

Toastmasters elects its first Malaysian International President

John Lau, business executive and political leader from Kuching, Sarawak, represents 280,000-plus member global organization

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, Calif., Sept. 13, 2012 [PRNewswire/](#) -- John Lau of Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, was chosen by members to serve as the 2012-13 President of Toastmasters International. This marks a historic milestone, as Lau is the first Malaysian to become International President of the world's leading organization devoted to teaching communication and leadership skills. Lau took office on August 18, during the organization's 81th annual International Convention, held in Orlando, Florida, USA.

"I'm honored and excited to serve this organization and its members worldwide," says Lau. As International President, Lau's focus during his term in office is "to bring the benefits of Toastmasters' leadership and communication skill-building program to emerging markets around the world, and to sustain growth in our mature markets." Toastmasters International added 1,292 new clubs in 2011-12, an increase of 3.6% over the previous year, and its membership has grown consistently over the past 19 years. Malaysia has more than 300 Toastmasters clubs, with 7,000-plus members.

A dedicated Toastmaster for 22 years and member of three Toastmasters clubs, Lau most recently served as International President Elect on the Toastmasters Board of Directors. He also has held several leadership positions within the organization and has attained the Distinguished Toastmaster designation — the highest level of achievement in Toastmasters.

"The leadership skills developed through Toastmasters can be applied in the workplace, in politics and in friendships," says Lau. Having personally benefited from this process, he says, "I use the skills learned in Toastmasters to inspire members in my political party to achieve our goals. Toastmasters made me a better thinker and listener, which makes me a better leader in business and politics."

Lau is the chief executive and owner of the [Acme Group of Companies](#), a management consultancy specializing in human capital development for several industries. He is also Sarawak State Chairman of the People's Progressive Party of Malaysia. This past January, Lau was one of 17 people appointed by the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau as a Kesatria Malaysia — "Knight of Malaysia" — charged with helping to develop the country's business industry. He holds advanced degrees in several fields, including a Ph.D. in strategic marketing.

A photo of Lau is available at this link:[hi-res photo](#).

About Toastmasters International

Toastmasters International is a nonprofit educational organization that teaches public speaking and leadership skills through a worldwide network of clubs. Founded in October 1924, the organization currently has more than 280,000 members in 13,500 clubs in 116 countries. Each week, Toastmasters helps more than a quarter million people of every ethnicity, education level and profession build their competence in communication so they can gain the confidence to lead others. For information about local Toastmasters clubs, please visit www.toastmasters.org. Follow Toastmasters International on Twitter [@Toastmasters](#).

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