

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

ISSUE 2 | SEPTEMBER 2022

ALETTA ROCHAT

INTERVIEW WITH AFRICA'S
FIRST ELECTED SECOND
VICE PRESIDENT OF
TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

**EVENTS AND
ENTERTAINMENT**
THUNDER IN THE CHARTER
THE POWER OF FEMALE
LEADERSHIP

EDUCATIONAL
LIFE LONG
LEARNING

LEADERSHIP
REALIGN WORK
WITH PURPOSE

12
PAGES



REDEFINING LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA



CONTENTS

01

EDITORIAL

Note from the Managing Director
From the District Directors Desk

02

LEADERSHIP

5 Steps to starting a new club
Club success streak
Re-aligning work with purpose - three tips to get you started
The Inspiring Journey of DTM Future Moyo
Exercising empathetic courage in leadership
Getting personal with Aletta Rochat
The Leading Women Series: Interview with Karen Levi Strauss

03

EDUCATION

Pathway Spotlight - Motivational Strategies
Incorporating Toastmasters Core Values in our clubs
Life Long Learning
Pathway Spotlight Presentation Mastery
Member spotlight : Benjamin Akinmoyeje
Road to transformation
Your storybook

04

EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Thunder in the charter
How clubs can succeed in uncertain times
The power of female Leadership
Toastmasters international convention

MAGAZINE EDITORIAL TEAM

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Ngomane

Managing Editor

Leya
Musunga

Production Manager

Solomon
Mulanda

Editor Leadership

Tsungai Manyeza
Sarah Jane
Ip Kwong
Nomqhele Muzu-
nze

Editor Education

Edith Utete
Rudo Masango
Marutesh
Marutesh

Editor Events & Entertainment

Blessing
Mukombwe

Contributing Editor

Martha Mpakula
Wame
Namponya
Zesipho Canca

Proofreader Editor

Michael
Shackleton

Designer

Simon Katende

CONTACT THE EDITOR TO FEATURE YOUR STORY

Reach us on email: [excellence@
toastmasters74.org](mailto:excellence@toastmasters74.org)

TOASTMASTERS SOUTHERN AFRICA CABINET

District Director

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DTM

Program Quality Director

Angie Kivido

Club Growth Director

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& Zivai Matondo,
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NOTE FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

“*Spring can be the chance to hit the reset button*”

Longer days, lots of sunshine and beautiful blooming flowers can only mean one thing: it's time to bust open those windows to better smell the fragrances because spring is here. The beginning of September marks the start of spring, my favourite season of the year.

Springtime is good for our mental health as it is seen as a time of growth, renewal, of new life being born and the cycle of life once again starting. It is more generally seen as the start of better times. At this time of the year we begin to feel less sluggish and become more open to inviting changes, both big and small, into our lives. With this renewed sense of optimism, don't forget to renew your membership too and invite friends and family to share the Toastmasters experience.

If you are feeling stuck and demotivated, this spring period can be the chance to hit the reset button as we transition into a new season of sunlight, warmth and movement. So how do we capture the hope of this season and encourage personal growth that grows like our hopeful gardens? In this issue we look at how one can realign their work with their purpose as life can get in the way of our efforts. We also get a peek into our very own Aletta Rochat's life, the first African elected as second Vice President of Toastmasters International, which is definitely a great inspiration to us all. Each of these stories and more speaks to our need for self-actualisation, lifting others as we rise and I am excited to share them with you. As we step into this new season may we be energized to continue to pursue our dreams and goals.

Please keep your eyes on the magazine in the coming issues for other signs of resilience, rejuvenation and renewal, because whatever changes spring may bring, one thing remains constant: our commitment to bring you news from the District. **Leya Musunga**

FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S DESK

“What can you buy for US\$0.25?” – she asked!
That's just under ZAR5 or BWP5 I thought, and all the time my mind kept shouting “Nothing!”
“How much do you spend for lunch or a snack?” – she continued.
“What if you invested in your personal and professional development more?”

For a moment, I wondered how much more, only for her to ask me to commit US\$0.25 per day, towards my personal development through Toastmasters. Would you say, yes?

Toastmasters has been a huge proponent for my personal development. I am mostly grateful to this experience for developing my self-awareness and social management which have helped me identify a career of passion and how to keep this career thriving. Had it not been for Toastmasters, I shudder to think where I would be in my professional development.

What has the Toastmasters programme, platform or people done for you? Do your fellow members know? I think you and I have an opportunity to tell



Andrew Tsuro, DTM
District 74 District Director

these stories of a \$0.25 a day investment that has yielded such great returns. I have just reinvested \$0.75 per day in my Toastmasters journey via my three clubs, at Central Centurion Toastmasters where they help me build my personal leadership brand, at Entrepreneurs Toastmasters where they help me profit through the Toastmasters network, skillset and ultimately growing my business and at the L'Avenir Anglo-Francophone – where they are preparing for the future with being comfortable with being uncomfortable learning another language. All these skills will enable me to redefine leadership in Africa.

Join me, let's reinvest at least US\$0.25 daily in our personal and professional development with Toastmasters. **Andrew Tsuro, DTM**

LEADERSHIP

5 STEPS TO STARTING A NEW CLUB

Kuhle Mthembu, a business coach and the owner of Impucuko Projects - a consulting engineering firm - as well as the owner of a construction business, is a member of Kloof Toastmasters Breakfast Club and the immediate past Division P Director. He joined Toastmasters in 2019 and is hugely grateful to the then club President, Joanne Schmitt, who planted a great seed within him and mentored him when he served as Area Director.

He firmly believes that leading from the front was crucial to the success of his division and all the challenges he faced to make history when Division P won the Jack Botha Trophy and came second among the 13 Southern African Divisions. Another outstanding achievement was that he was able to charter three new clubs during his tenure as the Division Director, which immensely helped to revive one of the struggling areas in the division.

What process did he undertake to start up the clubs?

Firstly, he gathered a mini committee to assist him with the charters. "In our case, it was four of us. This helped me have available role players for almost every Open-House we had," he indicated.

Secondly, the team set the dates without knowing how everything would pan out. They immediately identified the specific dates as possible dates for Open House events.

Thirdly, they embarked on a Public Relations journey as if these events were already confirmed. "We got the posters ready and started filling the role players list for all possible Open House events," he continued.

Fourthly, they tasked each other to invite at least five members each. Because their strengths varied in this regard, Kuhle took the lead in inviting guests.

Fifthly, what pushed the numbers of guests in attendance further was that Kuhle had Wednesday live events on Facebook, which were recorded and kept on the Division P Facebook group. Many people could recognise him whenever he reached out to them. "If prospects relate with your personality, they tend to follow you wherever you go."

Three months into the new Toastmasters' year, he has already signed on eight new members; this is the legacy of constantly being in touch with prospects during the previous year.

"My biggest lesson is the famous one: we don't know what we don't know whenever we join Toastmasters. The twist is that we don't know who we possibly could become if we work harder each day," he acknowledged. **Leya Musunga**



Kuhle Mthembu, Immediate Past Division P Director

*"We don't know
What we don't
know Whenever
we join
Toastmasters."*

”

CLUB SUCCESS STREAK.

Financial Toastmasters Club is one of the oldest clubs in Mauritius. For the past 14 years, with all the teamwork of the club sponsor, the Distinguished Toastmasters and members, we have never missed a DCP award. For the past 5 years, we have continuously achieved the President Distinguished status. With the help of the active members and executive group, we arrived at the 5th strike. As per our Division Director, we set the bar high and hope to maintain our legacy. Many of our members are doing speech after speech,

evaluation and other roles back to back, and without them, the club would not be a success. As a club, we support each other and celebrate our club's and individual members' successes.

I believe something that significant will happen this year as the year promises to be a game changer. With the new team, we are more motivated than ever. We have several directors and assistants from the division in our club. To mark the New Year, in the month of August, the executive members took the lead and gathered together to Reconnect, Rebuild the connection, Refuel and Rejoice for all members of the club. The club used that motto for members to create more family memories and enjoy an environment of fun

and laughter. "The first time I entered into the meeting room at the Financial Toastmasters Club; members were so welcoming and willing to help guests convert to members; I fell in love with Toastmasters immediately and applied to become a member," said the current club Vice President for Public Relations.

From that event and our meetings so far, we are discovering many talents: singers, dancers, comedians and many more. We are here to listen, keep dormant members active, and get new members. The executive members are taking the roles, helping each other, helping members to climb the ladder on Pathways and to progress in their public speaking projects in the club and outside Toastmasters

circles. We have shaken it up in the club and are more lively compared to last year. Members are highly motivated to pursue their projects.

Sarah Jane Ip Kwong





RE-ALIGNING WORK WITH PURPOSE- THREE TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED

Oprah Winfrey once said, “I want to fulfil the highest, truest expression of myself as a human being”. As a new member of Toastmasters, I am on a journey of self-actualisation. The goal of self-actualisation is to realise one’s potential, develop one’s abilities, and cultivate a sense of appreciation for life.

At times life gets in the way of our efforts, and the need to reflect and re-plan our path becomes necessary. Loss of motivation can hinder the best among us from accomplishing our set goals. So, for those times when you find yourself discouraged and unable to function to your desired standard in your role, here are three ways to re-align your work with your goals to give you a sense of control in your leadership journey in Toastmasters.

Keep a record of your plans- Leaders set the tone or standard of professionalism in any given context. It is, therefore, advisable to plan ahead of deadlines. You can do this by having a notebook, planner or journal. Some apps can serve as reminders for your meetings and daily tasks.

Establish a routine- most of us leave hybrid lives. There is family, work, and now Toastmasters, which may serve as a unique development platform for most. Toastmasters aligns with one’s purpose of becoming a refined professional in communication and leadership. It is the water we need to sprout into the highest, most genuine expression of myself. Establish a routine by creating a timetable for your daily tasks, and maintain that routine by showing up for every task.

Work around obstacles- Develop a sense of control; you can do this by completing all the not-so-difficult tasks first. Ask for help early, don’t wait until the last minute. Asking for help does not make one a failure as a leader. Even the greatest of leaders have asked for help from other leaders to advance a good cause and achieve their vision. **Zesipho Canca**

THE INSPIRING JOURNEY OF **DTM FUTURE MOYO**

Future Moyo, the Immediate Past Division Director for Division Z, which was awarded the Division of the year award for 2021/2022, joined Toastmasters in 2016 with the objective of becoming a confident leader and competent communicator. At her first meeting, she was blown away by the culture of confidence and commitment that the members exuded and she knew this would be a great place for her.

However, less than 2 months later she relocated to Bulawayo where she worked hard to sponsor the Dream Achievers Club, which became the second club in the city of Bulawayo. She became the charter president with the support of Coach Dorothy Chanakira, Coach Zivai Matondo and other Toastmasters from Harare. There were many teething challenges especially as this was during the period that Toastmasters International was transitioning to the Pathways programme, but through hard work and tenacity, the club ended the year as a President Distinguished club.

In 2019 she challenged herself to take up a more involving role as the Vice President for Education which positioned her to sharpen her transformational leadership skills. Meanwhile, she was inspired by other Toastmasters who were attaining the highest level in Toastmasters Educationals,



Future Moyo, Immediate Past Division Z Director

the Distinguished Toastmasters Award (DTM) and she decided to start on her own journey. In 2020 she took up the office of Area Director where she grew her area by adding two more clubs and increased the number of President Distinguished Clubs. She also sponsored the Victoria Falls Toastmasters Club in 2022.

In August 2022, Future finally attained the DTM Award, and when asked what key principles guided her thus far she said, “It begins with building a strong conviction about your personal ambition, then leveraging the limitless opportunities that Toastmasters has to offer while enlisting the support of mentors. In my case I had the immense support of DTM Zivai Matondo who held my hand on many occasions and allowed me to try my hand at putting into practice what she had coached me. Now I am a highly confident and competent leader.” **Tsungai Manyeza**



EXERCISING EMPATHETIC COURAGE IN LEADERSHIP

As introduced in the previous issue, there are 6 types of courage that leaders can maximise to achieve leadership functions if we are going to truly redefine leadership in Africa. In this article I’ll share on the first, empathetic courage.

I remember some years ago when I was working as the assistant director at my mother’s kindergarten. I had the opportunity to be responsible of the affairs of teachers and I was the first contact for the parents of our pupils; I responded to inquiries, complaints and whatever needed to be addressed. It was not an easy experience because I never understood what leadership functions I was to exercise and what type of courage to use for conflict resolution. I had to value both the parents and teachers without seeming biased. Similarly, in Toastmaster and any organization leadership should display empathy.

How can you apply empathetic courage to your leadership functions?

Firstly, let’s appreciate the concept of leadership. Every great leader is distinguished by their leadership because leadership is not a position but actions of influence. Oprah Winfrey wrote, “Leadership is about empathy. It is about having the ability to relate and connect with people without bias.” This takes courage and to be specific empathetic courage. Empathetic courage is acknowledging personal bias and intentionally moving away from them in order to vicariously experience the trials and triumphs of others without conflicting interests. This was the courage I needed to apply to understand parents concerns and the teachers without siding with any but communicating to resolve matters.

Clinton Kadochi



Our very own, Aletta Rochat, who hails from Cape Town, South Africa, was recently elected as the second Vice President for Toastmasters International. She is the first African to hold such a high position in Toastmasters International.

Mum to three wonderful children and married to Rory, Aletta's family has been very supportive throughout her Toastmasters journey. She loves walking and running and runs the occasional half marathon. The writer recently caught up with Aletta, just to peek into what makes her tick.

Q : Why did you join Toastmasters?

A: I always joke that I didn't join Toastmasters to become a better speaker or a leader, but to run away from my kids! I was looking for a hobby that would take me away from being a wife and a mum. Having heard about Toastmasters, I didn't know anyone who was one until I visited Cape Town Toastmasters Club in 2008 and I just loved what I saw. I immediately knew that I wanted to be as competent and confident as the people that I saw in action at that meeting.

Q : How else have you progressed as an individual?

A: I have started professional coaching on speaking and interview skills and have also published two books on public speaking, all this due to my Toastmasters experience. I have learnt a great deal during this journey and with every appointment, I am continuously learning.

Getting Personal

with

Aletta Rochat

Q: How have you made your way to this historic appointment for African Toastmasters.

A: Like many, my primary objective was to become a great speaker and a better leader. Soon my club president requested that I support the club as Vice President for Public Relations and I was happy to help since I have a marketing background. Not too long after, I volunteered to do Public Relations for the Division. I stood for elections for the role of District PR Manager and to my surprise I was elected even though I was relatively new to Toastmasters, having been a member for less than two years. There was therefore a lot to learn in this office and I was grateful for all the support and mentoring I received. It was during my term that the then International President, Pat Johnson visited our District and I had the privilege of managing her itinerary and travelling with her. This was a phenomenal experience through which I got to learn so much about Toastmasters at the international level. It opened my eyes to the wonderful opportunities that are available to all of us. The following year I went on to serve as Division D Director. Through the hard work of our clubs, members and Area Directors, we were a President Distinguished Division, which meant we were serving the needs of our members and clubs.

I then ran for election for the position of Lieutenant Governor of Marketing (which

is now the Club Growth Director role) and Lieutenant Governor Education & Training (now known as the Program Quality Director). I served as District Director then later applied to be a Region 11 Advisor. I served in this role for 2 years. This was a very interesting assignment since Region 11 at the time included Europe, the Middle East and Africa, so you can imagine the diversity of cultures, economies and many other dynamics. In 2019 I ran for election as International Director and served from 2019 to 2021. This was an unprecedented time because mid-way through the term the COVID-19 pandemic hit, presenting many challenges that we had to overcome. The journey has since brought me this far and I am honoured to have raised my hand and to be elected as the Second Vice President of Toastmasters International.

I am honoured to be the first incumbent from Africa to serve in this capacity. It has been possible through the immense support I have received from the many people with whom I have built very strong relationships. While I may be the first leader from Africa in this role, I am confident that many more will follow in the future. We have so many talented, committed leaders in our continent and in our region.

Q: What would you tell anyone sitting on the fence about joining Toastmasters.

A: Don't wait any longer! Jump right in and start making history. I am confident you will enjoy the world of Toastmasters. The world needs effective, inspirational leaders and Toastmasters can help you to

become one. I encourage you to sign up, pay your dues, participate actively and get a mentor. You will be transformed. I guarantee you that six months from now you will be surprised by your accelerated transformation.

Q: How will you redefine leadership as you embark on this new role?

A: My belief is that leadership is about relationships and how we can serve each other. It is not your title that matters but the difference that you make while you hold the title. Our job is to serve others.

Q: What is the one word that you can use to describe your Toastmasters journey thus far?

A: Enriching! Toastmasters has been one of the most enriching things I have ever done in my life.

Tsungai Manyeza

"It is not your title that matters, but the difference that you make"

THE LEADING WOMEN SERIES: INTERVIEW WITH

KAREN LEVI STRAUSS

As part of the Leading Women series, we seek to highlight the challenges and the career aspirations of the women leaders in the District. In this story, we speak to Karen Levi Strauss a multiple award winner and twice Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM), who strongly believes that by choosing to get involved and learn in the safe environment that Toastmasters offers, she has been able to stretch herself far beyond her own boundaries and grow her skills and career faster than she would have been able to do in her workplace alone.

Q: What personal sacrifices have you made in Toastmasters?

A: Time is probably my biggest sacrifice for Toastmasters – In my year as Division Director (2012-2013) I was spending 2-3 hours per day, 6 days a week, on something Toastmasters related. Even now in 2022 I am still spending a substantial amount of time participating in Toastmasters events and developing Toastmasters International content. However I have NO regrets – the sacrifice has reaped rewards for me as through Toastmasters I have developed practical communication and leadership skills that have stood the test of time and helped me to develop astronomically in both my personal and professional life. Being a

member keeps my skills sharp and honed.

Q: Could you name a woman who has inspired you the most?

A: Within Toastmasters I have a few women leaders who inspired me to be a better person, woman, leader – the first was Zosia Greaves a member at both Alberton Toastmasters and Gold Reef Toastmasters from 2000-2010 – she inspired me to deepen my Toastmasters journey. Beth Thomas always had a kind word and was a mentor for many years until she passed on. Lois Strachan a Past District Governor inspired me on so many levels as a Toastmaster and as a person. Aletta Rochat, who was recently elected as the Second Vice President for Toastmasters International, has forged new paths for African Women Leaders. Outside Toastmasters – Brene Brown – for her vulnerability, leadership work and the way she shows up so authentically.

Q: What leadership lesson have you learnt that is unique to being a female leader?

A: I like to believe that all the lessons I have learnt are applicable to being human rather than being female, however being a female leader in a male dominated environment has meant that I had to be clear about my role and boundaries and persevere when crucial and difficult conversations were required.

At times being the voice for other women

who are not always comfortable to speak up about difficult and controversial topics.

Q: What is the best Toastmasters related advice that you've ever received?

A: When you need to learn something in your professional life, look for material in the Toastmasters World – inevitably there will be something. An example is when I stood for Club Growth Director in 2016, I lost the election to Nikki Quinn after 3 rounds of voting but walked away with a wealth of knowledge about Marketing and Brand Building, a skill I really wanted to learn.

Q: Do you recall any biases or assumptions made about you?

A: I am sure there are many assumptions made about me – however none spring to mind because when assumptions are made I will generally immediately address them with the people involved. We each have a responsibility to correct wrong assumptions and give people in-the-moment feedback (privately) about any blind spots/biases they may have. I prefer to hold people accountable for any assumptions they make about me before it becomes an issue for either of the club or us.

Q: What's the greatest risk you've taken as a leader?

A: My greatest risk as a Toastmasters leader has been to stay in a role too long. In the years where I have not properly up skilled my successor I have landed up holding the role for longer than was good for me AND the club. Good risks have been when I put my hand up for roles I did not feel fully equipped for – like accepting a role on the Ethics Committee when the late Merryl Jubber asked me to – my leadership grew in leaps and bounds around mediation and conflict resolution – something I had generally avoided prior to that.

Martha Mpakula



Karen Levi Strauss, DTM

EDUCATION

PATHWAY SPOTLIGHT - MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

The Toastmasters Education programme has its foundation in 11 educational programmes known as Pathways that impart critical skills and competencies through the completion of 5 levels of projects. Motivational Strategies is one such Pathway.

Motivational Strategies is aimed at “building connections with the people around you, understanding motivation and successfully leading small groups to accomplish tasks.” I had the opportunity to sit down with **Lame Mthethwa**, Vice President Education: Gaborone Toastmasters Club, who recently completed all 5 levels of this Pathway.

Q: What were your expectations when you started the Pathway?

A: I've always believed that I am a

motivational speaker, I love to motivate and I love to encourage. I expected to only learn about how to motivate and what words to use, but this Pathway far exceeded my expectations and gave me more than I could have ever anticipated.

Q: What was the most challenging aspect of completing this Pathway?

A: One of the Level 5 Projects required me to create a team and delegate responsibilities. This proved to be a challenge to me as I learnt that I am a hands-on leader willing to pick up the slack when team members were not performing which isn't always good. I therefore had to learn how to be intentional in delegating and in communicating my expectations to the team.



Lame Mthethwa

Q: Which project did you enjoy the most?

A: I enjoy writing, so having the opportunity to write as part of the Level 4 Project of Writing a blog was really enjoyable.

Q: What lessons did you learn whilst completing the Pathway?

A: I learnt not only how to motivate people but also how to organise events, how to motivate teams and how stand up in front of an audience and inspire them.

Wame Namponya

INCORPORATING TOASTMASTERS CORE VALUES IN OUR CLUBS

As Toastmasters, we have a duty to uphold our core values of integrity, respect, excellence and service.

These values have a significant impact on group and individual success; not only in Toastmasters but also in the world at large. They are also in alignment with many corporate and organisational cultures.

Consistent application of the core values in the day-to-day activities of a club will contribute to greater self-confidence and club growth. Working in unison will also strengthen clubs through pursuing common goals, getting support from other club members and being accountable to one another.

Clubs may incorporate the Toastmasters International values through adding them to their meeting themes. They can also add them to table topics for various meetings.

Clubs could also have quarterly goals guided by the Toastmasters values. Each quarter could include campaigns, activities, projects or challenges related to the particular value for that period.

Virtual meetings could have Zoom backgrounds highlighting the core value of the moment as a constant reminder to members of these guiding principles.

A fun add-on would be to translate the core values into local languages and to use the opportunity as a learning method for club members as well as guests.

Most importantly, new members should be introduced to the Toastmasters core values and given an opportunity to reflect on how they will contribute to these values while aligning them with their personal values and goals.

Edith Utete

LIFE-LONG LEARNING

Albert Einstein, who is widely acknowledged as one of the greatest physicists of our time said, “Once you stop learning, you start dying.” This statement is applicable not only to individuals but to entities as well. Those who become stagnant when it comes to continuous learning and re-invention risk becoming redundant and eventually obsolete. The Covid pandemic taught us the importance of continuous improvement and agility in order to remain relevant in a fast changing world.

Learning is and should be a life-long process which is not necessarily restricted to formal learning, but can take on many forms including informal learning. The one key aspect of life-long learning is that it is voluntary and requires proactivity. Each day brings new opportunities to learn and develop new skills. Continuous learning is also evidence of one's self awareness and realisation that as long as one is still alive, no one ever arrives.

Some of the benefits of continuous life-long learning are:

- Personal fulfilment that comes from acquiring new knowledge or skills
- Gaining a competitive edge in business or one's career
- Continual evolution and growth

Life-long learning opportunities, be they formal or informal abound everywhere. One such opportunity is the Toastmasters Pathways Education programme which offers many prospects for one to continually learn, develop and refine skills that are applicable to any area of one's personal and professional life.

Rudo Masango



EDUCATION SEGMENT



Tlou Mashitisho

Sometimes you don't need all the answers when you start but the solutions will become apparent as you go along.

PATHWAY SPOTLIGHT - PRESENTATION MASTERY

Tlou Mashitisho recently completed the Presentation Mastery Pathway, which equipped him with the skills necessary to become an accomplished public speaker. As a trained educator, he chose this pathway as a means to improve his ability to share ideas and to learn how to engage a more mature audience. One of the challenges he faced was aligning his learning with the timelines for completing projects. He, however, challenged himself by committing to do the work, celebrating his successes and keeping his training on track.

In completing his projects, he particularly enjoyed the Level 4 Project, Writing a Compelling Blog. Basing the project on his

home club, Komani Toastmasters, allowed him to capture the beauty of the club whilst also applying the lessons from the project. He also found the Leading in a Volunteer Organization project incredibly useful in his leadership journey as it helped him to reframe his perception of leadership.

What was the greatest lesson learnt? Sometimes you don't need all the answers when you start but the solutions will become apparent as you go along.

Congratulations on your achievement.

Wame Namponya

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT BENJAMIN AKINMOYEJE

Benjamin Akinmoyeje, who describes himself as a restless person, has been a Toastmaster for ten years. He initially joined Toastmasters to meet new people when he relocated from Nigeria to Namibia.

"When I discovered the value of Toastmasters, I realigned my reason for joining and wanted to become an effective leader," said Benjamin, who is a member of Tarantaal Toastmasters club. With the desire to add value and contribute to others' development keeping him motivated, he aspires to

further polish his leadership skills and hopes to be leading an empowered group of leaders in the next twelve months.

Leya Musunga



Benjamin Akinmoyeje DTM

ROAD TO TRANSFORMATION

Being an intentional and impartial speaker as a life goal is what drove Pambana Masame to join Gaborone Toastmasters club in Botswana just a few months ago. Pambana describes himself as a versatile person and is motivated by his vision to succeed. He hopes to transform himself into an impactful speaker of repute by the end of the year.

Leya Musunga

YOUR STORY BOOK

We are a culmination of our life stories. Sharing a personal story is one of the greatest ways that we can deliver a message that has impact, resonates with our audience and most importantly is memorable. It is for that reason that creating your own story book - a compilation of stories and story ideas drawn from your personal experiences - can simplify the speech writing process by creating a personal repository of stories to draw from when writing a speech. Always have your storybook handy to jot down memories, life events and interesting moments for future reference.

Wame Namponya

EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT



The Thunder in the Charter :

Victoria Falls Toastmasters Club Makes a Majestic Entry

As the rivers from up north in Africa slowly but surely meander down towards the mighty Zambezi, so has been the journey to launching the Victoria Falls Toastmasters Club. The first launch meeting was in December 2021 and month on month only a few members joined the club. The sponsors remained resolute in building interest among the citizens and when the time came to charter, indeed the rivers had merged to form the mighty Victoria Falls. With a thunderous entry, Toastmasters International, Region 11, District 74, Division Z and Area Z6 welcomed the first-ever club in Zimbabwe's Matebeleland North!

This vibrant club, nicknamed #TeamAwesome officially made it to Club Central in May and was already Distinguished by June 2022! In the true

thunder fashion, it took the club a month to make it to the Hall of Fame in July 2022.

In August, the club held a top drawer Charter Dinner which attracted leaders in the city including the Mayor, His Worship Somvelo Dlamini. The event was also graced by DTM Andrew Turo, the CEO of Southern Africa Toastmasters, Angie Kivido, the lady in charge of the Education department of Southern Africa Toastmasters as well as some Toastmasters from Harare, Bulawayo and Lusaka. In his speech, His Worship the Mayor pledged his support for May Con 2023, assuring the team that he would personally welcome delegates to the convention next year.

Tsungai Manyeza

THUNDERCON 2023

THEME
CULTURE INFUSION CULTURAL DIVERSITY

DATE | 4TH OF MAY TO
6TH MAY 2023



2023 SOUTHERN AFRICAN TOASTMASTERS CONFERENCE

The 2023 Southern African Toastmasters Conference is open to all Toastmasters and guests.

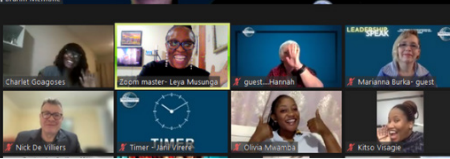
The conference shall be packed with great presentations, master classes, entertainment, cultural infusion, diversity, networking opportunities, fun and adventure!!!

Register your interest using the link below :

<https://toastmastersdistrict74.formstack.com/forms/>

EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT SEGMENT

HOW CLUBS CAN SUCCEED IN UNCERTAIN TIMES.



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Division O-daciously Original recently hosted Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) Brahm Memone for an interactive session on how clubs can succeed in uncertain times. With 26 years of experience as a Toastmaster, DTM Memone highlighted that with the recent global change, clubs will have to shift their mindset to adapt to new changes and cannot apply the same rubric of yesteryear in operating in these new times.

A club meeting is the primary reference point of the Toastmasters experience. DTM Memone accordingly emphasised the need to have quality meetings through the effective use of technology, preparation and the coming together of club leadership to ensure that meetings are conducive and enhance the member experience. He further underscored that leadership needs to happen in between club meetings, and as a result, it has become more important for clubs to foster a culture that promotes consistency and the creation of genuine connections with its members.

Ultimately, how a club hosts its meetings, engages with its members and guests before, during and after a meeting and fosters a healthy club culture are all essential tools for ensuring that clubs succeed in these uncertain times.

Wame Namponya

THE POWER OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP

There is a famous saying that goes, "When you strike a woman you strike a rock." As a way to celebrate Women's Month in August in South Africa, The Social Network Toastmasters Club decided to celebrate with a special themed meeting, The Power of Female Leadership. This was about embracing those qualities that our society sees as feminine which women are socialised in, to believe that they are female qualities, like relationship building and value in empathy. These are actually what make up what is termed as feminine leadership, and they are qualities that can be expressed by people of any gender. "I really wanted for this to be a space in which we celebrated that and recognise that these things that we are often judged or maligned for,

are the qualities that are required for us to make it in the world," stated Chantelle Ashley, when asked about the idea behind the theme.

With all the roles taken up by women, the meeting was also attended by various female leaders from the District and proved to be a very enlightening evening for all in attendance.

Leya Musunga



THE TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The Toastmasters International Convention is an annual event attracting Toastmasters from all over the world, geared mainly towards rounding up the year's business, recognising excellence, ushering in new international leadership and crowning the World Champion of Public Speaking.

This year's Convention, hosted in Nashville, Tennessee, saw our very own District 74 receiving recognition as one of only two Presidents Distinguished Districts for the 2021/2022 Toastmasters year and a World No. 3 District. Our Immediate Past District Leaders Njabulo Thela together with Andrew Tsuru and Angie Kivido took the Hall of Fame Stage to accept this prestigious accolade on behalf of the District cementing their motto that every member matters.

This year's Convention also saw Cyril Junior Dim with his speech titled "Ndini" take home the crown as the World Champion of Public

Speaking. Representing District 108, the Zimbabwean-born champion's victory is on the heels of that of Capetonian Verity Price, the first African to hold the title.

Finally, Matt Kinsey, DTM, was elected as the 2022/2023 International President. As a firm believer in what Toastmasters has to offer, the veteran Toastmaster with nearly 20 years' experience says he is ready to lead with courage, focus and inspiration.

Wame Namponya



