

DISTRICT 50

DIGEST

SEPTEMBER 2025



Area 13 Director, Greg Muckelroy, VC3, got up early and visited Tyler Morning Toastmasters. Greg describes the club as “a brightly shining light.”

📷 Tiffany McPherson

Leadership Lessons

Table of Contents



DISTRICT 50

03

**From the Desk of the
District Director**

06

Program Quality

Submit Club Success Plans by September 30

07

Club Growth

Fuel the Ripple

08

D50 Everywhere

09

The Rooms that Chaged Me

by Karan Karthik

11

**D50 After Dark
Episode drop**

District 50 Digest is a publication of District 50 Toastmasters.

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 <https://d50tm.org/>



DISTRICT 50

DISTRICT MISSION

We build new clubs and support
all clubs in achieving excellence



From the Desk of the District Director

This past month, I had the privilege of attending the Toastmasters International Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The event was filled with inspiring speeches, educational sessions, and powerful reminders of why we do what we do.

Yet, one of the most impactful leadership lessons didn't come from a speech or a workshop. It came from a simple gesture.

During one of the semi-final world champion of public speakers' contests, a contestant was clearly not feeling well. As the pressure of being on stage weighed heavily, a volunteer standing nearby noticed. Without making a scene, he quietly tapped the contestant, pointed to his own shoulder, and offered silent reassurance: "If you need support, I'm here."

That small act reminded me of the familiar words from the song "Lean on Me":

"Lean on me, when you're not strong. And I'll be your friend, I'll help you carry on."

Leadership is not always about giving directions, making big decisions, or standing at the front of the room. Sometimes leadership is as simple as being present, noticing when someone needs strength, and offering your shoulder—literally or figuratively.

This moment taught me that leadership is support in the moment. The most powerful leaders are those who remind others they don't have to carry the weight alone.

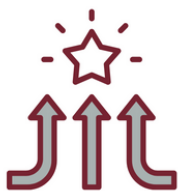
As we continue through this month, I encourage each of you to look for your "lean on me" moments. Whether in your club, your community, or your workplace, someone may be looking for quiet reassurance that they're not alone. Be that shoulder. Offer that presence. That's leadership in action.

Together, let's continue to shape District 50 as a place where leaders are not only developed, but supported—one moment, one shoulder, one lesson at a time.

Be the Ripple. Shape the Future.

Denise Castille, MBA, DTM | 2025-2026 D50 District Director

Fall Converge 2025



November 15, 2025

Collin College


9700 Wade Boulevard

Frisco, TX 75035

Connect. Share. Celebrate.


Get ready for an unforgettable day of growth, connection, and celebration.


What Awaits You


 **Mock Evaluation Contest:** Watch skilled evaluators in action and learn the art of constructive feedback that transforms speakers.

Back to the Basics Educational Sessions:

- Advanced Club Meet-Up
- Judges Training
- Prepare a Winning Speech
- Roadmap to DTM
- Create a Public Relations Plan for Your Club
- Parliamentary Procedure Without the Panic
- The Art of Effective Evaluations

 **First Timers Event:** honoring all first-time conference attendees. Get ready to grow and network with other Toastmasters.

 **Recognition & Celebration:** Honor achievements and be inspired by the incredible talent in District 50.

 **\$ Fees:** \$50 per person or \$100 per club. If your club is registering, your individual fee is \$0 per person when registering. Registration opens soon.

Want to be part of the magic behind the scenes or sponsor an event? Contact Fall Event Chair John Mottram, PM5, at fall@d50tm.org.

Toastmasters *Thrive*

Fall Converge

*A meaningful day of growth, connection,
and celebration*



A CONVERSATION WITH

John Mottram, PM5
Fall Event Chair

In this session, you'll discover:

- What makes Fall Converge a transformative experience for Toastmasters at every stage of their journey—from new members to seasoned leaders
- Insider highlights and must-know details about this year's programming, networking opportunities, and celebration activities you won't want to miss
- Practical strategies for maximizing your Fall Converge experience and bringing valuable insights back to strengthen your home club



DISTRICT 50



October 20, 2025



7:00 pm. (CT)



Register:

<http://bit.ly/44QZBqg>

PROGRAM QUALITY

RHONDA BUNTE, DTM
PROGRAM QUALITY DIRECTOR



Final Reminder: Club Success Plans Due September 30th

What is a Club Success Plan? Your roadmap to Distinguished Club status or better, outlining your club's goals and member development strategy for the year.

Great Progress So Far!

Thank you to the 61 clubs (52%) that have already submitted their Club Success Plans! You're on track for Distinguished Club status and have earned \$20 in District 50 Bookstore Bucks 💵

As of September 16, 2025

Division	CSP Submitted	Total Clubs	Percent
Eastern	15	20	75% 🌟
Plains	12	18	67%
Southern	11	21	53%
Town North	11	21	53%
Frontier	7	21	33%
Metro	5	17	29%
Total	61	118	52%

Congratulations to Eastern Division for leading the way with 75% submission rate!

Important Deadlines & Details

- **Submission Deadline:** September 30th
- **What happens if you miss it:** Your club will not qualify for Distinguished Club status this year

Need Help? We're Here for You!

Contact Program Quality Director Rhonda Bunte:

✉ Email: pqd@d50tm.org

📞 Available for consultation on plan preparation

✅ Can assist with submission process



CLUB GROWTH

SHANE GILMORE, EC4, EH1, PI1

CLUB GROWTH DIRECTOR

💧 Dues Fuel the Ripple 💧

Since being elected Club Growth Director, it's felt like drinking from a fire hose—but in the best way possible. I've been immersed in learning more about the structure, resources, and brilliance of Toastmasters than ever before. Every conversation, every training, and every new connection has deepened my commitment to helping this district grow.

But one thing has become crystal clear: **DUES MATTER!**

We all want thriving clubs, powerful meetings, and pathways that shape future leaders—and it all starts with members staying active. That's why I'm urging every club in District 50 to renew dues early and help your members do the same.

Our very own Toastmasters International President, Aletta Rochat, DTM, sent District 50 a personal video message underscoring just how essential dues are—not just for sustaining Toastmasters, but for building the kind of growth and momentum we're striving for this year.

The **ripple** of District 50 success begins with committed, renewing members. Let's ensure every voice is heard, every role is filled, and every club has the foundation to grow stronger.

So—submit those renewals, remind your members, and reach out if you need support. Together, we'll build 25 new clubs, strengthen every existing one, and **Be the Ripple** across District 50.





D50 Everywhere

Be the Face of Toastmasters in Our Community

District 50 is taking Toastmasters to the public! Through our **D50 Everywhere** initiative, we're setting up at community events, wine festivals, expos, and more — all to share the benefits of Toastmasters with people who may have never heard of us.

Want to help? It's simple, Volunteer for a shift at an upcoming event. You'll meet people, answer questions, and help grow our community. No experience needed. We'll provide a quick orientation so you'll know exactly what to do.

[D50 Everywhere Sign Up](#)

Have an event suggestion? Email D50Everywhere@d50tm.org.

Join us in showing the world what District 50 Toastmasters is all about!



Enjoy festive fun,
German cuisine,
and represent
District 50 on
October 4!

at
THE STAR



The Rooms That Changed Me

Karan Karthik, Senior at Rick Reedy High School

*Freshman year. DECA Districts.
Humongous Convention Center.*

The morning started with me fixing my tie in the bathroom mirror, trying to look older than I felt. The suit was stiff, a little too big in the shoulders, but it made me feel like I belonged. Clean, sharp, important. I remember walking into that massive hall, the kind of room with high ceilings and fluorescent lights that seem just big enough to make you feel small. There were hundreds of kids. Every single one of them is in a suit. Same posture. Same haircut. Same fake confidence. It hit me instantly: I'm not special. I'm just one more kid in a borrowed blazer.

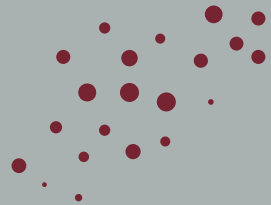
Up until that point, I hadn't felt nervous. But right then, this wave of doubt washed over me. Did I prepare enough? Did I even understand what I was supposed to be pitching? My name got called. I walked into that judge's room and tried to fake calm. But my voice cracked halfway through. I fumbled a transition. I couldn't even remember the closing I'd rehearsed. I left the room knowing I blew it. Final score: 59 out of 100. I didn't qualify for the next level. This was devastating. I felt... hollow. Like all the energy I built up that morning went nowhere.

What stuck with me wasn't the number. It was how lost I felt in that room. I realized I didn't know how to speak with purpose or confidence or direction. I didn't just fail the event. I walked away knowing I had no real idea how to hold someone's attention or carry myself like I believed what I was saying. And that realization stung more than the score.

But I didn't quit.

To find out what happens next, please visit:

<https://d50tm.org/the-rooms-that-changed-me/>





See What's Happening in District 50

Every month, we'll show you the numbers that matter—the real impact of our work together, the growth we're driving, and the connections that are transforming District 50.

Be the Ripple. Shape the Future.

24

Trio Club Visits to date



New members welcomed this month

115



D50 Cares reach-outs

3



D50 After Dark



Get ready to be inspired! Tune in to the latest episode of D50 After Dark, where host Mickey Bennett sits down with Jesse Oakley III, a Toastmasters veteran with over 30 years of leadership and positivity. From his roles as District Director, Regional Advisor, and International Director to his heartwarming love story and impactful podcast, Sunday Morning Chat Series, Jesse's journey is a masterclass in communication, leadership, and spreading positivity.

Why You'll Love This Episode:

- **Hear Jesse's rise through Toastmasters, connecting with global leaders from the U.S. to Asia.**
- **Laugh and smile at his charming story of meeting his wife, Dana, through Toastmasters.**
- **Learn how Toastmasters transformed his career at the Nevada Department of Transportation.**
- **Get inspired by his book, Greetings Happy People, and podcast, uplifting communities since 2020.**

