

SEPTEMBER 2025

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE MAGAZINE



**FROM SELF DOUBT TO
SELF EXPRESSION**

Kagiso Emmanuel Ngwenya

**FROM SOWETO ROOTS TO
BOARDROOM BRILLIANCE**

Dineo Mothlele's journey

Michelle Roniak's Brave Journey

From Pet Spa to Public Speaking

District 74 Southern Africa Toastmasters

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL[®]

District 74

Editor-in-Chief
Leya Musunga

**Editor
Communication**
Khaka Gomba

Editor Profile
Phaphama Mhleka
Khethiwe Malema

Layout & Design
Leya Musunga

Managing Editor
Khethiwe Malema

Editor Personal Growth
Lame Mthethwa
Modieng Ramekosi

Editor Leadership
Tumelo Maphalala
Nomathandazo Miselo

2025-2026 Toastmasters District 74 Executive Members

District Director
Bhekisisa
Ngomane,DTM

**Program Quality
Director**
Bryton Masiye,DTM

**Club growth
Director**
Devin Pearson,DTM

**Past District
Director**
Granny Be007,DTM

Contact the editor to feature your story

Reach us on email:
pr@toastmaster74.org

Toastmasters District 74 Mission
We build new clubs and support all
clubs in achieving excellence.

toastmasters74.org



EDITOR'S NOTE



The Southern African Toastmasters District is a vibrant community spanning four nations: South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, and Botswana. United by a shared commitment to personal growth and leadership, our District thrives on connection and encouragement.

Botswana, known for its warm and welcoming nature, beautifully mirrors this spirit in its clubs—where members are embraced, uplifted, and inspired.

As Toastmasters founder Dr. Ralph C. Smedley wisely said,

**“We learn best in moments of
enjoyment.”**

In these nurturing environments, voices grow stronger, confidence blossoms, and leaders emerge. It's this culture of support that fuels both club excellence and individual transformation. This month we have a special feature with stories about some of our Botswana based clubs and members.

Khethiwe Malema

CONTENTS

Page 8
Picture Highlights International
convention

Page 26
Riddle/Quzi Coner

Page 27
Club Anniversaries



11

Michelle Roniak

"Early in her London career, expressive dysphasia pushed her to leave and start her own business."

3

District Director's Note

From the Public Relations Desk

Spotlight on Botswana

04 -07

Toastmasters clubs triving in Gaborone

Profiles

20

From Soweti Roots to Boardroom- Dineo Mothlele

24

Rooted in Culture, Rising with purpose - Thulisile Mgidi

Articles

09

Leadership

Morning side Toastmasters story-Set Motsoagae

10

Leadership

Leading with heart: Segametsi Moumakwa's DTM Story

13

Communication

Bring back the Emissary
District 74 shines on the global stage

15

Leadership

How Toastmasters Improved my conversations- Lesedi Queen Masina

16

Leadership

From self doubt to self Expression- Kagiso Ngwenya

17

Leadership

Leading with service and vision -Lehlogonolo Seema

18

Communication

Fesitval of eventing 2025 - Lorna Holtman

25

Personal Growth

The Power of Yet - How Toastmasters Encourages Lifelong Learning

26

Leadership

Mental health in leadership
A Shy introvert guide to Toastmasters- Joel Gombera

DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S NOTE

September is a month filled with possibility and inspiration. At the recent Toastmasters International convention, held in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia I witnessed the power of connection, learning, and vision. One moment stood out for me – seeing our very own Aletta Rochat, DTM inaugurated as the President of Toastmasters International. What an extraordinary achievement! I count myself privileged to have witnessed this. I stood there thinking to myself, this is more than history – it is a reminder of what is possible when excellence is pursued with courage. Aletta's journey is proof that greatness can emerge from our own soil.

The best way we can honour her and support her is by committing ourselves to excellence in our own clubs and journeys. That begins with a simple but powerful step: renewing your membership. Renewal is more than staying active – it is saying, "I choose to keep investing in my voice, my leadership, and my future."



I also invite you to join our Council Meeting on the **20th of September**. This is your opportunity to help shape the future of District 74. Your voice matters.

Let us carry forward the inspiration of our President Aletta – and continue being Catalysts of Success who are truly Achieving Excellence.

Bhekisisa Ngomane,DTM

FROM THE PUBLIC RELATIONS DESK

We are thrilled to be heading into our third month and proud of all that has been achieved so far. Our first PR Lab sessions were a great success, with over 160 participants across the two sessions. We trust that our brand ambassadors – both current and future – are now better equipped and empowered to carry out their roles with confidence.

A special highlight was producing a special edition magazine celebrating our International President, Aletta Rochat, DTM, as she makes history as the first person from Africa to hold this prestigious role. [\[Read more here.\]](#)

We are equally excited about the growth and engagement on our social media platforms, as well as the refresh of our district website. Be sure to visit the site for valuable resources and updates.



Don't forget to follow our other social media pages as they continue to grow, so you never miss an update on what's happening in our district. [\[Link here\]](#)

Leya Musunga

Gaborone Toastmasters Club: A Legacy of Leadership, A Year of Excellence

By Tumelo Maphalala

Gaborone Toastmasters Club, founded on April 1st, 1992, holds the distinction of being the very first Toastmasters club in Botswana. For over three decades, it has been a pillar of growth and transformation for individuals seeking to develop their communication and leadership skills. As the birthplace of the Toastmasters movement in the country, the club has shaped countless voices and empowered members to grow in confidence, competence, and character.

Today, Gaborone Toastmasters continues to thrive, not just as a historic institution, but as a vibrant, high-achieving club within District 74. The 2024-2025 Toastmasters year has been particularly remarkable. The club earned the title of Second-Best Club in the District, received the award for Best Public Relations, won the DCP Sprint challenge, and achieved President's Distinguished status, the highest recognition for a club. These accolades reflect the club's strong leadership,

dedicated membership, and unwavering commitment to the Toastmasters core values of integrity, respect, service, and excellence.

Beyond awards, the club's strength lies in its consistent delivery of quality meetings, innovative themes, robust mentorship, and active community engagement. Its members span generations and industries, making every meeting a rich exchange of perspectives and experiences. The club has also excelled in retaining members, onboarding new ones, and cultivating a culture of warmth and encouragement.

In a world where digital communication is taking over, Gaborone Toastmasters remains grounded in the power of human connection. It continues to attract new members and inspire seasoned ones, proving that personal growth never goes out of style. As Botswana's oldest club, its legacy is firmly established, and its future shines even brighter, carrying forward the torch of leadership and learning for many years to come.



Member Spotlight - Agang Siska



It was sometime in November 2024, when a colleague invited my other colleague to join Toastmasters because she had too many "ums" in her speech. She then turned and looked at me, and she said, "you are a very good presenter, but you need to work on your vocal varieties". I was so intrigued and wondered what she meant. I was eagerly waiting for 2025 so that I could join Toastmasters.

In February 2025, I attended my first Toastmasters sessions and was impressed with how everything was done. On my first day, I delivered a table topic speech, I was extremely nervous, but I loved it. In April 2025 I officially became a member, and the journey has been amazing. I have burgeoned in my public speaking journey, and I love the growth I've seen thus far.

My goals prior to joining were to enhance my public speaking skills and work on my interpersonal skills. Some of the challenges I encountered when I first joined, were that sometimes I struggled with navigating through the portal. However, I have since overcome these challenges and would encourage people to join the movement.

Member Spotlight - Annah Moses

My name is Annah Moses, and my journey is a little different. I was born with a hearing disability, and for a long time, I believed it was something that would hold me back. Growing up, I often felt left behind in conversations and classrooms. I used to think that because I couldn't hear like others, I could never speak with the same confidence.

But with my hearing aids, I found a way to connect more deeply with the world around me. Instead of letting my hearing loss silence me, I began to see it as a source of strength—a reminder that communication is about more than just words, it's about courage and connection.

In 2024, I joined Toastmasters, and that was the turning point. I discovered a safe space where I could learn, grow, and be heard. Each speech I delivered helped me peel away the layers of doubt. With every role I took on, my confidence grew.

I've since completed Level 3 in the Visionary Communication pathway, served as Vice President Public Relations, and today I'm proud to serve as President of Eloquent Toastmasters. Toastmasters taught me that my disability does not silence my voice—it amplifies it.

My dream is to inspire others with hearing loss to believe in their voice. If I can stand before an audience with confidence, so can they. My story is proof that challenges can shape us, but they don't have to define us.



Opening Her Doors, Inspiring Her Club's Growth

By Tumelo Maphalala



Dr. Haseena Hamdani, a Toastmaster in Gaborone, Botswana, is known for her generosity both on and off the stage. She joined Toastmasters in September 2024 to sharpen her communication skills, but her journey has grown into something far deeper. Drawn by a desire to express herself better and think quicker during impromptu moments, Haseena describes herself as a nonconformist who often chose silence in spaces that preferred comfort over candor.

Toastmasters has given her the confidence to speak up, share bold ideas, and connect with people who value authenticity. The platform has been a mirror to her life, inspiring her to

share her stories—even through an autobiography.

She credits Toastmasters for teaching her that growth begins with self-evaluation and that feedback is most powerful when it is kind, constructive, and empowering.

Haseena's generosity extends beyond speeches. She willingly shares resources and opportunities, embodying the spirit of service that defines Toastmasters.

She also hosts Gaborone Toastmasters Club's in-person meetings at her clinic, reviving face-to-face sessions after COVID. For her, it has been a win-win: meetings feel more connected, and she never has an excuse to miss one.

To those considering joining, she says: "Just walk into a meeting. You may come to improve your speaking, but you'll leave with self-confidence, clarity, and a supportive tribe. Toastmasters doesn't change who you are; it helps you become more of who you're meant to be."

We thank Haseena for her hospitality, her commitment to her club's success, and her example of leading with heart.

From Toastmasters to the Universe

Gaborone Toastmasters Club is proud to celebrate one of its very own Lillian Nompumelelo Andries, crowned Miss Universe Botswana on 30th August 2025.

Her journey reflects confidence, eloquence, and grace qualities Toastmasters nurtures: the courage to stand tall, the skill to speak with clarity, and the leadership to inspire.

Lillian's triumph is not only personal but also a shining example of passion meeting purpose. As she represents Botswana on the global stage, she carries the spirit of excellence, resilience, and authenticity.



Eloquent Speakers Club: A Legacy of Growth and Leadership

By Annah Moses & Khethiwe Malema

Founded in 2006, Eloquent Speakers Club has become a vibrant hub in Botswana where members from diverse backgrounds unite to build confidence, communication, and leadership skills. Known for producing contest champions and district leaders, our club is more than a place to speak...it's a family where every voice matters.

Eloquent's secret to luring attendance - Snack breaks! Nothing brings people together like good conversation and even better snacks! Our snack breaks create a warm, welcoming vibe that encourages members and guests to stick around, network, and recharge. Snacks boost energy, spark casual chats, and make meetings feel more like a community hangout than just another event. At Eloquent Toastmasters, snacks at our in-person meetings aren't just treats, they're our secret ingredient for lively, engaged meetings and growing attendance!

Eloquent Speakers Club is also the proud home of Kage Kgobero, DTM and the club truly appreciates the impact he has had on the club. Kage is our Immediate Past President and a true architect of leadership. For more than six years, Kage has mentored countless members and Executive Committee teams, championed excellence, and inspired growth across every level of the club. His leadership has expanded beyond just our club as he is also a former Area Director and Division Director, a two time and reigning District 74 Evaluation Champion and past runner-up in Table Topics a testament to his quick thinking, insightful feedback, and engaging delivery.

Known for his infectious energy, generous mentorship and commitment to helping others succeed, Kage's vision has left an enduring legacy within our club and beyond. He is the kind of leader, speaker, and friend you feel privileged to meet and even more fortunate to work alongside



Picture Highlights from the 2025 International convention in Philadelphia



Aletta Rochat,DTM - Toastmaster International President 2025-2026



From Potential to Proud: Morningside Toastmasters Story

A year ago, Morningside Toastmasters had 12 active members and a reputation for having potential. Which is a polite way of saying, “not quite there yet.” Today, we’re 26 strong. We hit every point required for President’s Distinguished Club. We produced the best speaker across four countries, 114 clubs, and 1485 members — all striving to become better communicators.

But that’s not what made this year special. We became something many clubs dream of: a home. A warm space rooted in high performance, not just for our members, but for anyone who visited. We created an environment where people could catch a glimpse of their higher self, in the safest, most fun way possible.

It wasn’t smooth. It was messy, uncertain, and often full of friction. Changing culture always is. People resist change even when it’s good for them. But we kept showing up. We kept choosing to care. We kept calling out the higher version of our members and guests, even when “normal” would’ve been easier (and maybe even expected).

I don’t see this success as self-congratulation. Okay... maybe a little.

But mostly, I see it as lessons learned:

- No deliverable is worth sacrificing a key relationship.
- Take yourself seriously, and others will have no choice but to follow.
- Believe in people, but judge outcomes not just potential.
- Celebrate everything. Belief is built one small win at a time.

- Be kind, especially when “nice” would’ve been easier.
- How you say something matters just as much as what you say.
- Keep your promises. Expect more from yourself, and from others.
- And celebrate. Loudly and often.

That’s how you build the kind of club people brag about.



Set Motsoagae
Morningside Toastmasters President 2024/25
Area E4 Directo 2025/26

Leading with Heart: Segametsi Moumakwa's DTM Journey

By Nomthandazo Miselo

Segametsi Moumakwa recently earned the prestigious Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) award, the highest recognition in Toastmasters International. As Vice President Membership at Nedbank Toastmasters and former Area Director (2024/25), Segametsi has held multiple leadership roles including Club President, Coach, and Treasurer.

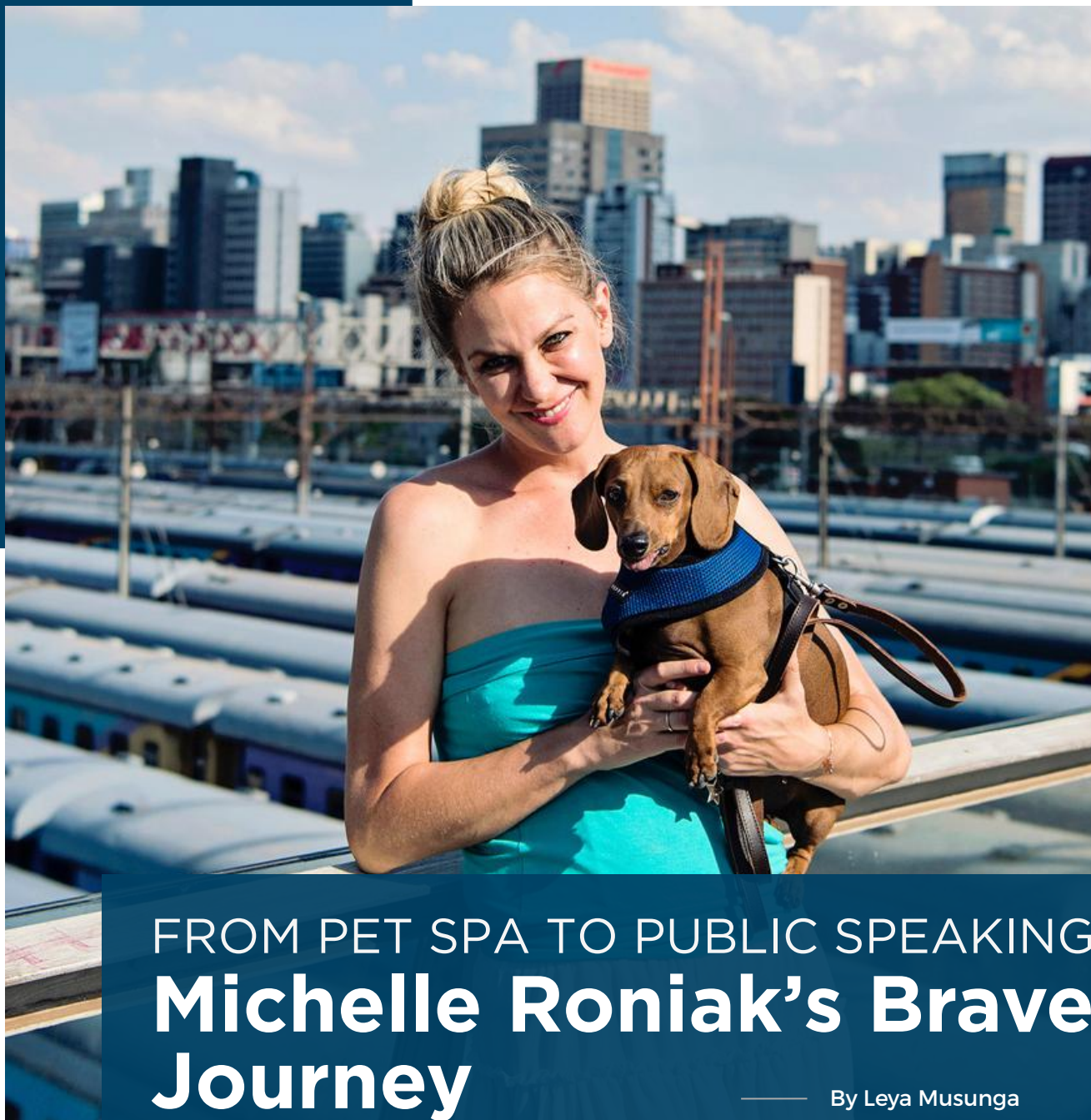
Outside Toastmasters, she's an IT Business Analyst Specialist, a mother of two, and a lover of books, Netflix, and hiking. Segametsi defines leadership as connection: "It's about understanding the needs and strengths of those you lead, and leveraging that to achieve organizational goals." Her dominant style is supportive and coaching, shaped by experiences and books like *The Advice Trap*, which taught her the value of listening over giving advice.

She admires volunteer leaders, especially in Toastmasters, where influence must come from inspiration rather than authority. With grown children and a passion for planning, she balances personal and leadership roles with intention. "Three years ago, I set a goal to earn my DTM. I mapped out every requirement and deadline."

Her advice to aspiring leaders? Start before you feel ready, stay curious, and read widely. "Leadership is an adventure—be patient with yourself and open to learning."



**"Leadership is an
adventure be
patient with
yourself and open
to learning."**



FROM PET SPA TO PUBLIC SPEAKING: **Michelle Roniak's Brave Journey**

— By Leya Musunga

Michelle Roniak's life is a colourful mix of grit, grace, and two spoiled dachshunds, Alfonzo and Gertrude. Born and raised in Johannesburg, she spent eight years in London and Sydney before returning home to launch an upmarket pet spa in Craighall. On the surface, she's a confident entrepreneur with a thriving business. Behind the scenes, Michelle has been on a personal journey, from avoiding public speaking at all costs to standing on stage and sharing her most vulnerable truths.

Toastmasters Journey

Michelle joined Toastmasters in June 2025, becoming a member of the Morningside club. Her decision wasn't about professional advancement but survival. "I started developing expressive dysphasia at the start of my corporate career in London," she explains. "It's one of the main reasons I left to start my own business, to get away from official communication presentations."

Facing the Fear

Her turning point came during the launch of her book, when she stood before 70 people and spoke openly about her struggle with body dysmorphic disorder. “I spoke confidently and vulnerably about something I had kept hidden for years,” she recalls.

At Toastmasters, she found a safe space to “just start,” even if her hands shook and her mind raced. “It’s about getting comfortable in the uncomfortable,” she says. “Everyone is on their own journey, going at their own pace.”

A Story That Needed to Be Told

Michelle’s book grew from a promise she made after enduring life-threatening complications from cosmetic surgery. “I wanted to shine a light on the lengths people go to in pursuit of body perfection, and the physical and mental dangers that can come with it,” she says.

Her target audience: anyone who feels their body is their sole measure of worth. “Chasing physical perfection is an illusion. If surgery goes wrong, the mental health impact can double. We need more awareness, better screening, and stronger support networks. We’re standing on the edge of a mental health epidemic.”



From Blank Mind to Brave Voice

Michelle admits she still struggles with eloquence. “Breathing, meditation, and pacing myself are key. I focus on keeping my anxiety at bay.” Her mindset, however, has shifted dramatically since her corporate days. “I used to see the world through a lens of perfection, and every time I fell short, I’d tear myself apart. Now, my narrative is about being a little braver each time. Even if I don’t deliver perfectly, I know I’m progressing.” She’s also learned to value her strengths. “I have a gift in storytelling and humour. Toastmasters has helped me see past my insecurities and embrace my vulnerability as something others can connect with.”

Looking Ahead

Michelle’s ambitions now extend beyond the page. “My book and message are my ‘why.’ I have to be bigger than my insecurities for the greater good,” she says. While interviews feel safer, she’s aiming for keynote speeches. “If I can get there, I’ll know I’ve truly stepped into my power, and I know Toastmasters can take me there.”

Her advice for those convinced they’ll never speak eloquently is simple: “No one is perfect. Growth means discomfort, and sometimes it means failing. But that’s evolution. Just keep showing up.”

In Michelle’s world, courage isn’t the absence of fear, it’s walking onto the stage, voice trembling, and telling the truth anyway.

Readers can explore and purchase Michelle’s book through [Amazon](#) or [Takealot](#)

Bring Back The Emissary!

By Tumelo Maphalala

Okay, enough drama. The Emissary has been brought back, now what?

Well, visiting other Toastmasters clubs is an enriching experience that goes far beyond ticking off a goal. It exposes members to diverse speaking and leadership styles, as every club has its own rhythm, structure, and culture. This variety sharpens your skills, offering new tools for your own growth.

Club visits also expand your network. You build relationships across clubs and divisions, fostering unity and exchanging ideas that can energize your home club. A new agenda style or fun meeting theme from another club might be just what your club needs!

Leadership is built too. Whether you're a guest speaker, evaluator, or simply an engaged visitor, you learn adaptability, initiative, and presence. Visiting smaller clubs can be especially rewarding, you uplift others while reinforcing Toastmasters' spirit of service.

The Emissary Award is more than a certificate, it's a celebration of dedication. It recognizes those who step beyond their comfort zones to engage with the wider Toastmasters community. Often, visiting another club rekindles the motivation that brought you to Toastmasters in the first place.

And in culturally rich districts like ours, it's also a chance for exchange. You experience different languages, leadership styles, and traditions, all within the warm, inclusive atmosphere of Toastmasters.

So yes, the Emissary is back. But more importantly, so are the connections, courage, and creativity that come with it.

[Emissary Link](#)

District 74 Shines on the Global Stage

District 74 received the prestigious **District Program Quality Award** at the 2025 Toastmasters International Convention!

This global recognition celebrates our district's outstanding achievement—more than 40% of clubs reached Distinguished status or higher during the 2024–2025 program year.

It's a powerful testament to the dedication, excellence, and collaborative spirit of our members and leaders across Southern Africa.

Let this moment remind us: when we lead with purpose, support one another, and stay committed to growth, we achieve greatness—together.



Picture Highlights from the 2025 International convention in Philadelphia



Congratulations to our neighboring District 129 that achieved the Smedley Distinguished Award



How Toastmasters Improved My Conversations (Not Just Speeches)

By Modieng Ramekosi

I have always wanted to inspire and empower others, but I realized I needed to enhance my communication skills to make a greater impact. I sought a supportive environment where I could practice public speaking, receive feedback, and grow while stepping outside my comfort zone. Toastmasters has significantly transformed my personal and professional life.

On a personal level, it has helped me overcome self-doubt and enabled me to communicate with authenticity. Professionally, it has strengthened my leadership, active listening, and presentation skills. As a result, I am now able to lead teams more effectively, inspire others, and represent my brand with excellence.

Toastmasters has significantly transformed my personal and professional life. On a personal level, it has helped me overcome self-doubt and enabled me to communicate with authenticity.

Professionally, it has strengthened my leadership, active listening, and presentation skills. As a result, I am now able to lead teams more effectively, inspire others, and represent my brand with excellence.

“Toastmasters has helped me overcome self-doubt and enabled me to communicate with authenticity.”

Lesedi Queen Masina
Division F Director
Club Mentor -Mphatlalatsane Toastmasters Club



From Self-Doubt to Self-Expression: My Journey to Confidence

By Modieng Ramekosi

My journey was inspired by my aspiration to be invited to industry panels, deliver keynote addresses, and use my voice to make a positive impact. Although I was already facilitating workshops, I felt that I needed to develop my skills further. That's when I discovered Soweto Positive Speakers, which became my hub for personal and professional growth.

Toastmasters have greatly boosted my confidence and led to my first panel invitation. Sharing my journey with the Soweto-based club sparked an invitation to speak at the Entrepreneurship Summit 2024 in the North West Province. This opened the door to international events like the World Tourism Market (WTM) 2025 and the Africa Rise Youth Indaba 2025.

I am thankful for the guidance of leaders like Mbongeni Simelani (Simelani_Voice), which highlights the effectiveness of Toastmasters as a coaching platform.

Before joining Toastmasters, I was anxious about public speaking due to concerns about my voice and pronunciation. To overcome these challenges, I took on opportunities such as Table Topics speaker, which greatly improved my speaking skills. With the positive feedback I've received, I now feel ready to face even greater challenges.

"Toastmasters have greatly boosted my confidence and led to my first panel invitation."

I loved a story shared by DTM Abel Mabaso, a founding member of the club. During the club's 2024 celebration, he gave a memorable introduction about his dog that was unrelated to his speech, yet it resonated with me.

Every time I think about public speaking, I recall the funny moments with my puppies. His introduction really set the tone, and it showed me how a good opener can boost your confidence for the rest of your speech.



Kagiso Emmanuel Ngwenya
Vice President Public Relations
Soweto Positive Speakers Club

Leading with Service and Vision

When I reflect on my journey as President of Nedbank Toastmasters, two leadership elements stand out, servant leadership and vision-driven growth.

Servant leadership taught me that leadership is less about holding a title and more about empowering others. I learned that when you listen, support, and create space for members to shine, the club flourishes. Instead of filling roles myself, I encouraged newer members to step up, assuring them of guidance. The result was remarkable: individuals discovered hidden confidence, and the club gained resilience.

I also relied heavily on the wisdom of those who had walked this path before me. I learned when to admit I was in over my head and when to ask for help. This humility opened doors, not only for me to grow, but also to extend a hand to others. I became open to learning while still holding things together, because I had the support of people who believed in me just as much as those who depended on me. As the saying goes in New Amsterdam: "How can I help?"— that simple question became my anchor in leadership.



"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."



In the end, I grew as an individual first before I grew as a leader.

Leadership is not about doing everything, it is about inspiring action, creating belief, and reminding ourselves as John Quincy Adams once said: "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."

Lehlogonolo Seema
Nedbank Toastmasters President 2024/25
Area Director 2025/26

My Experience at the Festival of Eventing 2025

The inaugural Festival of Eventing (FOE), held in Cape Town over two days August 8-9 2025, delivered a world-class blend of content, networking, and inspiration for South Africa's events industry. As Division C Director, I was honored to represent District 74 as a VIP guest at this dynamic gathering.

More than a conference, FOE was a vibrant call to action for innovators, storytellers, and leaders redefining eventing across Africa. Keynotes and masterclasses explored excellence, inclusive design, immersive experiences, sustainability, and the economic and social impact of the MICE industry. Diversity, wellness, and women's leadership were celebrated throughout.

A key takeaway was the power of authentic storytelling honoring local culture while embracing global narratives. Insights into human psychology emphasized creating audience connection through reward, not fear. The use of data and AI for hyper-personalisation showcased technology's growing role, while reinforcing that tech must serve, not replace, genuine human connection.

Communication and connectedness emerged as common threads in every session with clear potential for our membership growth efforts. The festival set a high bar for innovation with heart, proving that African events can stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the best in the world. I return to District 74 energised, ready to apply these lessons to elevate public speaking and leadership across the continent.

Congratulations to Devi Paulsen-Abbott and her team for delivering an event that informed, inspired, and set the stage for the future.



NIA the AI co-host



Lorna Holtman
Division C Director

From Soweto Roots to Boardroom Brilliance

By Phaphama Mhlele

From the vibrant streets of Mofolo North in Soweto to the strategic world of behavioural economics, Dineo Mothlele's journey is a powerful testament to resilience, purpose, and the strength of community. Raised in a township where neighbours became family, she credits her upbringing for instilling humility, confidence, and a deep sense of belonging.

Growing up in Soweto gave her the freedom to enjoy her childhood and the courage to dream big, she reflects. There's something special about being surrounded by people who genuinely care.

Today, Dineo is a Behavioural Economist at one of the leading banks in South Africa, with an academic foundation that includes a Bachelor's in Health Science, a Postgraduate Diploma in Management, and a Master's in Public Health, latter completed while raising two toddlers. Finishing her Master's with two kids under three was one of her proudest moments. It showed her with determination, anything is possible.

As devoted wife and mother of three beautiful kids and working professional, her passion for communication led her to Toastmasters, where she joined the Moving Forward Toastmasters Club to refine her writing and public speaking skills. She says, "I have always loved speaking, but Toastmasters helped me reconnect with my love for writing and helped me grow in ways I didn't expect."

Inspired by media icon Bonang Matheba, Dineo admires her poise and clarity. Yet her own speaking style is rooted in empathy and authenticity. Her best icebreaker starts with a sincere "How are you?" it opens the door to real connection.



She draws strength from her mother and late aunt, affectionately known as Gogo. Her mom always showed up as her best self, and she further affectionately notes "Gogo taught me practical life skills. Those lessons shaped how I now intentionally spend time with my kids."

As a former Club Secretary, Dineo gained insight into leadership, planning, and collaboration. Toastmasters taught me that leadership is about connection, clarity, and compassion.

Deeply family-oriented, Dineo is intentional about setting an example for her daughter. I want her to see that you can be a loving mother, a great friend, and a successful professional—all at once.

Picture Highlights from the 2025 International convention in Philadelphia



With the World Champion of Public Speaking

District 74

Current Incentives

SMEDLEY AWARD

ADD NEW or
5 DUAL or
REINSTATED Members

REWARD:

R300 CFR voucher + ribbon
from TI + up to R200 in boosted
Facebook Ads.

REWARD:

Trophy OR R300 Voucher
usable toward stock or May
Conference

CLUB TREASURER EXCELLENCE

Pay semi-annual dues for
20 Members by 20 September

RETENTION REWARD

Retain **75%** of your Club
Membership by **1st October**

REWARD:

R300 Voucher usable toward
stock or May Conference

REWARD:

Recognition in Hall of Fame,
Certificate and celebrated on
District Social Media

POWERFUL PERSONAL PROGRESS REWARD

Register TWO or more educational
awards by 30 November

Rooted in Culture, Rising with Purpose

By Phaphama Mhleka

Thulisile Mgidi proudly embraces her identity as a Ndebele woman from Boekenhouthoek in Kwa-Ndebele. Though born in the village, her early years were spent in Pretoria before moving to Olifantsfontein at age 11, and later to Kempton Park in Grade 9 where she still lives today. Raised in a traditional household, Thulisile continues to honour her cultural roots. She and her siblings all underwent traditional initiation, a rite of passage that deepened her pride in her African identity and heritage.

She completed both her undergraduate and postgraduate studies in BCom Accounting through UNISA. Her career began in external auditing at Mazars Gauteng (now Forvis Mazars), where she spent over seven years before making a bold pivot into learning and development.

Today, Thulisile is a certified coach and the General Manager of No-Valo Learning Centre, an accredited skills development provider focused on study skills and workplace readiness. Her passion lies in empowering young people, and she defines success as “making a difference in someone’s life even if it’s just one person at a time.”

As the eldest of three siblings with an 11- and 17-year age gap, she naturally stepped into a co-parenting role. Though she doesn’t have children of her own, her nurturing spirit is evident. Her family remains her greatest support system.

Her Toastmasters journey began in 2021, sparked by a Women’s Month talk and a colleague’s encouragement. Public speaking had always been a passion, and joining Toastmasters was on her “30 before 30” list. She hasn’t looked back since.



Now an aspiring Corporate MC, Thulisile draws inspiration from powerhouses like Hulisani Ravele and Relebogile Mabotja. She’s intentional about cultural representation – greeting audiences in multiple South African languages and often wearing Ndebele-inspired accessories that celebrate her roots.

Through her leadership roles in Toastmasters – Club Treasurer, President, and Area Director – she has learned to lead with empathy, manage time with intention, and stay grounded in authenticity.



The Power of 'Yet': How Toastmasters Encourages Lifelong Learning

By Modieng Ramekosi

I was inspired to join Toastmasters because Transformers Toastmasters, initially known as Eskom Toastmasters, was an open corporate club started in 1990. Our meetings were held downstairs in Megawatt Park, right next to the pub we often visited after our sessions. A work colleague in my section was also a member, and my mother had been a Toastmistress and ITC member since 1980, so joining felt like a natural progression for me. Although the club was primarily composed of engineers, the presence of IT professionals was steadily growing in a club of about 40 members.

Toastmasters have significantly enhanced my personal and professional growth. After struggling with confidence during a debate in school, I redefined my approach by treating each meeting like a workout, challenging myself to improve my speaking skills. Now, I feel confident speaking in front of others. The leadership skills I gained through Toastmasters have also been invaluable in my work settings.

I witnessed a few people freeze during their speeches and forget their lines. Instead of writing out my speech word for word—except for quotes, which I might memorize—I prefer to use a mental mind map to visualize my ideas.

I had a memorable Toastmasters experience when I was elected Club Secretary by just one vote. My opponent told me she didn't realize she could vote for herself. At the time, there were no nominations for District Secretary, so I offered to help the newly elected District Governor, Erich Viedge.



This led to my second Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) award. Back then, the whole Cabinet could attend the International Convention at Bally's in Las Vegas. I got to see Jerry Seinfeld perform at Caesar's Palace, which made for an entertaining trip, and I also supported my late friend, Dave Cairns, at the World Championship of Public Speaking semi-finals and what a great experience that was.

“After struggling with confidence during a debate in school, I redefined my approach by treating each meeting like a workout.”

Mental Health in Leadership

By Dr. Clinton Kadochi



Last year, I met a leader who confessed she was constantly exhausted. Her days began with unread emails, heated meetings, and looming deadlines. By night, she carried the weight of her team's problems home. "I know I have the potential to be great," she said, "but I never seem to do what it takes." Her struggle wasn't ability; it was mental health.

The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of well-being in which individuals realize their potential, cope with daily stressors, work productively, and contribute to their community. For leaders, this is crucial. Many have the vision, yet I have seen how unmanaged stress becomes the barrier between potential and impact.

Daily stressors are not dramatic, they are familiar. The overflowing messages. The budget shortfall. The difficult conversation with a colleague or manager. These, over time, drain the energy needed to lead with clarity.

So how can leaders use their mental health and cope with daily stressors?

1. **Reframe Stressors.** A tough meeting doesn't have to fuel frustration—it can be a chance to model calm authority.
2. **Build Rest into Routine.** A leader who takes a walk after lunch or carves out family time returns sharper, not weaker.

3. **Anchor in Purpose.** Decisions feel lighter when tied to a larger mission serving people, not just meeting metrics.

Great leadership isn't about escaping stress. It's about managing it wisely, so that potential can truly meet purpose.

A Shy Introvert's Guide to Thriving in Toastmasters

By Modieng Ramekosi

In our last [August issue](#), I shared some of benefits I have gained from Toastmasters and promised to share some more of my stories. If you missed last month's issue then click [here](#) to read my article.

As mentioned before I am an introvert and my biggest fear is being disconnected from the audience and rambling during presentations. Through Toastmasters, I have learned to research my audience and tailor my presentations to suit their needs. I have also mastered the art of reading the room and gauging the audience's mood, allowing me to adjust my speech if necessary.

In 2017, I was scheduled to present a marketing pitch at the business congress in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, representing the bank I worked for. My slot was from 12:30 PM to 1:00 PM, just before lunch. With over 200 delegates in attendance, including my CEO and industry leaders, I was surprised when the MC called me to the podium at 12:55 PM, leaving me only five minutes to present.

I quickly applied my Toastmasters training—organizing my speech and using vocal variety—and condensed my 30-minute presentation into five minutes. When I finished, I received a standing ovation. This experience was my best marketing pitch yet, all thanks to my Toastmasters background.

Joel Gombera (DTM)

A former District 74 Division Director
District 129, Division B Director



Congratulations

Triple Crown Awards August 2025

Phemo O. Kgosi
Eloquent Speakers Club



AUGUST 2025 CLUBS WITH THE MOST COMPLETED PATHWAY LEVELS

6 LEVELS

West Rand Toastmasters Club
Bloemfontein Toastmasters Club
Eloquent Speakers Club
Siemens Club

4 LEVELS

Algoa Club 2457
4th Dimension Club
Harties Toastmasters Club
Northern Star Toastmasters Club
Pinnacle Toastmasters Club

3 LEVELS

Table Bay Club
Multichoice Toasties
Act Toastmasters Club
Toasted Toastmaster
Communicators For Good
The MultiVoice Academy
Alberton Toastmasters Club
Green Speakers Toastmasters Club

NEW CLUB ANNOUNCEMENT

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (IDC) LION PRIDE

Division F | Area F2

Club Sponsors/Mentors

Lefu Dlamini

Themba Mathabatha

RIDDLE AND QUIZ CORNER

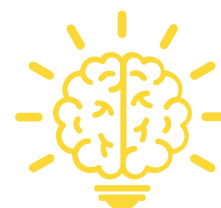


Test your wit! Can you solve these? Send us your answers and stand a chance to be featured in the next issue.

1. I'm feared before I'm faced, but once I'm embraced,
I vanish into thin air.
Who am I?
2. I am not one, yet I am many.
I grow when we gather, and fade when we part.
What am I?
3. I'm given, not taken. I grow when I'm shared.
Without me, a leader would be unprepared.
What am I?
4. I open hearts without a hand, I move minds without a band.
I'm found in truth, in lies, in art.
What am I?
5. I do not speak, yet I control the floor.
With colors I guide, and silence I implore.
What am I?

Anagram Unscramble - Unscramble each Toastmasters term

1. UOEAVINTAL
2. KBEAEDFC
3. EDRLSPEAHI
4. RIETM
5. RPIMVO
6. YROST
7. UCBL
8. OHMUR
9. CIOVE
10. TEMRAS



Think you know the answers?*

Email us your guesses at email below. Winners will be revealed in the next edition!

Reach us on email:

pr@toastmaster74.org

CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

September 2025

Division

A

Green Speakers Toastmasters Club - 3 Years
L'Avenir Toastmasters - 6 Years

Division

B

Siemens Club - 22 Years

Division

C

Cape Town Speakers - 37 Years
The Professionals Club - 9 Years
Toasted Toastmaster - 9 Years
Speeches by Peach Payments - 2 Years

Division

D

Nedbank Allstars - 4 Years

Division

E

Randburg Toastmasters - 52 Years

Division

F

Florida Toastmasters Club - 51 Years
Rosebank Toastmasters Club - 20 Years
Moving Forward Toastmasters - 9 Years

District 74

Southern Africa Toastmasters

IMPORTANT

>>> ANNOUNCEMENT <<<

New Member Fee Update

[First time members]

\$20 → \$25

From **1st October 2025** the new member fee
will increase from \$20 to \$25

Lock in your new members now!

Missed our previous issues you can find them on

[Toastmasters74.org](https://www.toastmasters74.org)



www.toastmasters.org