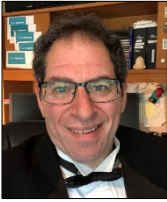




District 53 Toastmasters Annual Conference 2024

Committee Biographies

David Freedman, DTM; Conference Co-Chair



A Toastmasters member for 37 years David has served many leadership roles at various levels, including the Senior Leadership team, as District Treasurer and long-time District Chief Judge. He also serves on club officer training teams. He found his passion through serving in various roles on many District conference planning committees, as well as the Regional Conference & International Convention District 53 hosted. Inside Toastmasters David has been involved in 40 events, six as chair.

As someone who has enjoyed planning dozens of District Conferences, there is a huge satisfaction in planning an amazing event for your fellow Toastmasters knowing attendees had an enjoyable day where they were inspired, educated, and entertained. David's most important role at a conference is one of a member first. He returns time-and-time (60 to be exact) because skills he acquires, ideas exchanged, contests, networking and the camaraderie.

Beyond conferences, David dedicates his time in service to Toastmasters through officer training and mentorship to ensure members build and enhance their communication and leadership skills. David is a proud member of the Henry Hudson & Niantic Toastmasters clubs.

Skills that David has learned in Toastmasters has enhanced his skills as a technical trainer and the leadership component have served him in his past service on the Board of Directors of a local chapter of the Association for Talent Development.

Richard Peck, DTM, PIP; Conference Co-Chair



Richard joined Toastmasters in 2006 at the recommendation of motivational speaker Les Brown. He joined solely to improve his communication skills, he had no view on leadership. Within a year he was serving in District leadership and has since served as the 2020 – 2021 International President of Toastmasters International.

When he became International President in August 2020, the pandemic had a tight grip on the world. To connect with members throughout Toastmasters he implemented the International President's World Tour. As a result, he spoke "virtually" in over 140 countries, allowing him to evolve his communication style, develop a deeper understanding of the cultural diversity of our organization, and the needs of our members.

His volunteer work includes serving with Kiwanis International, Lions Club International, and many more. In 2018 he received a United States Presidential Award for Volunteerism.

He currently belongs to three Toastmasters Clubs: Nutmeg Toastmasters the club he joined in 2006, Park City Toastmasters, and New England Advanced Toastmasters (N.E.A.T.)

His leadership mantra is, "Being a leader is not about being the center of attention, being a leader is about being the epicenter of action!"



District 53 Toastmasters Annual Conference 2024 Committee Biographies

Cathy Kittle, DL5, IP2; Marketing & Communications



Cathy is a charter member of the NYS Forum Toastmasters club and has served as President and several years as VP of Education for her club. She has spent the last 30 years working professionally in communications for the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Although she has attended several District 53 conferences, this is the first time being involved at the committee level - "I love a Toastmasters growth opportunity and being able to support something that has given me so much over the years."

Sharon Mercado, DTM; Education



Sharon joined Toastmasters in 2002. She is currently a member of the Norwich Toastmasters and New England Advanced Toastmasters clubs. She has held many club officer roles, been a Club Coach, Club Sponsor, Area Director, Division Director, Club Growth Director, Program Quality Director and 2015-2016 District 53 Select Distinguished District Director. That year she was so proud that our district was ranked 23rd in the world. She loves competing in speech contests and was 2nd runner up in the 2014 District International speech contest. Sharon holds a Masters in Quality Assurance / Regulatory Affairs and has over 30 years experience in the pharmaceutical industry. Sharon believes she stays in Toastmasters as it provides her a positive and supportive environment to help her to continue to build her self-confidence and she is an example of the Toastmaster logo "where leaders are made".

Donna Peterson, SR2; Sponsors & Exhibitors



Donna Peterson is the CEO of World Innovators, a renowned B2B family-owned marketing agency with over four decades of experience in the industry. Her passion for fostering authentic relationships among individuals and businesses is the cornerstone of her success. Donna firmly believes that building strong bonds with employees, vendors and customers is paramount to long-term growth and success.

With her extensive background in Business-to-Business marketing, Donna has helped countless companies achieve their marketing objectives. Her secret to success lies in her ability to dive deep into specific industries, understand their unique challenges and goals, and stay ahead of the game by forecasting future trends. Her exceptional leadership skills and unwavering dedication to her craft have earned her the respect and admiration of her peers.



District 53 Toastmasters Annual Conference 2024 Committee Biographies

Stephanie Anne Roy, PM5 VC5 PI5 LD5 EC2; Facilities



Stephanie has spent the last 20 years as an entrepreneur and teacher, specializing in building empowering, community-oriented villages within brick-and-mortar business. She owns a martial arts school as a fifth-degree black belt in Shaolin Kempo Karate, runs a leadership and team training consulting business with her longtime partner, and is a part of a project to bring family empowerment centers to the Northeast. As an avid learner and personal growth buff, Toastmasters has been pivotal in developing and growing her unique voice. Stephanie is a member of Talk It Up Toastmasters & Dynamically Speaking Toastmasters and current Division A Director for District 53.

Norm Thibodeau, DTM, SR4; Registration



Norm belongs to two District 53 clubs (Air Line Trail and New England Advanced Toastmasters). He serves as Vice-President, Education in both. Norm is very active at the District level and currently serves as the District Administration Manager, Logistics Manager, and District Services Manager. He has been the Registration Chair for all District 53 conferences since 2010, except for the four conferences that he chaired.



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Rev.: 4/3/24