

# 98 Toastmasters Advance to Semifinals of World's Largest Speech Contest

**The World Championship of Public Speaking® highlights the International Convention in Washington, D.C.**

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, Calif., July 27, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- After six months of rigorous competition, 98 contestants have risen from a pool of more than 30,000 participants from 135 countries to earn their spot in the semifinals of the International Speech Contest. The competition takes place at the organization's 2016 International Convention, held Aug. 17-20 at Marriott Marquis Washington, D.C.

The 98 winners from around the world advanced to the semifinals after surviving four earlier rounds of elimination through club, area, division and district speech competitions. Their five- to seven-minute speeches were judged on content, organization, gestures and style.

The semifinals take place Aug. 18, where 10 finalists will emerge and compete again two days later in the [Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking](#).

"In addition to helping build communication and leadership skills, the Toastmasters program gives members the advantage of honing their skills through competition," says Jim Kokocki, Toastmasters 2015-2016 International President. "Competing in the International Speech Contest gives any member of the organization the opportunity to earn the coveted title of Toastmasters World Champion of Public Speaking."

The 2016 semifinalists hail from major cities around the world. View the complete list [here](#).

In addition to speech contests, the convention will host attendees from all over the world as well as other events, including Opening Ceremonies, education sessions, keynote presentations and the President's Inauguration Reception.

The Toastmasters International Convention takes place Aug. 17-20 at Marriott Marquis Washington, D.C. Each of the 98 contestants has an interesting story to share about their journey to the Washington, D.C. stage. To set up an interview with a contestant, email [pr@toastmasters.org](mailto:pr@toastmasters.org).

For more information about the 2016 International Convention, please visit <http://www.toastmasters.org/Events/2016-International-Convention>.

## About Toastmasters International

Toastmasters International is a worldwide nonprofit educational organization that empowers individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders. Headquartered in Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif., the organization's membership exceeds 332,000 in more than 15,400 clubs in 135 countries. Since 1924, Toastmasters International has helped people from diverse backgrounds become more confident speakers, communicators and leaders. For information about local Toastmasters clubs, please visit [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org). Follow [@Toastmasters](#) on Twitter.

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