Box office hit Lincoln shines spotlight on timeless Toastmasters skills

Through public speaking, anyone can find their voice and serve their world

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, Calif., Feb. 20, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- The art of oratory is gaining renewed respect as a result of the box office hit *Lincoln*. Honest Abe's timeless rhetoric reminds movie viewers that carefully selected words, spoken with confidence, can change the course of a nation. Public speaking remains a necessary skill today, as anyone needing to give a toast, speak at a business meeting or even interview for a job can testify. Toastmasters International offers a proven program that can help anyone harness the power of words to achieve their goals.

"Through Toastmasters, you gain the inner strength to speak your mind, lead with clarity and build influence," says Toastmasters Past International President Gary Schmidt, who is a former speechwriter for two U.S. senators. "Just like Lincoln, you will find the voice to serve your world."

In Toastmasters, members gain confidence and hone their public speaking skills in a supportive club atmosphere. They practice speeches, receive and give feedback, speak impromptu and perform a variety of roles to help them gain leadership skills. To see how, watch this video.

Like Lincoln, many Toastmasters use their public speaking skills to affect change in the political arena.

- **Pat Roberts**, a three-term U.S. Senator from Kansas, used his experience as a member of the Capitol Hill Toastmasters to fine-tune his speechwriting: "I learned how to be succinct," says Roberts, who is a ranking member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture. "If you want to be a good communicator, then I think it would be very helpful to join Toastmasters."
- **Carl Trujillo**, recently elected state representative of New Mexico, says of his Toastmasters experience, "Now I feel comfortable and confident to stand up in front of the House of Representatives and speak on any issue, because I have the necessary tools to do so."
- **Danny Nguyen**, the first Asian-American City Councilman to be elected in Missouri City (Texas), says he was "terrified" to speak in public when he joined Toastmasters 12 years ago. He overcame those fears and used his new-found confidence to connect with voters in the city council race. "People's perception of you is based on how you present yourself," Nguyen says.

Whether oratory serves as a catalyst for political success or other professional accomplishments, it is a skill anyone can learn. To discover how Toastmasters can help you gain the confidence and skill of public speaking, visit a Toastmasters club meeting or learn from our time-tested tips on video.

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-plus 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.

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