



# NEWSLETTER

## Sarah Whitfield Wins Frontier Division Evaluation Contest!



### Who We Are

Preston Persuaders is a club dedicated to helping our members improve their public speaking and leadership skills. We meet every Monday from 7:30pm to 9:10pm at the Custer Road United Methodist Church located at 6601 Custer Road, Plano Tx 75023. The meetings are open to the public and we encourage you to attend if you are thinking about improving your speaking or leadership skills.

Please visit our website at [www.prestonpersuaders.org](http://www.prestonpersuaders.org) for more details.

Our own Sarah Whitfield, CC took home the gold during the Frontier Division contest. There were several members from Preston Persuaders attending the contest to cheer her on. Sarah will now go one to compete at the District Conference with will be Held on May 13th-14th. See [www.d50toastmasters.org](http://www.d50toastmasters.org) for details.

## LEARNING HOW TO LEAD

*If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.*

~John Quincy Adams

Imagine you read an article about the latest developments in your industry. It sparks a tremendous idea. You come to the office with a spring in your step, all bright-eyed and fired up ready to go. As you walk in, half your team is groaning about how tired they are, while the other half is counting down the hours to go home. Your manager hasn't been motivating anyone for a few weeks now, in fact you wonder if he's looking for another job. How can you convince them it's time to pick up the pace again?

Here are some of the ways the leadership skills we practice at every Toastmaster meeting prepare us to be great leaders.

When preparing an invocation, we aspire to inspire. The invocation right before a meeting sets the tone, it gives us a vision to work towards. Great leaders know how to create an environment everyone wants to be a part of.

As Toastmaster, we are responsible to lead our club in a meeting. As Table Topics Master and General Evaluator we are responsible for those portions of the meeting. We make sure all the roles are filled and participants understand what is expected of them. Great leaders know how to delegate, and how to remove obstacles so the project flows smoothly.

Filling the helper roles like ah-horn, posture bell, grammarian, or lexicologist remind us to speak and move appropriately. Great leaders know how to express their thoughts and emotions verbally and physically.

Our joke masters make us laugh and lighten the mood. Great leaders know how to use humor effectively.

Serving as timer is a tremendous opportunity to become aware of the sanctity of a second. Great leaders know how to prioritize and work within the time-frames they have.

When you're the listener, it is clear that great leaders never neglect this channel of communication. Great leaders know how to read between the lines, too.

Being the Vote Counter prepares us for declaring the winners. Great leaders know how to reward and celebrate successes, and how to make the sometimes tough choices.

Speakers are automatic leaders because they have the floor. Great leaders know how to channel the attention they receive toward their goal.

As Table Topics participants we have the floor unexpectedly. Great leaders know how to step into the spotlight gracefully, and only for as long as they're needed.

Evaluating and providing helper reports gives us the chance to practice the art of giving constructive feedback. Great leaders know how to coach for maximum results, and how to motivate even if they have to criticize.

And those roles are only the beginning. Consider serving your club as an officer, and a whole new world opens itself in terms of service leadership. You learn how to keep track of finances (Treasurer), how to organize administrative details (Secretary), how to maintain functional meetings (Sergeant at Arms), how to do marketing (VP of PR), how to attract and retain members (VP of Membership), how to ensure everybody gets what they came for (VP of Education), and how to lead a team of dedicated officers to

ensure club success as a whole (President). Consider serving your Area as a Governor or Assistant Governor, and support the clubs in your Area. Consider serving your Division in one of the Division leadership positions, and serve the Areas in your Division. Consider serving your District, and support all of the Divisions in your District. And when you're ready to lead Toastmasters International, call Pauline Shirley (DTM) for tips.

From personal experience I'd like to add that practicing leadership skills in our club's very supportive environment has given me the courage and confidence to take my own business to the next level, and also to practice those leadership skills elsewhere. I feel more accountable for my actions, more optimistic about my vision and more capable of seeing it through. They say hindsight is 20:20, and if I could go back and start my Toastmasters journey all over again, I would approach every single role in our meetings with much more earnest appreciation for the learning potential it offers. It has taken me a couple of years to realize I'll only get out as much as I put in; now I get better at looking for ways to translate and apply what I learn in Toastmasters to my life. Thank you.

*Doris Fuellgrabe, CC, ALB*

ON BEING A TEST SPEAKER

Being a former Project Manager turned solopreneur, I miss the collaboration that takes place at work. What I love about Toastmasters is that we get immediate feedback on how we did on a speech. How often in our personal and professional lives do we get that opportunity? I hadn't considered it prior to being asked, but when I was approached by Ed to be the Test Speaker for a contest, I immediately said YES!

I didn't care where, when, what or how I will do it, but the only thing I know is YES, I'll do it. The more I let that sink in, realizing that I will be speaking to a larger audience of unfamiliar

faces, the prouder I am of myself for that courage.

I understood the nature of being a Test Speaker is that we have to be relatively new to Toastmasters (having done only 2-6 speeches) so that we have a lot of things to improve. While I was nervous during my preparation, I allowed myself to be imperfect. No matter what happens, I am not competing!

I was excited to craft a message that will be heard by many new people. At the contest, I felt I had the easiest role. I spoke with ease at the impromptu segment with the Contest Master and was thanked and congratulated by many.

Being a Test Speaker is the best way to boost one's confidence because you get several top-notch people giving you positive feedback! It is a wonderful feeling to be understood (by strangers no less), and have them pick up on nuances of your speech.

Evaluations are truly great gifts.

Anita Tsang, TM

CLUB CONTEST

Our club evaluation and international speech contests were a resounding success!



The international speech contestants Rick Galceran, CC, Saguna Raghuraman, CC, and Raghu Raman, CC each gave moving speeches that truly inspired the audience.

The evaluation contestants Doris Fuellgrabe, CC, ALB, and Sarah Whitfield, CC both showed what Toastmasters is all about in their encouraging, positive evaluations.

The contest chair Iddah Wangondu, CC made sure that the contest was well organized and that the contestants could remain focused on competing.

