

# NEWSLETTER



## District 83 Toastmasters Annual Conference Recap

On Saturday April 26, at the Westwood in Garwood, New Jersey District 83 held their annual conference. Our Speak and Lead Toastmasters Club was well represented at the conference with Benito Zarzuela, Kelly Grove, Cristhyan Sarachi, Rich Holmes and Steven Drapkin all in attendance. Also, our own Charisse Marcelino was competing that afternoon in the speech evaluation contest.

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## New District 83 Leadership Elected



**Kadian Grant**  
Program Quality  
Director



**Pamela Johnson**  
District Director



**Louis Wasser**  
Club Growth  
Director

On Wednesday April 9, 2025 the Annual District 83 Business Meeting was held. One of the important matters handled at this meeting was the election of the new leadership team for the upcoming Toastmasters year which begins on July 1, 2025 and runs until June 30, 2026. Pamela Johnson was elected the new District Director, Kadian Grant was elected to serve as the new Program Quality Director and Louis Wasser was elected to serve as the new Club Growth Director. The new officers will take office on July 1. We wish them all good luck and hope the new Toastmasters year will be filled with success and growth!

## District 83 Toastmasters Annual Conference Recap (cont)

There were several virtual learning opportunities in the two weeks leading up to the in-person conference including an author's workshop, a leadership seminar, finding your pathways in life, laughter yoga as well as other offerings. The main event was the in-person conference which started with a gathering of conference first-timers getting to meet and know each other through fun filled games and conversations. There was also a fun Toastmasters Bingo which required you go around the room meeting other toastmasters and seeing if they fit one of the boxes on the bingo sheet. The boxes had descriptions such as "A former District officer", "A Pathways DTM" (someone who got their DTM through the pathways learning rather than the legacy system) along with other descriptive bingo boxes. After you filled the entire card, you entered them into a raffle drawing. Our own Speak and Lead Toastmasters Club member Rich Holmes won several books in the raffle! There was a great keynote speech about increasing your aperture in life which was very interesting. The speaker inspired you to take a different look at the things happening in your life.

We had a very informative learning session from Patrick O'Halloran, Ed. D. The leaning session entitled "Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: What Toastmasters Need to know for Improving Public Speaking Skills" taught us to recognize maladaptive or negative thoughts or perception of a situation. We learned to challenge those thoughts, determine if they are true or false and develop positive thoughts to counter the negative. We learned deep breathing exercises to help us calm down before we speak as well as the use of positive imagery to change our emotional state. This was a highly informative and useful training session.

The contests were a major highlight of the conference. Charisse did a great job in the evaluation contest and each evaluator was excellent. While in the end there could only be one winner, it is a great accomplishment for us that our own Charisse was one of the top five evaluators in the entire district! Great job Charisse, we are proud of you!

All the speeches were amazing, and I am glad I did not have to score and judge them. I think everyone of them was great and could have won.

The conference was a great time and great learning experience for all. I would encourage everyone to consider attending next year. The food, fun, friendship, and the educational experience is well worth it.

## Speak and Lead Learning Series Recap

Over the past few Speak and Lead Learning Series meetings, we have learned from experts about body language, pronunciation, intriguing intros for our speeches, storytelling, mistakes to fix in our communication and many more skills we are all working on improving in our communication. These meetings are virtual where we watch videos that are relevant to addressing improvements attendees desire to make, as well as reviewing and discussing what we have learned after we are finished watching.

Our next meeting will be on May 18 at 5PM.

To attend our May 18 meeting, email Steven Drapkin at [vpapr.tm660313@gmail.com](mailto:vpapr.tm660313@gmail.com)



# Get Ready For Summer!

**Speak and Lead  
Toastmasters  
Merch is Now Available**

**[SHOPDRAPMEDIA.COM](http://SHOPDRAPMEDIA.COM)**

## New Club Officers Needed!

Are you a leader? Did you join Toastmasters to become a better leader? If so, we have a great opportunity for you.

As officer elections are approaching, there are still some open positions and we would love for you to join our club leadership team!

Please email Rob Moss at [robmoss1@verizon.net](mailto:robmoss1@verizon.net) to enter your name into the running and for more information about the positions and responsibilities.