

DISTRICT 103

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

The LOOP

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2023 District 103
ANNUAL
CONFERENCE

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL





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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Loop Conference Issue 2023

EDITORS' NOTES

Hey there, District 103 friends and family! Are you ready for another chance to come together and celebrate what makes Toastmasters so great? It's time for our annual hybrid conference! There will be personal growth, community, networking, and a whole lot of fun!



Alhaji Abubakar, PI3
2022-2023 Loop Editor in Chief

Putting together this newsletter was extra special because it gave us a sneak peek of all the exciting things happening next month. The conference committee has really outdone themselves with a program that will take your vision to a higher ground. The best part? You can join in-person or virtually! They've got something for everyone.

Get ready to be inspired and make new connections. We can't wait to see you there!

*Alhaji Abubakar, PI3
2022-2023 Loop Editor in Chief*

One of my favorite District conferences in my home district (District 3) was the 2011 Fall Conference. At the time, my role was to run audio-visual for this conference, which took place at the Prescott Resort & Conference Center in Prescott, AZ. Long story short, after the Saturday night dinner, I decided to have a little fun with a Past International Director, an Immediate Past District Governor, and the current District Governor at the time. I decided to end the evening using the Casper Slide (cha cha now, y'all!) but blended it with Faces Drums 3 (Househeads know this track) and then it evolved into a very short mix with a variety of genres. Was it a lot of work? Absolutely. But worth it.



Prince Leftridge, II; DTM
2022-2023 D103 Loop Layout Editor
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In supporting these events, I had to inventory, set up, run audio, and tear down for every event from 2009 to 2013. Giving the audience some fun with live music sparked my desire to want more for this burgeoning hobby of mine. Fast forward to today — I have a controller which works with Serato DJ Pro 3.0, and a newer computer to run it.

Even if you don't already have certain skills, volunteering to work with your conference will help you on the path to acquire them. If nothing else, volunteering for conferences will spark something in you to want to reach higher in whatever you are doing. Whether you are doing graphics, decorations, registration, or helping the tech team, you will definitely learn something new. Practicing these skills will put you on the path to become more proficient. The more proficient you are, the more rewarding it will feel — and then you can even have some fun with it. What's your new mix?

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



Still Believing... Still Driving

Written by Dionne Leggin, DTM; District Director

Still after seven months, I BELIEVE that D103 can “Drive Our Vision to a Higher Ground” – A higher ground of being Distinguished (or better). When I started this journey of leadership, many of the members of District 103 asked why do I want to do this? Why do I put in soooo much time into the members with no monetary reward? My answer: because I BELIEVE in Toastmasters’ ability to bring out the best in its members.

As District Director I am always looking for little nuggets of confirmation of how great an organization Toastmasters is. Recently I found a HUGE nugget confirming my belief and the resilience of D103! We still have club members from clubs chartered since 1951. Even with the split in 2017 from District 30, and COVID, Speakers Forum and West Suburban Toastmasters Club (the two oldest clubs in our district) are alive and well. They chartered in 1946 & 1951 respectively. West Suburban has 19 members and 3 DCP goals; they have the vision of being DISTINGUISHED, and they are not alone.

We are so close to making history in being a DISTINGUISHED DISTRICT for the first time. I know we can do this!! Will it be easy? Absolutely not! Nothing worthwhile ever is. But will it be worth it? ABSOLUTELY YES!! We have over 40 clubs in good standing with 3 or more goals achieved. That is HUGE!! This again is a testament to what happens when you BELIEVE.

So, what does it all mean? For some, keep doing what you are doing; for others we have 5 months to get into gear and get in engaged in Pathways. Trust me, if you do your part, it will be reflected in you becoming a better speaker and or leader. What does doing your part look like? Well for one, its sharing Toastmasters’ benefits with friends, co-workers and family. It’s taking up a role at the meeting. It’s taking that giant leap and doing your first speech to completing the last speech toward completing a level or path. For others, it’s saying YES to leading in the district, -even if you don’t know how. Whichever it is, as Nike says, “Just Do It!” and Believe!.

In closing, please make sure to share and attend our District’s Annual Hybrid Conference April 21-22, 2023. It will be an exciting educational opportunity for you to see how “Driving Your Vision to A Higher Ground” can be an incredible experience when you believe as I do in YOU.

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 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Volunteers needed in the following areas:

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

.....and many more

PROGRAM QUALITY DIRECTOR'S NOTES

SAM SUKUMAR, DTM



Sam Sukumar, DTM
2022-2023 Program
Quality Director

Here we are, on the cusp of the district's flagship event — the **2023 Annual Conference** — just about a few weeks away. Aren't you excited? Sure, you are!!!

Aligned with the theme “**Drive Your Vision to a Higher Ground,**” we are providing you the opportunity to get back to your Toastmasters vision and elevate it. This year's conference is being brought to you with two things in mind:

- **Let's bring back the joy of in-person engagement.** For those who can attend in person, enjoy having face-to-face conversations with your colleagues!
- **Let's come together and connect.** This is the one event where the whole district is invited, and you have the chance to network with our extended D103 Toastmasters family.

This year's conference provides:

- Two World Champions of Public Speaking
- Live International speech and Evaluation speech contests
- Showcasing all our education awards winners
- In-person banner parade
- Band performance, by our own Toastmasters
- Great food at very affordable prices
- Sponsorship opportunities, and
- A lot more!

The **three** categories of pricing are designed to provide greater flexibility so you get the best benefits:

- Club registration
- Individual full package
- à la carte pricing
- Special pricing
- Super Saver pricing
- Choose what you like

Club registration is the most cost-effective offer, when your club registers for a set price. All members of the club and non-Toastmaster guests (prospective members, friends and family) have free admission for both days (excludes meals). Your club can become a sponsor too, for an additional fee, and receive added benefits at the conference.

Individual full package includes everything, from the time doors open till the time doors close.

À la carte pricing is for you to pick and choose activities to partake and meals you will have with us.

The Club registration option is a wonderful opportunity for you to showcase Toastmasters to everyone in your world. You could utilize this feature for a membership drive. Over and above all of these, we are also offering you excellent opportunities to showcase yourself, your club, and/or your business in our conference booklet for a very nominal price.

Please contact either our Conference Manager, Elizabeth L. Stevenson, at confmgr@d103toastmasters.com, or me at pgd@d103toastmasters.org, if you require any special arrangements or have questions.

Did you know? As of January 31, 2023, we have 260 education awards achieved this year (Toastmasters year that began on July 1, 2022). And we expect a lot more level completions before the conference recognitions **cut-of date of March 31, 2023**. Are you on the verge of completing a level or a path? Please get it done and get the approvals sent through to Toastmasters International. We would like to see you recognized too.

Would you like to see our District go Distinguished for the very first time? It's in your hands, literally. Pathways level completions play a BIG role. Below table tells us where need to be and where we are as of January 2023:

Pathways Level	Level completion Required	Level completion Achieved	Difference
Level 1	105	73	-32
Level 2	105	52	-53
Level 3	56	43	-13
Level 4	28	47	+19
Level 5	28	26	-2

As you can see, we have some work to do. Let's designate the month of March as “**Level 1 & Level 2 Extravaganza**” and get our members to complete Levels 1 & 2. Please reach out me if you need any support with this campaign.

Wishing you well as you cruise along your Pathways journey and see you at the conference, if not earlier.

Kindest regards,
Sam Sukumar

2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

New Sponsorship Opportunities This Year

New this year, the D103 Toastmasters Annual Conference offers sponsorship opportunities, allowing you the chance to support the annual conference at various levels.

We invite our corporate partners, our business owners and entrepreneurs to participate. Even clubs can take advantage of this sponsorship opportunity, with a Club Spotlight.

Keep reading for the details on how you can make D103 sponsorships work for you!

D103 Annual Conference Sponsorships

Attention corporate partners! Become official sponsors of the 2023 D103 Toastmasters Annual Conference, which is being held again in hybrid format: in person, based in Chicagoland; and in cyberspace, attendees on Zoom.

Our conference sponsorship opportunities are designed to help our corporate partners extend their brand visibility and promise while supporting the Toastmasters mission of increasing the public speaking and leadership capabilities of our members.

While the conference is hosted in Chicagoland, the reach of our conference extends well beyond, both nationally and internationally, via our hybrid virtual format. Our members and registered attendees are from all over the United States, and even internationally from such countries as Canada, United Kingdom,

Ireland, Brazil, Singapore, India, Nepal, and even New Zealand.

Corporate partners, engage today, before these opportunities sell out! Let's build new leaders together!

If you have questions about sponsorship or corporate clubs, please contact:

D103 Program Quality Director Sam Sukumar
PQD@D103Toastmasters.org

For more information: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/563603853297>

D103 Conference Advertising Sponsorships

Advertise your club, business, yourself, or whatever you chose, subject to approval of course, in our conference program!

Please secure your advertisements for display and to be shared with ~1,500 members of the D103 Toastmasters Annual Conference community and guests. Each option is self-explanatory and each ad is subject to approval by the Conference Manager.

For submissions:

Email your graphic designs (logos/business card/etc.) in vector format to:

confmgr@d103toastmasters.org

For more information: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/562623260317>

2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

D103 Annual Conference Business Booth Sponsorship

Attention D103 businesses, entrepreneurs, and vendors! Come display and sell your products and services to our dedicated conference attendees.

Showcase your products and services to D103 conference attendees!!!

Secure your Conference Business Booth now.

What you get:

- A 6-foot display table
- High foot-traffic location
- An engaged audience
- An email blast highlighting your conference business booth

Benefits include:

- Generating potential sales
- Adding to your business mailing lists
- Exposing your business to approximately 1,500 District 103 Toastmasters members and guests

Act now, only 9 booths are available and they won't last long.

*Products and services on display must be approved by the D103 Conference Manager.

For more information: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/562601545367>



Loop Conference Issue 2023

D103 Club Spotlight Sponsorship -

Get your 2-minute club commercial and speak before the entire conference audience in our inaugural Conference Club Spotlight!

Here is where you get:

- 2 minutes, either onsite or virtually, to highlight your club in the Conference Club Spotlight

Consider it to be your club's commercial. This time can be used to highlight members' achievements, to advertise your club website or meeting details, and to showcase your Youth Program, Speechcraft, Open House or any upcoming membership drives or events in front of the entire audience. Additionally, your sponsorship helps the district to put on an excellent conference.

Get your sponsorship TODAY while quantities last. Only 25 spots are available. Clubs may purchase up to a maximum of 5 spotlights

Thank you for your sponsorship and we look forward to seeing you in the Club Spotlight!

For more information: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/561034568497>

All of these Sponsorship opportunities can be found at the D103 Annual Conference Collection: <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/d103-annual-conference-collection-1830909>

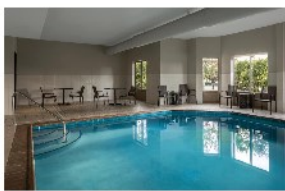
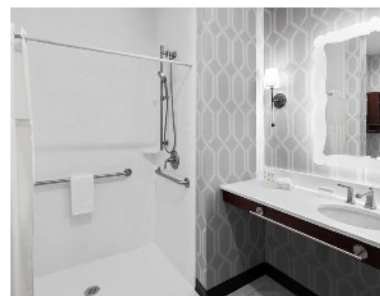
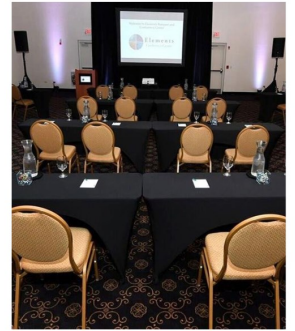


2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

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2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

A Conversation with Elizabeth Stevenson, DTM

If you've been hiding under a rock, it's time to wake up and smell the excitement because the 2023 D103 annual conference is just around the corner! This eagerly anticipated event brings together district members, family, and friends from all over to connect, learn, and grow as a community. Mark your calendars for April 21-22 and get ready for a conference like no other.



Elizabeth Stevenson, DTM
2023 Conference Manager

This year's conference is jam-packed with incredible content that's sure to inspire and motivate you. From two world-champion keynote speakers to the Evaluation and International Speech contests, you won't want to

miss a moment. And with two of our district's finest serving as your emcees, you can expect an event that's both entertaining and informative.

I had the pleasure of sitting down with this year's Conference Manager, Elizabeth Stevenson, to get a sneak peek at what's in store. Elizabeth has been a dedicated Toastmasters member since 2006, and her passion for the organization is contagious. She's held various leadership roles, including TLI Registration Chair, Area Director, Division Director, and Conference Manager (back in 2010). Elizabeth even helped found New Faith Toastmasters while serving as a Division Director.

Elizabeth's enthusiasm for this year's conference is contagious. She's a true servant leader who is committed to getting every member excited about attending. With such an incredible lineup of speakers and activities, it's easy to see why. So don't miss out on this amazing opportunity to connect with your fellow Toastmasters and take your skills to the next level. Register today for the 2023 D103 annual conference!

And now, let's hear from Elizabeth.

HAAJi: For those who are unfamiliar can you share some information about your role and responsibilities as Conference Manager?

Elizabeth: I am responsible for coordinating a team to help develop, implement, and organize a conference. The goal is to bring as many people as possible to our event to learn about the Toastmasters organization, to network with fellow Toastmasters that we may not have seen in a while, and to hear the best speakers in our district battle it out in speech contests.

There will be an Evaluation speech contest and an International speech contest. The International speech contestant is going to go on further to compete for that coveted World Championship of Public Speaking title. In fact, we have two World Champions of Public Speaking as our keynote speakers this year. It is the conference chair's responsibility to make sure that we have great speakers who will attract our members and guests.

It is also the responsibility of the chair to ensure that we have teams that will work in their individual areas to bring this entire conference to fruition. These teams include the finance team, the PR and publicity team, the logistics team, and the technology team.

Speaking of the tech team – since this is a hybrid event, we need to make sure that we have people in place who can advise us on the technology requirements. We want this experience to be just as vibrant and exciting for the person that's online as for the person who is attending in person. We don't want there to be a disparity, and so the technology team is critical and important to the complete success of this event.

We will also be naming the District Leadership team that will take us into 2023–2024, including the District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Directors. These are all elected officials, and we will find out who our team is at the conference.

We will also find out who the speech contest winners are, hear from our keynote speakers, and enjoy some entertainment.

2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

The conference is designed to meet the needs of our members, and we will recognize members for their hard work since last year's conference. It's a great time to see Toastmaster friends we haven't seen and to introduce our physical family to our Toastmasters family.

This is a great opportunity to learn about our own leadership skills. This is a team effort with many moving parts, and we meet regularly to hammer out a great program. We want to ensure that this conference takes into consideration everything that worked at the last conference, as well as address those things that could be improved.

HAAJi: The theme of this year's conference is "Drive Your Vision to a Higher Ground." What do those words mean to you?

Elizabeth: I'd like to invite every single member of the D103 community to drive their vision to a higher ground. As you might have guessed, I was listening to Stevie Wonder. He's a hero of mine. Certainly, he has talent and the vision to make his dreams come true, to make his goals a reality. He never stopped. He pushed forward all the time. He did not let the absence of visual acuity stop him from taking it to another level. I think that we are ready in District 103 to take our goals and our Toastmaster journey to another level. We need to always be learning, and Toastmasters allows us the ability to do that. This conference reminds us that even in COVID times we can challenge ourselves. We can put our best foot forward. We can be great communicators. We can be great leaders.

HAAJi: That being said, last year I joined virtually and it was exciting to be able to take part in the conference, even though I wasn't there in Chicago. How will you ensure that those joining in virtually will be able to have an engaging experience?

Elizabeth: We have factored in spaces for those who are joining us virtually to have an opportunity to participate in activities, such as virtual table topics. We have engaged people to ensure that during break times and when speakers are not on stage there are still activities for our virtual audience to participate in.

I tested the virtual portion myself by dialing in to segments of our conference from the hotel last year. So I want to ensure that those

who are dialing in are engaged and are a part of everything that's going on. We will have visuals for them and will engage them in events, including the First-Timer Orientation which will be hybrid. We will have a person in the room and our speaker/teacher will be dialing in. From the ground up, we are including our hybrid Toastmasters who are dialing in at every level and every segment of this conference.

HAAJi: Let's talk about the keynote speakers. Who are they and how did you decide on these world champion powerhouses?

Elizabeth: First, we have Ramona J. Smith. She is the 2018 World Champion of Public Speaking, and she won her title in Chicago! I have photos from that event, including from photo opportunities with her. But the thing about her win in Chicago was that the second place and third place winners were also women. So that was history making. For the first time ever, the top three winners were female.



Elizabeth Stevenson
2023 Conference Manager

The Loop did a feature article on her in January, and didn't even realize that she was going to be one of our keynote speakers. And so that is really nice that some more information about her is already in print. (You can find the article in the Oct-Nov edition of The LOOP here: <https://www.d103toastmasters.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/D103-Toastmasters-The-Loop-Fall-Winter-Oct-Nov-2022.pdf>.) The second keynote speaker is Edward Hearn, the 2006 World Champion of Public Speaking. He is originally from Springfield, Illinois. But he's a Chicagoan. He won in Washington, D.C. He's a minister and a motivational speaker. So we've got a local theme going through the two speakers.

Both speakers will be addressing the conference theme "Drive Your Vision to a Higher Ground." They will tag team throughout the conference, giving their keynote addresses. Then, they will be made available for a VIP session. And what that means is that you have an opportunity to be one-on-one with the world champions during the conference! We're giving these powerful speakers an opportunity to show off their prowess, talent, and skills.

HAAJi: The keynote speakers sound impressive! What about the other sessions – can you share some information about the educational sessions that will be offered?

2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

Elizabeth: We have four workshops designed to mimic the four categories from the Toastmasters International conference: Professional Development, Personal Growth, Inclusive Excellence and Public Speaking.



Elizabeth Stevenson
& Barry Mixon

First we have Eric Vernsten, a pretty new Toastmaster speaker. I'm excited that we're going to have someone that we don't always see. He'll be under the Public Speaking track, talking about improving your speaking with improv comedy. Second, we have Calvin Gibbs Jr, who is a familiar name in D103. He'll be under the Professional

Development track, talking about the purpose and benefits of professional development. Third, we have Haseena Shaheed Jackson, under the Personal Growth track. She's going to talk about raising the ceiling, tackling fears, and addressing obstacles. Finally, Yvette Beasley, speaking under the Inclusive Excellence track, will discuss how to remove limitations and barriers caused by biases.

We are also having a session called Club Quality Panel Discussion. It is designed to address club leadership questions and issues. It is designed to address questions that our leaders and members have about how to wind down their year; how to bring on those last members as you're working toward your goals; how to bring on new members, how to orient them; how to close out your Distinguished Club Program (DCP); and how to elect new officers for the next year.

HAAJi: All that sounds incredibly helpful and timely. I know there's a lot of planning and coordination to bring all this relevant information to our attendees. Can you tell me a little bit about the team you're working with to bring this event together?

Elizabeth: Absolutely. You mentioned the big word delegation. That is something that I have to work on, because I like to have my hands on things. I like to see things through, and I have to trust that my team is going to step into their roles and finish the job that they

are tasked with. So let me mention some of the roles that make up my team.

- We have the Education Chair, Sandra Washington.
- Our Sponsorship co-chairs are Audrey Schroeder and Stella Lorenz.
- The Publicity and Promotions Chair is Robert McKenzie.
- Our Finance Committee chair is Latrina Oddo.
- The Registration Chair is Wanda Williams-Griffin.
- Our Logistics Chair is Cassandra Lee.
- The Volunteers Committee Chair is Cheryl Lane.
- The Technology co-chairs are Ivory Gwin and James Larmie, with special support from Prince Leftridge.
- The Decorations Chair is Chelsea Thomas.
- Then, you have our District Program Quality Director (PQD) Sam Sukumar and our district director, Dionne Leggin. She absolutely is looking over our shoulder, making sure and ensuring everything is "up to snuff," if you will.

HAAJi: What does success look like for you and your team?

Elizabeth: Oh, my gosh. Success looks like every single club (in D103) coming to the conference. Success looks like rooms overflowing with numbers that we hadn't anticipated. Success looks like our corporate partners clamoring to be a part of the event and commemorative book. Success looks like everyone dressing up, feeling beautiful, attending the event and feeling a great sense of accomplishment and having a great time. Good food, fellowship, networking, listening to music and thinking about what they want to do in Toastmasters in the next year. That is success!

HAAJi: Now, for someone who has never attended a D103 Toastmasters conference, why would THIS year a great opportunity for them to go for the first time?

Elizabeth: Because they will not be disappointed. You will not feel like one person in a room full of strangers. There are no strangers in Toastmasters. There will always be someone nearby wanting to tell you about the Toastmasters experience. There will also be other people who want to tell you about their own Toastmaster experience. The benefits of Toastmasters are so great that a person walking in off the street will be intrigued, interested, ask questions, sit down, come in, join us. They will not walk away empty-handed. You will definitely be satisfied.

2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

HAAJi: What additional information would like to share regarding the conference?

If you have any additional questions about the conference, please contact Elizabeth at confmgr@d103toastmasters.org

Elizabeth: We have an expanded goal this year to engage our corporate clubs. We want to highlight our district's corporate clubs by giving them an avenue for more visibility in District 103. So, we will be offering sponsorship opportunities so they can be showcased.

Be sure to register for the conference if you haven't already!

Additionally, this year we're offering group specialized group opportunities so that you can come to the conference under your club's banner. When they register as a club, you can come to the conference with your club. And you still have an opportunity and an avenue to come as an individual. So, lots of new things this year.

This article has been edited and condensed.



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2022
District 103
Annual
Hybrid
Conference

Memories





2022 D103 TOASTMASTERS ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
PRESIDENT-ELECT (2021-22) AND TWO WORLD
CHAMPIONS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

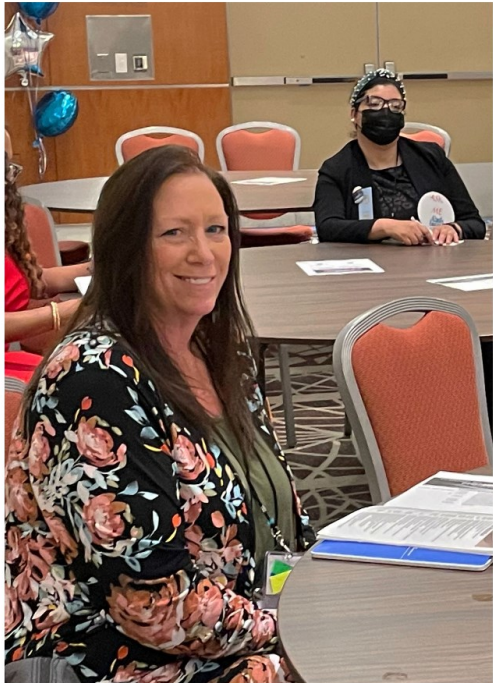
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**Chicago Embassy Suites Hotel
Conference Meals!!!**







2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

Are you a First Timer??

ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE FOR THE FIRST TIME

Martha Brock-Leftridge & Derrick Kimbrough

We are Martha Brock-Leftridge & Derrick Kimbrough. We are the hosts for the District 103 First Timers' Event for the 2023 Annual Hybrid Conference. Martha is the Virtual part of the committee. Derrick is going to be on site. If you have already registered or are still considering attending your first District 103 Annual Conference, this page is for you.



Martha Brock-Leftridge, DTM
First Timers Committee

Toastmasters International recognizes those who are attending a District Conference for the first time as integral participants. These participants are special dignitaries and will be referred to as First Timers.

You may be curious what to expect at your first District Conference. The First Timers Committee is here to help you make the most of this year's conference! Here are a few suggestions:

- This year's conference theme is "Drive Your Vision to A Higher Ground."
- Get involved by interacting with Conference Officers, District 103 Conference Committee Members, Guest Speakers, Presenters and other First Timers by speaking with or using the chat.
- Please review the Conference program to find out about the educational offerings, events and networking
- If you've already registered, please reply to my email asking if you would like to be recognized on the First Timers' slide that will be shown during the conference.

- Let others know that you are a dignitary by Including letters "FT" in front of your name in Zoom
- Attend the First Timers' session on Friday, April 21 at 5:00 pm CDT. This is a great opportunity to build your Toastmasters network and make new friends. In addition to other First Timers, meet Conference speakers, Committee Members, and District Officers

First Timers will be given a sheet with a list of 20 people they must go around and meet. The fastest to do this will win Toastmasters International swag.

*All the First Timers are automatically entered in a raffle to win a book where our very own PRM, Shanita Akintonde, is a contributing Author.

As the First Timers Committee, we are available to you before, during and after the conference. We are looking forward to meeting you soon at one of the virtual contests or the District 103 Conference! Please don't hesitate to reach out to say hello.

If you have questions, please reach out to me at 123mbrock@gmail.com.

Martha and Derrick



Derrick Kimbrough
First Timers Committee

2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

KEYNOTE PRESENTERS

Ramona J. Smith



Ramona J. Smith is an international award-winning public speaker who holds the prestigious title of the 2018 World Champion of Public Speaking. She is a powerhouse, and a gracious woman beyond measure. One who courageously surpassed over 30,000 people to receive such an illustrious honor. Her ubiquitous

stage presence and poised intellectual delivery of various topics has made Ramona one of the most sought-after public speakers in the world.

Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, audiences admire her unrivaled ability to captivate and connect with individuals from across the globe of all races and ethnicities. She has given keynote addresses in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Brazil, India, and Malaysia. Ramona has a bachelor's degree in Public Relations with a minor in Marketing from the famed Baldwin Wallace University, graduating Magna Cum Laude. She is currently pursuing an Executive MBA from Prairie View A&M University in Houston, Texas.

Ramona spends a great deal of her time traveling the world delivering encouraging messages of hope, triumph, perseverance, leadership, and love. She has been featured on Forbes.com, Business Insider, INC.com, and several other credible news outlets. Ramona authored the best-selling eBook, *A World Champion's Guide to Public Speaking: 10 Optimal Tips to Master the Art of Public Speaking*. In addition to being an educator, author, life coach, and poet; her greatest joy is being a mom to her miraculous son Ryan.

Edward Hearn



Edward E. Hearn is a professional motivational speaker, criminal defense lawyer, life coach, pastor and the Toastmasters 2006 International World Champion of Public Speaking, all rolled into one.

He has an extensive background as a professional speaker which began when he was a high school student in his home town of Springfield, Illinois.

Ed was an award-winning speaker on his high school Speech and Debate Team, and he was selected among the top Law School Trial Lawyer students at St. Louis University Law School in St. Louis, Missouri, where he earned a Juris Doctorate Degree in Jurisprudence.

Ed's extensive background as a speaker has taken him around the world to numerous foreign countries, including Zimbabwe, Israel, Jamaica, England, Canada, Sri Lanka and various other parts of the world.

More than anything, Ed is a delightfully entertaining storyteller who draws from many unique and interesting life stories, experiences and personal challenges as he delivers his many presentations and workshops.

2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

WORKSHOP SPEAKERS

Track: Public Speaking



Speaker: Eric Vernsten

Session Title: Improve Your Speaking with Improv Comedy
Session Summary:

“Add improv comedy to your speaking toolbox to improve your gestures and vocal variety. Use improv to warm up for a performance and be more confident. Let improv help you when you forget your speech, as well as help you learn to have fun while speaking. This workshop will show you how.”

Track: Professional Development



Speaker: Calvin Gibbs, Jr.

Session Title: I Didn't Learn That In School
Session Summary:

“If you think that you have reached the pinnacle...you are wrong! You are only just getting started. This workshop will help you understand the purpose and benefits of professional development.”

2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

WORKSHOP SPEAKERS

Track: Personal Growth



Speaker: Haseena Shaheed-Jackson

Session Title: 6 Step Coaching Process to Pivot Your Thinking
Session Summary:

“Tap into the more that is within you. Raise the ceiling so that you can become more, see more and do more. Awaken your mind to not surviving but thriving. Tackle fears and push through obstacles to see and believe in more.”

Track: Inclusive Excellence



Speaker: Yvette M. Beasley

Session Title: Removing Limitations and Barriers Caused by Biases
Session Summary:

“Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging are corporate buzz words we hear all the time. But do you understand the concepts behind them? More importantly, are you aware of your personal biases and how they impact outcomes for you and for those around you? Attend this impactful workshop to learn more.”

2023 D103 ANNUAL HYBRID CONFERENCE

DRIVE YOUR VISION TO A HIGHER GROUND

CONFERENCE EMCEES

Sporty King



Sporty King also calls himself *The Master of Listening*, and works with military service and family members who want to become better listeners so they can become better citizens, employees, parents and siblings. He does so by sharing his humor, corporate and life experiences that additionally inspire you to ENJOY your personal and professional success.

Sporty believes that time, preparation and ultimately having the vision to put in the work to encourage others will change their definition of success, because success challenges and changes your drive to a higher ground.

Cynthia Leggett



Cynthia has been a Toastmaster since 1997. All she wanted to accomplish was to complete ten speeches to aid her with speech impediment of stuttering.

In the years following, Cynthia has had the pleasure of serving in various officer roles at the club and district level. In December 2010 she obtained her DTM. Cynthia is currently enrolled in two Pathways paths and is a member of two clubs: HHS Toastmasters and Next Step Toastmasters.

Her greatest joy in Toastmasters is mentoring and witnessing others excel in their personal and profession growth as communicators and leaders.



Who do you know that could Serve as an **Area Director** for D103?

Serving as an Area Director (AD) is a great next step for any current club officer, especially the Club President (PRES), Vice President Education (VPE), Vice President Membership (VPM) and/or Vice President Public Relations (VPPR).

When you serve as an Area Director, you will hold one of the District Executive Committee (DEC) roles. As an Area Director, you will:

- Serve as the direct liaison between the district and the clubs in your area,
- Conduct club visits with the clubs in your area – twice a year – to understand and support the clubs' needs; assess club membership growth; determine educational achievements of club members; and submit area visit reports online to Toastmasters International,
- Communicate regularly with your Club Presidents their club's status in the Distinguished Club Program,
- Motivate and assist each club in your area to become a Distinguished club or better,
- Hold at least two (2) Area Council meetings to address the needs of the clubs in your area; discuss the plans and goals of each club in the Distinguished Club Program; review attendance at club officer training; and provide club awards and recognition,
- Coordinate area speech contests,
- Discuss district training and other district events with the clubs in your area,
- Participate in Area Director training provided by the district,
- Attend District Executive Committee (DEC) meetings once per month; and
- Participate in division and district sponsored events throughout the club year.

Area Directors are eligible for re-appointment for one succeeding term only. Those who successfully complete a one-year term as Area Director will receive credit toward their Pathways Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) award.

For more information about the Area Director role, refer to the [District Leadership Handbook](#) and the [District Administrative Bylaws, Article VII: Officers](#) in the Governing Documents of Toastmasters International. Visit <https://www.toastmasters.org> to access these documents.

Know a club leader or club member who would make a great Area Director? Encourage them to serve your division as an Area Director for the 2023-2024 club year. Share this flyer and the competencies below with them. **Want to nominate yourself for an Area Director leadership role?** Reach out to 2023 District Leadership Committee (DLC) Chair Gregg Thompson at gregg.thompson@sbcglobal.net and 2022-2023 District Director Dionne Leggin at dionneleggin@gmail.com Include a completed [Candidate Application](#); [District Leader Agreement and Release Statement](#); [District Leader Biographical Information form](#); along with a .JPG photograph (headshot preferred).



2022 - 2023 District 103 Club Growth Committee



*Dushun Mosley, DTM
Club Growth Chair*

Changes to improve the Toastmasters Club Coach Program are now in place. The moves are designed to forge the best fit possible between clubs and well-qualified coaches so that more clubs can flourish.

The changes took effect July 1, the beginning of the 2022–2023 program year, and they are outlined on a new Club Coach Program webpage. The new program policies were crafted by the 2020–2021 Policy Review Committee, composed of past and current members of the Toastmasters International Board of Directors. “The main purpose of implementing new rules for the Club Coach Program is to strengthen it and make it more robust,” says Deepak Menon, DTM, Toastmasters’ 2019–2020 International President, who co-chaired the Policy Review Committee. “These changes are also expected to increase the success rate of the program by ensuring that there will be fewer slippages.” New requirements for club coaches will ensure such members are experienced, committed, and “have the knowledge that the clubs they coach can benefit from,” says Menon.

A coach must complete the Club Coach Training Module before beginning an appointment. The module is in Pathways Base Camp, and it provides an overview of the Club Coach Program for club members, club officers, District leaders, and prospective coaches. This way, everyone is aware of what the club/coach relationship involves and what is expected from the partnership.

There are monthly checkpoints that allow for club coaches to gather and discuss the progress of the clubs they are coaching along with the variety of successes and challenges. These sessions are to also get the necessary resources for coaches to be more effective in helping clubs become distinguished or better.

On the following page is the list of New Club Coaches that are currently assigned. All assignments are 6-12 month appointments.

MONTHLY CHECKPOINT

This is a meeting for the club coaches to gather and discuss the clubs they are coaching along with the successes and challenges.

Club Coach Monthly Checkpoint is scheduled for Friday, April 28, 2023 at 7:00 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

Questions? Please email Martha Brock-Leftridge at CRChair@D103toastmasters.org



Scan Me to Register



Congratulations to the following 2022-2023 Club Coaches

Name	Assigned Club	President
Sheila Edens-Brown	Metro Talk Club	Shenitha Carter
Dr. AlyceAnn Crump	Toasting on the Green (New Name)	Evan Wheeler
Chelsea Thomas	Bellwood Toastmasters	Sonia Falk
Robert Rich	Towering Talkers	Kendrick Hillian
Merry Wang	PGL/NSG Blue Flames	Jacqueline Montero
Sai Siva Kare	NAACP Chicago Southside	Chelsey Robinson
Patricia Scott	Two-One-Nine Toastmasters Club	Shenitha Burton
Herbert Obah	MJM Speakers' Circle Toastmasters	Joseph Olalusi
Phoebe Thermitus	DIC	Don Williams
Haseena Shaheed-Jackson	BMO-Harris Toastmasters Club	Yolanda Douglas
Manuel Rivera	Pwc Speak Easy Toastmasters	Mohammad Qayoom
Bhanu Dabadi	Talk Of The Town Toastmasters Club	Mary Reed

Receiving Credit

Clubs can now have a minimum of three members (and no more than 12) for a coach to be appointed. (One or two coaches can be assigned.) Coaches receive credit toward the Distinguished Toastmaster award (DTM) if the club achieves Distinguished or better status in the Distinguished Club Program. Coaches can now also fulfill an additional DTM requirement if the club reaches 20 or more members in addition to being Distinguished or better. The additional credit is expected to entice more members to be club coaches.

To earn the credit, coaches must now:

- Serve as a coach for a minimum of six months by the end of the program year (June 30).
- Coach only one club at a time.
- Complete and submit a Club Coach Preliminary Report and Club Coach Progress Report every 60 days, and a Club Coach Final Report once the coaching assignment ends.

In the three reports, coaches answer questions relating to what initiatives they've undertaken to help the club, what challenges they face, how they are tackling them, and what growth opportunities there are for the club in the future. The reports will put an early spotlight on potential problems and allow time to brainstorm effective solutions, he adds.

The coach will also receive a 360-degree evaluation completed by members of the Club Executive Committee. The coach will get feedback on their skills in areas such as leadership, team building, and problem solving.

Annual 2023 Conference

Shanita Akintonde

2022–2023 District 103 Public Relations Manager



It's Annual Conference Time!! Some people are coming; others are going. No matter the term, the intent is the same. Gain valuable knowledge about Toastmasters at the one-stop shop place in the room where it happens — The District 103 Annual Spring Conference!

Participants will levitate to a "Higher Ground" — how? via listening to keynote addresses from World Champions of Public Speaking, learning tips via informative educational sessions, and participating in personal and team-building activities.

Who will win the Evaluation contest, which culminates at our District Conference? Who will win the International Speech Contest, and represent D103 at the next level(s)? Attend in person or online to hear the announcements of our winners. Enjoy the banner parade, where clubs showcase their banners and members. And to celebrate our newly elected District leadership, there will be an installation of our District's 2023-24 officers on site.

For those on the fence about whether to attend the District 103 Annual Spring Conference, here is a poem I wrote to help you make the best decision:

Should I go?

WHOA.

Think no more, answer the door.

The D103 Annual Conference is on the other side.

Waiting with specially wrapped communication gifts inside

There are keynote speeches by World Champions! and educational sessions, too.

Get ready for fellowship and fun, and yes, there will be FOOD

That leaves only one thing left for you to do.

Run, don't walk to register so you can participate on 4/21 and 4/22

Take the leap—answer the call

No excuses since Zoom is an option for y'all

That's because the 2023 District 103 Annual Spring Conference is HYBRID.

The planning committee thought of it ALL!

I'll be present in full regalia with whistles and bells

Here's hoping you will join me as well

Together we can Knock, Knock District 103

Into the archives of Toastmasters history.

2024 HYBRID CONFERENCE

Are you looking to stretch yourself in areas such as Project Planning and other areas to make this one of the best D103 conferences?

Are you interested in volunteering on the 2024 Conference Committee?

Areas to Volunteer

- Sponsorship
- Decor
- Program Committee
- Tech
- Education
- Many, many others.....

Questions? Please email the PQD at pqd@D103toastmasters.org after June 30, 2023





The LOOP

Guidelines for Article Submission

- *Articles may be submitted to 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*
- *All Artwork must be camera ready*
- *If you have questions, please email newsletter@d103toastmasters.org*
- *Next issue to be released by May 8, 2023*
- *Articles must be in by April 30, 2023*

- *Upcoming Schedule*
 - *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!*