

# District Director's Report - Michael Collins

## District Director

Welcome to my first official address as I preside over the Autumn Conference. While it is a privilege to be in this position on the District Leadership Team (DLT), it's also a responsibility. The role of District Director is about leading a team, all of whom give of their time in a voluntary capacity. So what are the plans for the District and how will we measure the ultimate success of the District on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2017? I'd like to think that the ultimate measurement of District success is far more than just the resulting numbers.

## Perspective

In my view Toastmasters is essentially a people organization, while the two tenants of leadership are

1. Developing relationships
2. Influencing people

The District Mission and the ultimately the reason why Districts exist is

1. To Build Clubs
2. Support all clubs in achieving excellence

The core values of the organization are: Integrity, Respect, Service and Excellence. One of my areas of focus this year is that of respect. Each member who gives of their time in a voluntary capacity deserves respect, but not reverence. A new member deserves the same level of respect as a Toastmaster who has climbed the ranks of the organization.

## SMART Goals

In the same way as the club strives to reach distinguished level, a reflection on the club's performance, the District also has criteria which is will be measured by. We have a target to reach Select Distinguished, which was achieved under Kevin Lee's reign. To do this, the District needs to achieve the following

1. A net growth of 10 clubs
2. 10,813 individual member payments
3. 84 Distinguished Clubs

## Challenges

The following was announced at the TI Business Briefing in Washington this year - "Beginning in 2018, districts are asked to refocus their efforts on leadership and education through **TLIs** or other learning opportunities, and discontinue the October/November conference. More information will be forthcoming in the next year." Uncertainty of what, if anything, will replace the autumn conference is a going to be challenge.

The increase in membership dues is already proving a challenge to some clubs who struggle to break even. It is vitally important that members get value for money. Our role is to ensure that all clubs are striving for excellence, so that all members benefit from a quality programme at every Toastmasters meeting.

## Appointments

Appropriate delegation offers opportunities for members to stretch themselves. The following additional appointments will be put to the District Council for approval having previously been approved by the DEC.

- Realignment Chairperson
- District Leadership Chairperson
- Pathways Ambassador
- Conflict Resolution Officer

## Communication

Our main channel of district-wide communication is [www.d71toastmasters.org](http://www.d71toastmasters.org). Complimentary regular emails are sent to the wider membership and focused sub-groups. There is huge difference between over-communication and effective communication. After all we are a communications organisation.

## Final thoughts

The DLT and wider DEC are elected and appointed to represent the district's best interests. This is a voluntary non-profit organisation that offers enormous opportunities for personal growth. Hold on, isn't that part of the club mission? Remember that the DLT and wider DEC are also Toastmasters who are taking on a challenge. I encourage you to have a chat with your Area or Division Director and see what opportunities there are in taking on an extra role. Maybe there's a role on the DLT you'd be interested in taking on? Dip your toe in the water, challenge yourself; you will not regret it.