



ISSUE 07 January 2025

DISTRICT 71

NEWSLETTER

D71 BRANDBUILDERS



ENJOY | GROW | CELEBRATE

PAULINE MCCABE

District Credentials Chair
Mullingar Toastmasters, Area 9, Division F

WWW.D71TOASTMASTERS.ORG

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

02

FROM THE PRM'S DESK

03

DISTRICT 71 LEADERS

08

UPCOMING EVENTS

11

CLUB MILESTONES
CELEBRATION

13

SPOTLIGHT ON DLC

15

TOASTMASTERS AND
ROTARY

17

BEHIND THE BADGE:
DIVISION DIRECTORS STORY

21

CENTENARY
CELEBRATION

24

D71 WRAPPED

26

FACE OF DISTRICT 71

27

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

29

GUEST CONTRIBUTION

32

PURPOSE
PIONEERS

33

CHALLENGES & REWARDS

39

PR TIPS &
TRICKS

40

POETIC
PALETTE

41

FEEDBACK &
SUGGESTIONS



FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR



A TOAST TO GROWTH: REFLECTING ON 2024 AND PREPARING FOR 2025

As we step into a new year, it's only natural to pause and reflect on the journey we've taken together as a Toastmasters community. In 2024, many of us tackled new challenges, delivered speeches that stretched our abilities, and took on roles that pushed us beyond our comfort zones. Perhaps you completed your first Pathways project, led a meeting as Toastmaster, or even competed in a contest. Each step, no matter how small, contributed to your growth and strengthened our shared mission of fostering effective communication and leadership.

One of the beauties of Toastmasters lies in its cyclical nature: every year offers new opportunities to refine our skills and set fresh goals. So, as we bid farewell to 2024, let us celebrate our accomplishments and embrace the potential that 2025 holds. Reflect on your Toastmasters journey—what did you achieve this year that you are proud of? What lessons did you learn from challenges you faced? These reflections are the foundation for setting meaningful goals for the year ahead.

In 2025, let's commit to growth as individuals and as clubs. Perhaps this is the year to take the leap and deliver a keynote speech, mentor a fellow member, or step into a district leadership role. Or maybe your goal is simply to show up consistently, actively participate in meetings, and cheer on your fellow members. Whatever your aspirations, remember that Toastmasters is a place where dreams are nurtured, fears are overcome, and success is celebrated.

Let's also remember to support one another on this journey. Each speech we evaluate, each timer's report we deliver, and each kind word of encouragement helps build a community where everyone can thrive. Together, let's make 2025 a year of enjoyment, growth and celebration. Here's to a new year filled with inspiring speeches, bold goals, and countless moments of discovery!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!



FROM THE PRM'S DESK



Fellow Toastmasters,

Happy New Year! As we welcome 2025, we also embrace new opportunities to connect, grow, and inspire each other within our vibrant Toastmasters community. This edition of the District 71 newsletter highlights the incredible milestones we achieved in 2024 and sets the stage for the exciting journey ahead.

A key theme for this year is Enjoy, Grow & Celebrate and I encourage each of you to harness the tools Toastmasters provides to elevate your skills and help others do the same. Whether it's through your club's initiatives, contests, or personal goals, every step you take makes a difference.

In this issue, you'll find stories of triumph, updates on upcoming events & more. I hope these features inspire you to strive for excellence in your Toastmasters journey.

Remember, your voice matters. If you'd like to share your story or celebrate a club milestone, don't hesitate to reach out. Together, we made 2024 a success. Let's make 2025 a year to remember!

Warm regards,

Angela Afieghe

PR Manager, Toastmasters District 71



DISTRICT 71 LEADERSHIP TEAM

DISTRICT
DIRECTOR

PROGRAM QUALITY
DIRECTOR

CLUB GROWTH
DIRECTOR



DANNY BANKS

MAIREAD DILLON

STEVE CAMPION

IMMEDIATE PAST
DISTRICT DIRECTOR

ADMINISTRATION
MANAGER

FINANCE MANAGER

PUBLIC RELATIONS
MANAGER



ELIZABETH JORDAN

PAIGE SKELTON

WILLIAM KEARNEY

ANGELA AFIEGHE



DISTRICT 71

DIVISION DIRECTORS



TIM LEECH



NICHOLAS O'NEIL



PATRICIA GRAY



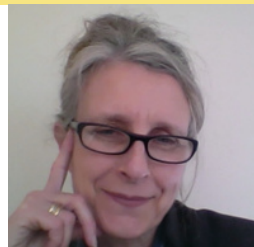
GEORGINA
HODGKINSON



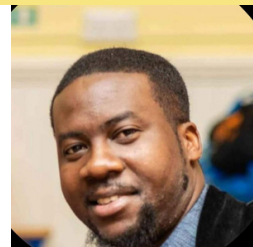
RANDY EKAKITIE



KEVIN O'REILLY



OLGA BYRNE



FEMI OLULAJA



PAUL MCCARTHY



DISTRICT 71

PR AMBASSADORS



Rob Partridge
Division F



Claire Downie
Division S



Katuta Lumpa
Division H



**Aparna
Sasikumar**
Division N



**Shantelle
York**
Division E



**Sudeepto
kushary**
Division M



Centennial Plus One Pledge



CALL FOR DLC NOMINATIONS

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS



Learn about the opportunities for District Leadership!

The District Leadership Committee is inviting applications for the following roles in 2025 - 2026

- District Director
 - Program Quality Director
 - Club Growth Director
-
- Division Directors (A, C, D, E, F, H, M, N, S)

To apply, email your *completed documents to DLC chair, Elizabeth Jordan, DTM, IPDD:

dlc@d71toastmasters.org



* Links to the relevant documents will be circulated via email by District Director, Danny Banks, DTM on 1 Dec 2024.



UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THE MONTH



DISTRICT 71
QUARTERLY AWARDS
Join us for an evening event at our District Quarterly Awards Ceremony as we celebrate the great achievements and dedication of the outstanding Toastmasters in our district!
8th January, 2023
07:00 PM (GMT)
REGISTER NOW
D71 BRAND BUILDERS



QUARTERLY AWARDS
07:00 PM

WED
08



ABOUT MENTORING
07:00 PM

TUE
14



D71 BRAND BUILDERS
Presents
Toastmasters Unplugged 007
Top Guns!
Join Nigel Smith as he engages with a diverse group of Toastmasters who have earned the highest honour in their Toastmasters' journey!
Nigel Smith
Sarah Smith
John Smith
Paul Smith
14 January 7 PM GMT


TOASTMASTERS UNPLUGGED
07:00 PM

TUE
14



CLUB OFFICERS TRAINING 2
06:30 - 09:00 PM

MON
27



JUSTIN BARRY – SPICE UP YOUR MEETINGS
07:00 PM

WED
29

UPCOMING EVENT

D71 PR BOOTCAMP

TOASTMASTERS
DISTRICT 71

D71 BRAND BUILDERS



District 71 PR Bootcamp

Learn from our PR Ambassadors as they guide you through mastering Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, Google My Business, and more. Elevate your PR skills and boost your impact!

Wednesday,
January 22, 2025



19:00 (GMT)



REGISTER NOW



UPCOMING EVENT

SPRING CONFERENCE 2025



Toastmasters District 71 Spring Conference

Early Bird
Tickets
Available

Back to School Solihull Conference 2025



*Join us in Solihull, for the D71
Toastmasters Conference!*

9 - 11 May, 2025

 Voco St John's Hotels Solihull, B91 1AT

 www.solihull2025.co.uk

Early birds ticket available at Solihull2025.co.uk

10 DISTRICT 71 TOASTMASTERS



CLUB MILESTONE CELEBRATION



JANUARY HONOREES



Eblana Club
1st January - 65 Years



Norwich Speakers
1st January - 33 Years



Blarney Club
1st January - 50 Years



Elder Gate Club
1st January - 39 Years



Leicester City Speakers
4th January - 14 Years



CLUB MILESTONE CELEBRATION



JANUARY HONOREES



Liverpool City Club
7th January - 6 Years



Clane Club
11th January - 9 Years



Toastmasters4Golf
28th January - 4 Years



VMWARE Club
29th January - 10 Years



Milton Keynes Confident Speakers
29th January - 6 Years



SPOTLIGHT ON DISTRICT LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE (DLC)

The District Leadership Committee (DLC) plays a crucial role in identifying and nominating candidates for elected positions within Toastmasters districts. Adhering to Protocol 9.0 and proposed timelines is vital for maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of the process.

Who appoints the Toastmasters DLC Chair?

The District Leadership Committee Chair is appointed by the District Director. It is typically a past District leader, usually the Immediate Past District Director (IPDD). This year's DLC chair is Elizabeth Jordan, DTM, IPDD.

What specifically is the role of the District Leadership Committee?

The District Leadership Committee (DLC) is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and nominating the most qualified candidates for the District's elected leadership roles. This process involves a call for candidate applications, conducting interviews, and assessing each candidate's qualifications for the roles.

How are Committee members appointed to the DLC?

The District Leadership Committee (DLC) is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and nominating the most qualified candidates for the District's elected leadership roles. This process involves a call for candidate applications, conducting interviews, and assessing each candidate's qualifications for the roles.



DLC Chair, Elizabeth Jordan

SPOTLIGHT ON DISTRICT LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE (DLC)

Which roles are nominated for District 71 (UK North and Ireland) by the District Leadership Committee (DLC)?

The District Leadership Committee is tasked with nominating candidates for the following elected positions:

- **District Director** (DD)
- **Program Quality Director** (PQD)
- **Club Growth Director** (CGD)
- **Division Directors** (DivDs)

These roles are essential for the effective management and leadership of the District.

Key dates on the District Leadership Committee calendar

November 1 2024: The District Director appoints the DLC Chair.

December 1 2024: The DLC Chair appoints committee members with the District Director's approval.

January 15 2025: Deadline for candidates to declare intent to run.

March 29th 2025, six weeks prior to the District's Annual Business Meeting: DLC submits its report to the District Director.

12th April 2025, four weeks prior to the District Council Meeting (10 May 2025): DLC report is distributed to District Council members and posted on the District 71 website.

Election of District Officers will take place on **10th May 2025.**

You can find out more by visiting the District 71 website:

[District Leadership Committee – Toastmasters UK North & Ireland](#)



TOASTMASTERS AND ROTARY: A POWERFUL ALLIANCE TO CHANGE LIVES

I joined Toastmasters from a banking background, drawn by their tagline, "Where Leaders Are Made." I wanted to share my story, change lives, and advocate for the suffering. Initially, it seemed impossible to get speaking opportunities, but my mentor advised me to start with local Rotary Clubs. I began at the Letchworth club, progressed to London's flagship club, and eventually spoke at their Bournemouth conference. The opportunities, feedback, and kindness I received transformed my journey.

Both Toastmasters and Rotary have given me something priceless—a sense of purpose and the tools to make a difference. It's this shared mission of empowering and uplifting others that makes this alliance so extraordinary. I am so proud to be designated the Rotary Chair for Toastmasters (District 71) and to help bridge these two incredible organisations

1. Shared Commitment to Service:

Rotary and Toastmasters are united in serving humanity. Rotary focuses on life's essential needs—clean water, education, and disease prevention—while Toastmasters empowers individuals through communication and leadership. Together, they address vital human needs and equip people to lead effectively.

2. Incredible Members:

Members of both organisations strive to make a difference. For example, Rotary eradicated polio globally, and Toastmasters have helped build confident communicators who have driven social change for 100 years! Their shared passion for humanity is awe-inspiring.

3. Game-Changing Alliance:

This partnership can amplify impact. Joint efforts in youth programs, such as Rotary's Youth Movement and Toastmasters' Speechcraft, will inspire the next generation. Members can collaborate on projects, combining communication skills with service for greater global reach.



4. Unique Benefits:

Toastmasters gain real-world speaking opportunities at Rotary clubs, sharpening their skills, while Rotarians benefit from Toastmasters' leadership expertise in hosting educational and charitable events. Together, they foster mutual growth and broaden impact.

5. Reviving Communication in the AI Era:

In a world increasingly dominated by AI, face-to-face communication is at risk. Losing these skills threatens collaboration and empathy. Rotary and Toastmasters provide a platform to cultivate interpersonal connections, ensuring humanity doesn't lose its ability to communicate effectively—a vital skill to protect and nurture.

This partnership inspires hope, growth, and positive change across the globe.

Let's act now to safeguard humanity's ability to communicate, connect and lead.



JILLIAN HASLAM
ROTARY CHAIR FOR TOASTMASTERS



BEHIND THE BADGE: AREA DIRECTORS STORY

LIFE IN DISTRICT LEADERSHIP 6 MONTHS INTO THE ROLE AS AREA DIRECTOR

My first 6 months as Area Director have been busy. To date I have visited all 6 clubs in the Area, created and submitted Area Director Club Visit Reports, attended two Director Officer Training events in person, held Area council meetings, helped with the Area Contests, attended Division Meetings, and taken on the role of Contest Chair at the Division C Table Topics final.

I also got to take on a training role at a joint Division led Club Officer Training and be a part of the planning group for the first-ever corporate club event hosted and led by Microsoft. What amazing experiences to get while serving in a leadership role in District 71.

For me, and I am sure for so many others, such experience is pure gold dust, especially say if one is not long into a corporation, or like me, working on their own as a sole trader. By the end of this year I will be so much more confident at leading meetings of other leaders, both online and in person, leading an Area and being comfortable leading at the next tier.

At each of my Club visits I have felt so welcome and respected in my role but also as a fellow visiting Toastmaster. I have been invited to speak while visiting, sometimes taking on a role if requested and of course making presentations to club members.

Focusing on success and making presentations is my favourite task so far. Reminding all my clubs about how well they performed last year and using this as a time to mention about the structure of Toastmasters and what it means to be a club in good standing and what a Club Success Plan is. Sometimes we can forget that new members may not know about these things because they have not been talked about since they joined the club. I love these natural moments for education and celebration, two of my favourite things in life.



BEHIND THE BADGE: AREA DIRECTORS STORY

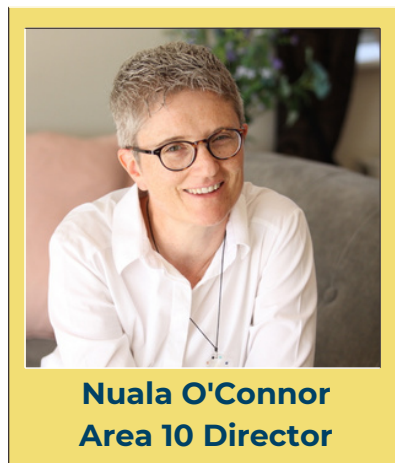
One part of my role that I have found challenging is offering clubs a call to action. Here I am, a visitor, who just wants to celebrate success, yet offering that growth point, or call to action is as important to a Toastmaster as getting those coveted certifications of achievement.

As AD I am being called to servant leadership. Every meeting I attend I ask the committee and the club members, how can I be of service to you? I genuinely want to help in any way I can.

At a personal level, I have taken on a College Course this year, so time management is a key part to my ability to succeed in this role because as I said earlier I am also self-employed.

Having a good Division Director who is available to take a call any time, has really helped me through these first 6 months. My DD also helped me out with one of my club visits and attended the Area contests. I knew I was not alone through these months. It is such an amazing support to have someone who will always find an answer to any question I have.

Are you someone who wants to progress in their work place but lacks the opportunities within the organisation to get the leadership experience you need to help you get confident in leadership and at leadership? Why not talk to your Club and Area Director about the possibility of taking on a District role in the next Toastmasters Year, you will be glad you did.



BEHIND THE BADGE: AREA DIRECTORS STORY

THE ADVENTURES OF AN AREA DIRECTOR: WHY YOU SHOULD TAKE THE LEAP (IT'S NOT AS SCARY AS IT SOUNDS!)

When I first became an Area Director, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Was it a secret society? Would there be hazing? Did I need to memorise some ancient Toastmasters oath? (Spoiler alert: the answer to all three is no—though the paperwork sometimes feels ancient.) What I did find was a role that challenged me, delighted me, and taught me lessons I never knew I needed.

The Perks of the Job

Let's start with the obvious: you get a title that makes you sound ridiculously important. "Area Director." It's the kind of title that makes people nod knowingly at parties, even if they have no idea what it means. (Pro tip: just smile mysteriously and say, "It's classified.")

But beyond the title, the real perks are the people. You'll connect with club members across your area, marvel at their diverse talents, and occasionally laugh so hard you'll wonder if ab exercises were part of the training. You'll also get to support clubs in a way that feels genuinely impactful, like a cheerleader who also carries a clipboard and a gavel.

The Surprises

Now, I'll admit, there were surprises along the way. For instance, did you know there are about 17 different ways to run a club contest, and all of them can cause your Wi-Fi to fail at the worst possible moment? But here's the thing: every hiccup is a chance to learn, adapt, and create stories that will entertain your fellow Toastmasters for years to come.

And let's talk about time management. You might think being an Area Director takes up all your free time, but it's much more manageable than you'd expect. With a bit of planning and prioritising, the role fits nicely into your schedule. Plus, the meetings, visits, and events are so enjoyable, they hardly feel like work at all. It's the kind of role where you get back as much as you put in—and then some!



BEHIND THE BADGE: AREA DIRECTORS STORY

Why You Should Say Yes

Being an Area Director is like signing up for the ultimate Toastmasters experience. It's challenging, yes, but it's also incredibly rewarding. You'll see firsthand how your efforts help clubs thrive, and you'll grow as a leader in ways you can't imagine. Plus, you get to work with other Area Directors and Division leaders who are just as passionate, quirky, and downright inspiring as you are.

If you've ever thought, "Should I take on a bigger role in Toastmasters?" let me be your friendly nudge (or shove, if needed). The answer is yes. Yes, you can do this. Yes, you will enjoy it. And yes, you will come out of it with stories, skills, and perhaps a slightly overworked calendar app.

The Call to Action

Ready to take the plunge? Talk to your current Area Director or Division Director and find out how you can step into this incredible role. And if you're still hesitant, remember: it's not about being perfect. It's about saying yes to growth, connection, and a whole lot of fun. Plus, you'll finally have an answer when someone asks, "So, what exactly is an Area Director?"

So go ahead, embrace the challenge, and join the ranks of those brave (and slightly caffeine-fuelled) leaders who make Toastmasters the amazing organisation it is. I'll see you on the adventure!



Rob Partridge
Area 12 Director

CENTENARY CELEBRATION

DUBLIN SOUTH TOASTMASTERS THE ART OF STORYTELLING: CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF TOASTMASTERS



On November 19th, Dublin South Toastmasters organised Ireland's largest in-person centennial celebration out of UCD cinema, attended by members of over 10 different Toastmasters clubs across two divisions, and sold over 90 tickets in the process.

"The Art of Storytelling: 100 Years of Toastmasters" was a resounding success, having sold out days in advance, with members of the public and fellow toastmasters delighting in the tips, tricks and craftsmanship our keynote speakers provided.

The Storytelling segment was introduced by Stuart Parkinson and began with a short presentation titled "From Humble Beginnings to Global Impact," narrated by Teresa Cronin. This presentation explored the 100-year history of Toastmasters, featuring cinema-sized archival photos.



CENTENARY CELEBRATION

The audience learned about Ralph Smedley's vision of a club dedicated to improving communication skills, the creation of Toastmistress clubs for women until their inclusion in 1973, and Toastmasters' resilience through WWII, the COVID pandemic, and its international expansion.



Chris Werner recounted how a lecturer's compelling story led him to study Geology instead of Astronomy. He emphasized the universal value of storytelling, from personal to professional settings, and offered tips on using stories to one's advantage.

The night concluded on an entertaining note with a storytelling contest hosted by Orna Mulhern. Dublin South Toastmasters member Steve Fitzgerald took first place with a hilarious tale of his youthful adventures in Munich, leaving the cinema audience in fits of laughter.

As a token of appreciation, Monica Diez Campa, President of Dublin South Toastmasters, presented the three keynote speakers with copies of "Confident Voices", a newly updated chronicle of Toastmasters' rich history. The evening wrapped up with heartfelt remarks from Division Director Tim Leech, bringing the celebration to a memorable close.

CENTENARY CELEBRATION

The first keynote speaker, Áine Ní Ghlinn, delved into Ireland's rich tradition of storytelling. She shared how oral stories, such as The Salmon of Knowledge, evolved over time with varied endings before they were transcribed.

Pat Cowley's presentation highlighted the significance of stories in our lives and their power to engage our emotions. She shared techniques to enhance storytelling through structure, dialogue, and emotional depth, weaving in delightful anecdotes inspired by her nine grandchildren.



2024 HIGHLIGHTS

The Fort 2024, D71 Toastmasters Conference 10 - 12 May, 2024



Toastmasters International Convention 14 - 17 August, 2024



2024 HIGHLIGHTS



FACE OF DISTRICT 71



Celebrating Pauline McCabe DTM, District Credentials Chair. Mullingar Toastmasters, Area 9, Division F



I attended my first Toastmasters meeting in January 2001 with some friends and was mesmerized by the speeches and tabletopics. A member asked if any of us would like to do an Icebreaker at the next meeting. It was like a lightbulb came on for me and I volunteered....a far cry from the shy person that I was. The camaraderie and support I have received in Mullingar Toastmasters Club and in District 71 has helped me grow as a person and find my voice. I have served in every Club committee role, helped grow a club, and served as Area Director twice. I enjoy Contests both as a contestant and role player. I am a frequent Conference attendee.

In 2021 the then District Director Gerard Mannix asked me if I'd be interested in the role of District Credentials Manager, I accepted without hesitation. I love the role of overseeing credentials and elections for the District Executive Council and the District Council. I've gotten so much out of being a member of Toastmasters and I believe in giving back....what you put into something is what you'll get out of it. I look forward to many more years of membership and helping other members realise their potential.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



VPPR OF THE MONTH (December 2024)



ALEX HANNON

DUBLIN SOUTH TOASTMASTERS

I joined Toastmasters in April 2022 to build confidence in public speaking but soon discovered its broader appeal, particularly in evaluations and mentoring, which kept me engaged and enthused. Though I initially declined a role on the 23/24 committee, I stepped in as assistant VPE when additional support was needed. Shortly after, I became club secretary, focusing on improving processes, thanks to my IT background.

An opportunity arose then where our long-standing VPPR joined a sister club which was struggling with membership, providing me the opportunity to fill her, admittedly very large, shoes within Dublin South. What attracted me the most to the role is that I have a long-standing desire to set up my own business at some point in the future and wished to understand the mechanics of social media marketing before then.

With the assistance of my capable assistant, Iacob Cupcea, who brought his own social media and photography skills, we achieved great success, especially during our "Art of Storytelling: 100 Years of Toastmasters" centenary event in November, as well as achieving the highest number of guests in attendance, since I've joined, for the first three club meetings this year.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



PR AMBASSADOR OF THE MONTH (December 2024)



I was introduced to Toastmasters at a very young age, when I only joined for a few months. My parents were told that Toastmasters was a good platform where children could overcome shyness under expert supervision. Fast-forward to 2018, my friend at college took me to a session in his club. The session was good as usual, but little could I reckon the impact of that one session in the coming years. I have been a member since 2018 actively participating in all club-related activities. Be it Club Committee or Contests, I have been lucky to face challenges and fail as I volunteered, and failing has taught me to try again.

Toastmasters has given so much to me! Amazing club members, wonderful mentors, and a learning experience! So much so that I want to give back to the community that has fostered me for so long, helping me meet and work with so many like-minded people. Toastmasters has introduced me to people whose presence is enough to awe and inspire! In an attempt to give back to the community, I have taken up the role of an Area Director in Division M along with the PR Ambassador for the Division and I know I need to do a lot more to do justice to these roles. My only advice to the new members reading this issue is to volunteer. As is my philosophy, "Take a role if you are going to the session". My Heartfelt gratitude to Toastmasters International!



GUEST CONTRIBUTION

DEVELOPING YOURSELF: A PATH TO PERSONAL GROWTH AND FULFILLMENT

Personal development is a lifelong journey of improving various aspects of your life, whether through acquiring new skills, cultivating positive habits, or enhancing your emotional and mental well-being. It is a proactive approach to living a more intentional and fulfilling life. While the process may seem overwhelming at times, breaking it down into manageable steps can lead to profound changes and lasting success.

1. Set Clear Goals

One of the cornerstones of personal development is setting clear, achievable goals within a timeframe. Without direction, it's easy to drift through life without making significant progress. Start by defining what you want to achieve in the short and long term. Break down larger goals into smaller, actionable steps and create a timeline for achieving them. The clearer the goal, the more motivated you'll be to work towards it.

For instance, if you aim to improve your health, instead of setting a vague goal like "get fit," you might set a specific goal: "I will exercise for 30 minutes every day for the next three months." This gives you a clear, measurable target and a defined action plan.

2. Develop Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is the foundation of personal growth. It involves understanding your thoughts, emotions, strengths, weaknesses, values, and goals. When you have a clear understanding of yourself, you can make decisions that align with your true desires and motivations.

To develop self-awareness, start by practicing mindfulness. Take time each day to reflect on your thoughts and emotions, journaling about your experiences. Regular self-reflection helps you recognize patterns in your behavior, so you can identify areas for improvement.

Additionally, seeking feedback from others can provide valuable insight into how you're perceived and highlight areas where you might grow. Be open to constructive criticism, and use it to fuel your development.

3. Cultivate a Growth Mindset

A growth mindset, a concept popularized by psychologist Carol Dweck, is the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed with effort, learning, and persistence. Adopting a growth mindset is crucial for overcoming challenges and setbacks, which are inevitable in any personal development journey.

Instead of viewing failure as a reflection of your abilities, see it as an opportunity for learning and growth. With a growth mindset, you'll be more resilient in the face of adversity, and you'll see obstacles as stepping stones toward achieving your goals.



GUEST CONTRIBUTION

4. Embrace Lifelong Learning

Personal development is an ongoing process, and one of the most powerful ways to continue growing is through learning. Never stop seeking knowledge—whether it's through formal education, self-study, or practical experiences. Read books, take online courses, attend workshops, or engage in meaningful conversations with others to expand your horizons.

Learning doesn't have to be limited to professional skills. You can also focus on emotional intelligence, communication, creativity, or any other area of interest. The more you learn, the more you'll be able to adapt to changing circumstances and open up new opportunities in your life.

5. Build Positive Habits

The key to sustained personal growth is consistency, which is why building positive habits is essential. Small, positive actions performed regularly can lead to big changes over time. Start by identifying areas of your life where you'd like to make improvements—such as your physical health, productivity, or relationships—and choose one habit to focus on.

For example, if you want to become more organized, you might start by implementing a daily to-do list or cleaning your workspace each evening. If your goal is better mental health, incorporating meditation or gratitude journaling into your daily routine can make a difference. The key is to start small, remain consistent, and gradually build momentum.

6. Strengthen Emotional Resilience

Life is full of challenges, and emotional resilience is crucial to overcoming them. Emotional resilience refers to the ability to adapt to adversity, recover from setbacks, and continue moving forward with a positive outlook. Strengthening this trait can improve your ability to handle stress, make better decisions, and stay focused on your goals.

To develop emotional resilience, practice self-compassion. When you face difficulties, treat yourself with kindness instead of harsh self-criticism. Additionally, build a support network of friends, family, or mentors who can offer encouragement and perspective when you need it most. Learn to reframe negative situations, looking for lessons and growth opportunities rather than dwelling on what went wrong.

7. Nurture Relationships

Personal growth is not just about developing yourself in isolation; it also involves fostering meaningful relationships with others. Surround yourself with people who inspire, challenge, and support you. Positive relationships are key to your emotional well-being and can provide valuable opportunities for learning and growth.

Make an effort to listen actively, communicate openly, and show empathy in your interactions. Building strong, authentic connections will not only enhance your personal life but can also open doors to new professional opportunities and experiences.



GUEST CONTRIBUTION

8. Prioritize Well-Being

Self-care is a vital component of personal development. In the pursuit of growth, it's easy to neglect your physical, mental, and emotional well-being. However, you can't achieve your goals or reach your full potential if you're burned out or unwell.

Prioritize activities that promote well-being, such as regular exercise, healthy eating, quality sleep, and relaxation techniques like meditation or yoga. Make time for activities that bring you joy and allow yourself moments of rest and reflection. When you take care of yourself, you'll have more energy, focus, and motivation to pursue your goals.

9. Stay Accountable

Accountability plays a key role in personal development. Without someone (or something) to hold you accountable, it's easy to let progress slip. Find a mentor, coach, or accountability partner who can help you stay on track. You can also track your own progress through regular check-ins, whether that's through journaling, apps, or a goal-tracking system.

Having an accountability system in place can help you stay committed to your goals, celebrate your progress, and identify areas that need more attention. One very important accountability system is having an accountability partner. An accountability partner can be a peer or a senior who is working towards a similar goal. Both of you can hold each other accountable while working toward a shared goal.

10. Celebrate Your Successes

Finally, take time to celebrate your achievements, no matter how small they may seem. Acknowledging your progress boosts motivation and reinforces the positive habits you've developed. Celebrating milestones reminds you that personal development is not just about the end goal, but also about the growth and progress you make along the way.

Developing yourself is not an overnight process, but by setting clear goals, cultivating a growth mindset, and nurturing your well-being, you can steadily move toward becoming the best version of yourself. Embrace the journey, and remember that personal development is about continuous growth—making small, incremental changes that compound over time. The effort you invest in yourself today will shape the person you become tomorrow.

KAYODE YUSUF, DTM
DISTRICT DIRECTOR
TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 130



PURPOSE PIONEERS

JOIN THE JOURNEY

Join Our Visionary Quest for Club Growth!

Step up and be part of an extraordinary movement within District 71 as we embark on a groundbreaking strategy to create new clubs! This is your chance to develop your skills, collaborate with visionary leaders, and play a pivotal role in shaping the future of Toastmasters in our community.

Seize this opportunity to transform your personal and professional landscape. Let's innovate, inspire, and drive success together.

To join, send an email to clubgrowthdirector@d71toastmasters.org and contribute to a legacy of excellence and achievement!

Join the Brand Builders Team!

Dive into a world of innovation, connect with fellow leaders, and leave your mark on our district's legacy in this Centennial year.

Supercharge your Toastmasters experience by joining our elite District Public Relations team! This is your golden opportunity to master new skills, influence our community, and accelerate your Pathways projects.

Don't just participate—lead and inspire! Send an email to prmanager@d71toastmasters.org to sign up today and transform your Toastmasters journey into an extraordinary adventure.



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

VPPR OF THE MONTH:

Are you ready to showcase your creativity, engage our community, and take your club's public relations to new heights? This is your chance to shine and bring €50 to your club!

How to Participate:

Every month, we're looking for a Vice President of Public Relations who stands out by boosting the club's visibility, engaging members, and innovating communication strategies. If you've got what it takes, dive into this exciting challenge!

Why Join the Challenge?

You will be the winning VPPR gain recognition across the district and increase your PR skills. You will also secure an additional €50 for our club, which can be used to enhance our Toastmasters experience & complete your pathways project!

Get Involved:

Start planning your strategies, engage with your club members, and let's make some noise about the great work you are doing!



VPPR OF THE MONTH



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

Social Media Post of the Quarter Contest!

Ready to showcase your creativity and social media savvy? Enter our Social Media Post of the Quarter contest and you could win **€50** for your club!

Contest Details:

Create a post that embodies the spirit of Toastmasters, engages the community, and reflects your club's unique vibe. Whether it's an inspirational quote, a success story, a clever meme, or an event recap, make it impactful and make it shine!

Winning Criteria:

1. Creativity and Originality: Bring something new and exciting to the table. Surprise us!
2. Alignment with Toastmasters Values & Brand: Your post should be compliant with the TM brand, and embody and promote the values of leadership, communication, and personal growth.
3. Engagement: We're looking for likes, shares, comments, and overall interaction. Get the community talking!
4. Visual Appeal: Make sure your post is visually captivating. Use high-quality images or graphics that grab attention.
5. Message Clarity: Your post should communicate clearly and effectively, delivering its message in a powerful way.

How to Participate:

Simply tag your club's official social media account in your post and use the hashtag **#D71BrandBuilders** and **#D71PostOfTheQuarter**. Posts must be made within the current quarter to qualify. Send a link of your post to prmanager@d71toastmasters.org



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

PR Ambassador of the Month Award:

Are you ready to elevate your Division's profile and showcase your PR prowess? Join the exciting PR Ambassador of the Month challenge and stand a chance to win €50 for your Division!

What's the Challenge?

Each month, we're on the lookout for a PR Ambassador who goes above and beyond to enhance your Division's visibility, engage the VPPRs & community, craft compelling narratives that resonate far and wide & comply with TM Brand guidelines.

Why Participate?

This is your opportunity to make a significant impact, gain recognition across our Toastmasters community, and bring a €50 bonus to help fund Division initiatives. Whether it's through innovative social media campaigns, dynamic press releases, or engaging community outreach, your efforts will not go unnoticed!

How to Win:

Show us how you can lead PR efforts that captivate and inspire. Excellence in communication, creativity in execution, and measurable impact on our community engagement will crown you as the PR Ambassador of the Month.



PR AMBASSADOR OF THE MONTH



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

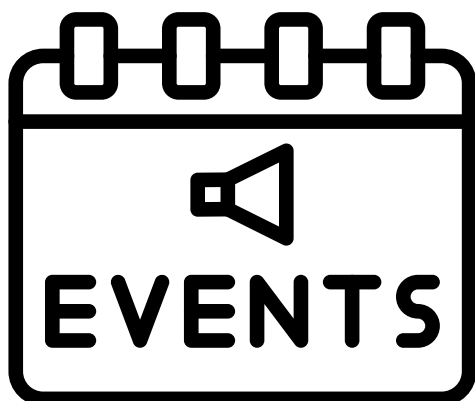
Open Night Incentive

Calling all Toastmasters! Put your event planning and publicity skills to the test. Host an open night within the toastmaster year that not only captivates but also attracts a crowd! If your event draws 20 or more attendees and gets featured in the local newspaper or on the radio, your club wins **€50!**

Incentive Details:

1. Organize an Event: Plan and execute an event that draws at least 20 attendees.
2. Capture the Moment: Take photos and videos to document the event's success.
3. Gain Media Coverage: Get your event published in a local newspaper or broadcast on a local radio station.
4. Submit Your Proof: Send in your pictures, videos, and a copy of the media coverage to claim your prize.

Note: Each club can claim this incentive once, so make it count! This is a fantastic opportunity to boost your club's visibility, engage the community, and showcase the vibrant spirit of Toastmasters.



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

#MyWhy Incentive: Share Your Story, Win €50 for Your Club!

Are you ready to inspire and engage? Participate in our #MyWhy drive by sharing a one-minute video detailing why you joined Toastmasters and why you continue to be a part of our incredible community. The most engaging story of the month will win €50 for their club and gain special recognition!

How to Participate:

1. Create Your Video: In one minute, tell us your Toastmasters journey. What drew you to join? What keeps you coming back? Make it heartfelt and inspiring!
2. Post & Tag: Share your video on social media using the hashtag #MyWhy. Make sure to tag our official page so we don't miss it!
3. Engage Your Audience: Encourage likes, shares, and comments. The post with the most engagement wins!

Prize Details:

The participant whose video garners the most engagement for the month will not only bring €50 to their club but will also be featured in our district communications, showcasing their story and their club.

Deadline: Get your videos posted and rack up engagement throughout the month. Submit the link by email to prmanager@d71toastmasters.org on or before the **28th of the month**. We'll tally the results and announce the winner at month's end.

Why Join the #MyWhy Drive?

This is your chance to highlight the impact Toastmasters has had on your life, connect with others on a similar journey, and contribute directly to your club's success. Let's fill our community with powerful stories and reasons that keep us all coming back for more.

Ready to share your why? Grab your phone, record your story, and let's show the world the power of our Toastmasters community!



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

Shine at the D71 Conference in Solihull on Us!

Calling all aspiring writers and Toastmasters enthusiasts! Here's an exciting opportunity to showcase your talents and potentially enjoy the thrill of our next D71 Conference in Solihull – **absolutely free!**

How to Enter:

Simply contribute an article, story, or any creative content to our district newsletter. Whether it's sharing insights, club successes, personal achievements in Toastmasters, or thoughtful reflections, your contribution not only enriches our community but also earns you a chance to win!

Prize Details:

Win a Free Ticket to the D71 Conference in Solihull worth **£300**. Immerse yourself in the vibrant atmosphere of one of the year's most anticipated Toastmasters events.

Drawing Process:

Every contributor's name will be entered into a draw. At the close of the submission period, one lucky winner will be selected to receive a free ticket to the conference, where you can network, learn, and celebrate your Toastmasters journey.

Don't Miss Out:

This is your chance to shine and be recognized. The more you contribute, the richer our newsletter becomes, and the closer you get to experiencing the excitement of the D71 Conference on us!

Ready to contribute and win? Submit your entries now to prmanager@d71toastmasters.org and join us in making the Toastmasters District 71 newsletter a source of pride and information.

Let your words take you places!



PR TIPS & TRICKS

New Year, New Strategy: Refreshing Your Club's PR Plan for 2025

The start of a new year is the perfect time to revisit and refresh your club's PR strategy. A well-thought-out plan helps you attract new members, engage your current audience, and boost your club's visibility in the community. Here's how to revamp your PR approach for 2025:

1. Set Clear Goals

Define what you want to achieve this year. Do you aim to gain 10 new members? Host a record-breaking open house? Increase social media engagement by 50%? Whatever your goals, make them specific, measurable, and aligned with your club's objectives. Clear goals provide direction and help you measure success effectively.

2. Audit Your Channels

Take a closer look at your PR tools, including social media platforms, your club website, and email campaigns. What worked well in 2024? What needs improvement? Ensure your messaging and branding are consistent across all channels. Update any outdated content and make sure your contact details are easy to find.

3. Plan Content Ahead

Develop a content calendar for the year that aligns with your club's events, goals, and key Toastmasters milestones. Include a mix of posts, such as member spotlights, event promotions, educational content, and testimonials. Planning ahead keeps your PR efforts organized and prevents last-minute scrambles.

4. Leverage Visuals and Tools

Eye-catching visuals can make your content more engaging. Use tools like Canva to create professional-looking graphics and scheduling apps like Buffer or Hootsuite to plan posts in advance. This saves time and ensures consistent posting.

By setting clear goals, optimizing your PR channels, and planning content strategically, your club can start 2025 with a strong and effective PR strategy. Make this the year your club shines!

WRITTEN BY

CHERYL ONWUKWE

VPPR, KILDARE TOASTMASTERS CLUB



POETIC PALETTE

A CENTURY OF VOICES: A NEW YEAR'S ODE

A hundred years, Toastmasters' pride,
From Dublin's shores to England's tide,
Through Scotland's hills where echoes blend,
Our voices rise, they never end.

From humble halls where stories grew,
We shaped our dreams, both old and new.
A century passed, a legacy vast,
But this new year calls—let's make it last.

In England's heart, where history's taught,
And Scotland's peaks with battles fought,
Ireland's green where poets inspire,
We fan the flames of the speaker's fire.

With every speech, with every cheer,
We cast aside the grip of fear.
We share our truths, we dare to dream,
Our words a bridge, a radiant beam.

Let's toast to growth, to every fall,
To rising stronger, giving our all.
The world's a stage, the mic's our tool,
Let's lead with grace, let's teach and rule.

Though centuries fade, our purpose stays,
To light the path, to blaze new ways.
So here's to the next, let's build anew,
For Toastmasters' heart beats strong and true.

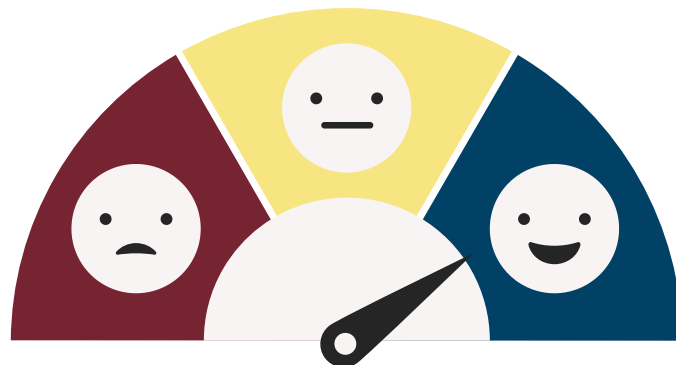
With courage bold and vision clear,
We march ahead in this new year.
Through England, Scotland, Ireland too,
The power of words will see us through



PRINCE ACQUAH
DISTRICT 71 POET-IN-RESIDENCE



FEEDBACK & SUGGESTIONS



WE VALUE YOUR INPUT!

HELP US IMPROVE YOUR NEWSLETTER

We're always striving to make our newsletter more engaging and valuable for you. Your feedback and suggestions play a crucial role in shaping the content and ensuring it meets your needs and interests. Here's how you can contribute:

Share Your Thoughts:

What did you enjoy in this issue? What would you like to see more of? Your insights help us tailor the newsletter to better serve our community.

Suggest Future Content:

Have ideas for articles, features, or topics? Would like to suggest clubs or individuals that are outstanding and deserve to be recognised? Let us know! Your suggestions can help us create content that resonates with you.

How to Provide Feedback:

Email your feedback and suggestions to prmanager@D71toastmasters.org or send us a message on our social media platforms. We're always listening!

Photo of the Month:

Submit your favourite moments captured during club meetings or events. The best photo will be featured in next month's newsletter!

Join the Conversation:

Engage with fellow members by discussing your favourite articles and sharing your thoughts on our [Facebook Group](#). Let's build a vibrant and interactive community!

THANKS TO OUR EDITORS!

Angela Afieghe

Folasanmi Ajayi

Share with other members and non-member friends/colleagues that you know.

THANKS FOR READING! HAPPY NEW YEAR!

