter.

A chorus of fellow leaders came forward to share stories, laughs, and heartfelt thanks. District Director Charice Manor, DTM, Program Quality Director Patti Howard, DTM, and David Kincade, DTM, (whose roast was delivered with flair by Tom Coscia) all contributed to the celebration with reflections that were both funny and full of love.

Here are a few snapshots from the fun:

📸 Karen Leingang, DTM turns up the heat

Past District Director Karen Leingang, DTM, delivered a roast that left the room in stitches—and Rhonda speechless (for once).

📸 A warm embrace beneath the flames

After the roast, Karen Leingang offered Rhonda a heartfelt hug that said what words couldn't: job well done, sister in leadership.

📸 Tom Coscia, DTM brings the zingers

With his trademark timing, Tom Coscia delivered barbs with brilliance—roasting Rhonda in a way only a fellow DTM could.

📸 Karen Dew lets the laughter fly

Club Growth Director Karen Dew stepped up with a roast full of inside jokes and appreciation, proving that growth and gratitude go hand in hand.



☀️ Your Voice, Your Victory

District 8 continues to thrive because of you. Every speech, every role, every moment of encouragement you offer is a building block in our collective greatness.

Want to be featured in our next issue? Submit photos, stories, and achievements to prm@dist8tm.org.

Whether it's an open house, milestone celebration, member recognition, or just a great photo that captures the spirit of your club, your story deserves the spotlight. Let's show the world what makes your club shine!

District 8 – Where Leaders Are Made
www.dist8tm.org

A Toast to the Journey

As we reflect on the heartfelt message from District Director Charice L. Manor, DTM, we pause not only to receive her thanks—but to offer our own.

Thank you, Charice, for leading with vision and vulnerability.
For lifting others while carrying the weight of responsibility.
For allowing grace to guide your decisions and heart to lead your way.
This year has been one of growth, rebuilding, and rediscovery.
And through it all, you reminded us that leadership isn't about perfection—it's about presence.
You showed up. You believed. You lifted.

And so, we raise our glasses—
To the journey that brought us here,
To the people who made the path brighter,
And to the next chapter, already unfolding in the lives we've touched.

To District 8—elevated by leadership, inspired by service, and held together by heart.



Deborah Woods, PRM, Contributor and Editor