

Toastmasters Experience Benefits those Seeking Public Office

For the past 90 years, the global speaking and leadership organization has helped politicians hone their skills

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, Calif., Nov. 6, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- From Abraham Lincoln to the Roosevelts to John F. Kennedy, some of the United States' most celebrated presidents were also masters of the oratory. Toastmasters didn't exist when Lincoln delivered the "Gettysburg Address" or when Theodore Roosevelt gave inspirational speeches to Americans at the turn of the 20th century, but for the past 90 years, many lawmakers have benefited by honing and practicing their leadership and communication skills in Toastmasters.

Whether it's a city council member or a United States governor, the ability to connect with potential voters is key for any politician seeking election. To develop, practice and enhance their communication skills, politicians will attend a Toastmasters club meeting where its members can not only help them with their speech, but also give them an opportunity to deliver their message to a diverse audience who will provide valuable feedback.

"My Toastmasters experience was invaluable in preparing me for my campaign for mayor," says Tom Tait, recently re-elected mayor of Anaheim, Calif. "Before I joined Toastmasters, I had a very real fear of public speaking. Through the support of my club I overcame that fear to the point where now I actually enjoy public speaking. I highly recommend Toastmasters to anyone interested in running for public office."

Seasoned politicians, such as recently re-elected Kansas Senator Pat Roberts, recognize the benefit of regular public speaking practice. "Toastmasters keeps you on your toes," he says. "If you want to be a good communicator I think it would be very helpful to consider joining Toastmasters."

Toastmasters Past International President Gary Schmidt has served as a top aide of two United States senators and witnessed the impact Toastmasters can have on people seeking and serving political office. "Toastmasters helps people in every profession, but especially in politics," he says. "Leadership is an essential component in public service and as many people have said, you can be a communicator and not a leader – but to be a leader you have to be a communicator."

Whether oratory serves as a catalyst for political success or other professional accomplishments, it is a skill anyone can learn. Toastmasters offers its time-tested [tips on video](#) to help speakers to best connect with their audience.

About Toastmasters International

Toastmasters International is a nonprofit educational organization that teaches public speaking and leadership skills through a worldwide network of meeting locations. Headquartered in Rancho Santa Margarita, California, the organization's membership exceeds 313,000 in more than 14,650 clubs in 126 countries. Since 1924, Toastmasters International has helped people of all backgrounds become more confident in front of an audience. For information about local Toastmasters clubs, visit www.toastmasters.org. Follow [@Toastmasters](#) on Twitter.

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