

2,000 Talkative Toastmasters to Converge on Washington, D.C.

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Toastmasters International, the world's largest educational organization devoted to teaching public speaking skills, will hold its 75th annual convention on Aug. 23-26 at the Hilton Washington hotel in Washington, D.C.

Nearly 2,000 silver-tongued members from around the world are expected to attend and do what Toastmasters do best: talk, joke, orate, educate and motivate each other. Opening ceremonies are scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 23, with a keynote address by former National Speakers Association President Mark Sanborn. Jim Kouzes, well-known leadership expert, speaker and author from Santa Clara University in Northern California, will receive Toastmasters' most prestigious award, the Golden Gavel. He will address delegates at a luncheon on Thursday, Aug. 24, at noon.

The four-day event, hosted by Toastmasters from clubs throughout the District of Columbia and neighboring areas, will culminate with The World Championship of Public Speaking on Saturday morning, Aug. 26. In this contest, 10 speakers representing regions throughout the world will be judged on content, speech organization, voice quality, gestures and style. There are no topic restrictions on the five- to seven-minute speeches. One contestant, Josef Martens, is from Maryland. A management trainer by occupation, he has a Ph.D. in physics from University of Cambridge.

Throughout the week, various experts on communication and leadership will share their secrets to personal and professional success. Formerly tongue-tied Toastmasters, who by their very example demonstrate the potential of the Toastmasters program, will lead most seminars.

Toastmasters International has helped millions of people develop their public speaking skills since the organization's humble beginning in Santa Ana, Calif., in 1924. This year, Toastmasters International celebrates its 82nd anniversary with more than 210,000 members in 90 countries, including 127 clubs in the District of Columbia alone. There are Toastmasters clubs in many government agencies, including the U.S. Senate, FBI, IRS, FEMA, the State Department, the Treasury Department, NASA and the World Bank, as well as in organizations such as the National Press Club, National Public Radio, McGraw Hill, Georgetown University, and the Smithsonian Institution.

SOURCE: Toastmasters International

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