



# *D25 Annual Conference 2025*

**V I S I O N  
I N S P I R A T I O N  
P A S S I O N**

**MAY 16-17, 2025  
THE WESTIN, DFW AIRPORT**

# THE WESTIN

DALLAS FORT WORTH AIRPORT

## BANQUET MEETING SPACE



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# GREETINGS



**Jesse Ford**  
**District Director**

It is with great excitement and heartfelt enthusiasm that I welcome you to the 2025 District 25 Toastmasters Conference Weekend! Whether you are a long-time member or joining us for the very first time, we are thrilled to have you with us for what promises to be an unforgettable experience filled with all the vision, inspiration and passion we can muster.

This weekend is a celebration of everything that makes Toastmasters truly extraordinary: our vision for personal growth, our inspiration for effective communication, and our unwavering passion for one another as leaders and learners. It is also a time to recognize the incredible accomplishments of our members and clubs, to cheer on our speech contest participants, and to build lasting friendships across our district and beyond.

Our theme this year is **VIP: Vision, Inspiration, Passion**. It encourages us to embrace the power of our voices and the strength of our community. Over the next 48 hours, you will have the opportunity to hear powerful keynote sessions, attend dynamic workshops, and engage in the best-in-class networking events. Each element of this conference has been carefully designed to help us all continue to GROW through what we GO Through.

I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to the dedicated conference team, volunteers, speakers, and leaders who have worked tirelessly to bring this event to life. Your vision is the heartbeat of this weekend. To our guests: we are delighted you've chosen to spend time with us. May you find encouragement, motivation, and perhaps a spark of inspiration that will let you to take your next step with Toastmasters. And finally to our members: thank you for your continued passion—not only for your own growth but that of your fellow Toastmasters.

Let's make this weekend one to remember! Here we GROW!

*Jesse Ford*  
District 25 Director

# GREETINGS

## **Kelly Pelkey** **2025 Annual Conference Chair**



Welcome to the 2025 D25 Toastmasters Annual Conference! I am thrilled to have you all here this weekend embarking on what promises to be an unforgettable journey filled with **V**ision, **I**nspiration, and **P**assion. As the chair of this incredible event, my heart is full of gratitude that you are here. This is more than just a conference; it's a transformative **VIP** experience where we engage with impactful motivational speakers, ignite our deepest passions, and seize enriching networking opportunities that will elevate our paths and our shared journey. This is where our dreams take flight, and where every one of us truly belongs. I am incredibly excited to share these transformative moments with all of you. Together, we will embrace our vision, ignite our inspiration, and fuel our passion at an event designed for you, our valued VIPs.

Thank you for being here, and let's make this a **VIP** experience to remember!

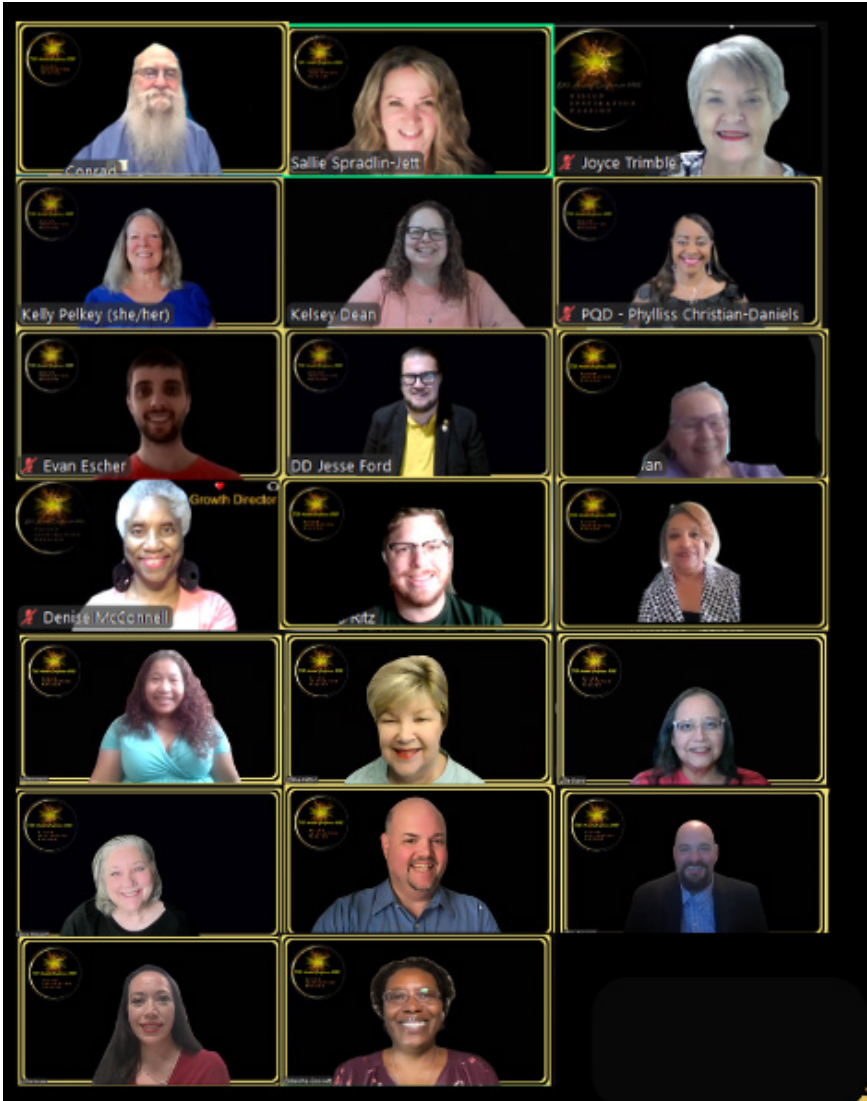
*Kelly Pelkey*  
2025 Conference Chair



# 2025 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Andres Aguilar	Jesse Ford	Kelly Pelkey
John Aparicio	Lydeisha Gossett	Greg Pick
Michelle Bayes	Shudhi Hashim	Chris Ritz
Krystal Besaw	Corey Henderson	Vanessa Rivera
Candie Blunt	Curtisstine Hill	Darlene Roberts
Liz Brenner	Jason Jett	Jake Robison
Phylliss Christian-Daniels	Tammy Kasterke	Sallie Spradlin
Alex Conrad	Anna Kielpinski	Laura Stewart
Kelsey Dean	Denise McConnell	Lola Stone
Mark English	Matthew Navy	Jon Stricklan
Jamie English	Mark Novak	Sandy Swan
Evan Escher	Diana Patton	Samantha Watt

# 2025 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE



# SPONSORS

**Thanks to the following for supporting our conference with donations:**

## **Keynote and Presentation Sponsors**

Burleson Toastmasters Club  
Crefmasters Toastmasters Club  
Electric Toasters  
Highway to Excellence  
IT Egos  
Leaders-Speakers of Tomorrow  
San Angelo Toastmasters  
Weatherford Club  
Phylliss Christian-Daniels  
Oliver Cozby

## **Special Sponsorship**

First-Timers' Reception — San Angelo Toastmasters  
DTM Ceremony — Highway to Excellence  
Swag Bags — Crefmasters Toastmasters Clubs  
General Donation — Electric Toasters

*Electric Toasters is corporate club for Vistra*





# RAFFLE INFO

## Members & Guests can purchase tickets to win fabulous prizes

Tickets are \$5.00 each OR \$20.00 for 5 tickets

*Drawing to be at 1:15 p.m. on Saturday*

<b>Donation By</b>	<b>Basket Name</b>	<b>Retail</b>
<b><u>Value</u></b>		
Trio	Gardening Starter Kit Basket <i>create your own lush green oasis</i>	\$175
District Director	D25 Salsa Basket <i>homemade salsa made by Jesse and chips</i>	\$
Past President	I Spy Handmade Quilt <i>homemade quilt with hidden treasures</i>	Priceless
Finance Manager	Picnic/Outdoors Basket <i>picnic backpack with settings for four</i>	\$200
Division A	Explore the Wonders of the Heavens! <i>gain understanding of the cosmos</i>	\$508
Division B	What's Cookin Good Lookin Basket <i>cooking utensils, towels, and D25 cookbook</i>	\$150
Division C	Taste of Texas Hospitality Basket <i>Health Camp Diner pic, gift card and red wine</i>	\$125
Division D	Daytime Delights Gift Basket <i>for day-trippers, beach lovers, and picnic pros</i>	\$250
Division E	Entertainment Escape Basket <i>items for entertainment escape</i>	\$200
Division F	Crafts Galore Basket <i>crafts and puzzles</i>	\$100

*See D25 website for full descriptions*

# CONFERENCE INFO

## Registration —

The registration desk is located outside the Oak Ballroom. Tickets for education events and speech contests may be purchased at the registration desk. Please write your name on the back of each ticket so that it may be returned to you if it is misplaced. District 25 cannot replace lost tickets. If you find a lost ticket, please return it to the registration desk.

### Registration Hours

Friday, 4:00 pm – 6:45 pm

Saturday, 6:45 am – 6:45 pm

Registration will be closed during meal events and contests.

## First-Time Conference Participants —

We have a registration desk just for first-time conference participants. You'll be greeted warmly and receive a "first-timers" registration package. Friday evening there is a welcome reception for first-time conference participants featuring Jesse Ford, District 25 Director.

### First-Timers' Reception – Dogwood Room

Friday, 6:15 pm - 6:45pm (First-Timers Only)

*First-Timers' Reception sponsored by San Angelo Toastmasters*

*Smoking is not permitted in any conference event.*

# CONFERENCE INFO

## **Hospitality —**

Enjoy a chance to network and mingle with friends, old and new. Let District 25 hospitality make your conference memorable! Join us in the hospitality suite if you attend in person.

Hospitality Room Hours –

Friday, 6:15 pm - 6:45pm (First-Timers Only); 9:30pm - Midnight

Saturday: 8:00am - 6:15pm; 9:45pm - Midnight

Hospitality Room will be closed during meal events and contests.

## **For In-Person Attendees —**

Conference badges are your passport for admission to all general and educational sessions. Along with your event tickets, your badge admits you to all conference events.

For the safety and enjoyment of others, please keep aisles and hallways clear of obstructions at all times. Please place all cell phones on silent during conference events. This will enable all members to enjoy the conference.

## **For Virtual Attendees —**

Virtual registration and the Zoom link allows admission to two contests, awards presentations, DTM Ceremony, and all four Keynote presentations.

\*Virtual viewing options will be limited to a live streaming via a Zoom link. Access will not include any interaction with presenters. Chat and other functions may be limited. Recording and any sharing of materials is prohibited without expressed permission.

# EVENT SCHEDULE

## Friday, May 16

- 4:00 pm Registration Opens
- 5:15 pm Education Session (50 min) Irving Lecture Hall  
**Morag Mathieson, DTM**, Immediate Past International President —  
*The Art of Mentoring*
- 6:15 pm First-Timers' Reception – Dogwood Room
- 6:45 pm Oak Ballroom Doors Open
- 6:45 pm Banner Parade Lineup
- 7:00 pm Opening Ceremony with Banner Parade — Oak Ballroom
- 7:15 pm Friday Night Dinner – **Keynote: Gregory Rutledge**  
*Letting Go to Lead with Passion and Purpose*
- 8:30 pm Table Topics Contest — Oak Ballroom
- 9:45 pm Friday Night Social — Oak Ballroom
- 9:45 pm Hospitality Suite Opens
- 11:00 pm Hospitality Suite Closes

*\* Hospitality Room will be closed during meal events and contests.*

## Saturday, May 17

- 7:00 am Registration Open
- 7:30 am Doors Open
- 7:30 am Breakfast – Oak Ballroom
- 7:45 am **Keynote Richard Marquez—**  
*The Danger that Illiteracy Poses to the Economy*
- 8:00 am Hospitality Suite Opens
- 9:00 am - **Education Session 1 (50 min) VIP=Purpose**  
**Richard Marquez**, *Critical Thinking and Developing Vision, Inspiration, and Passion* Irving Lecture Hall  
**Scott Prickett**, *Right People in the Right Seats* Trinity I Room
- 10:00 am - **Education Session 2 (50 min) VIP=Drive**  
**Steph Valadez**, *Navigating Life's Lows: and the Power of Passion* Irving Lecture Hall  
**Lorie Burch**, *Wabi-Sabi: Imperfect, Broken, and Beautiful* Trinity I Room
- 11:00 am - **Education Session 3 (50 min) VIP=Creativity**  
**Claire Daigle**, *You ARE Funny: Finding Humor in Your Unique Story* Irving Lecture Hall  
**Christian Straffon**, *Living With Intention: Uncovering Your WHY?* Trinity I Room

# EVENT SCHEDULE

## Saturday, May 17 (continued)

11:45 am Doors Open

12:15 pm District Awards Luncheon – Oak Ballroom

**Keynote: Steph Valadez — *Finding Passion in Vulnerability: A Visionary Tale of Resilience and Inspiration***

1:15 pm Raffle Drawing

1:45 pm - **Education Session 4 (40 min) VIP=Empowerment**

**Cameron Hernholm**, *Strength, Love, and Legacy: My Journey of Purpose* Trinity I Room

**Gregory Rutledge**, *From Waiter to Greater: How to Level Up From Where You Are* Irving Lecture Hall

3:00 pm International Speech Contest — Oak Ballroom

6:00 pm DTM Ceremony Rehearsal — Oak Ballroom

7:00 pm Doors Open – Dignitary Lineup

7:15 pm Dignitary Parade

7:30 pm Saturday Evening Dinner & DTM Ceremony

**Keynote: Morag Mathieson, DTM**, Immediate Past International President — *Releasing Hidden Leaders*

9:00 pm Conference adjourns

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER



## **Gregory Rutledge**

### LETTING GO TO LEAD WITH PASSION AND PURPOSE

What if the only thing stopping you from your next level isn't what you need to do but what you need to let go of? Gregory Rutledge shares his journey from ego-driven success to purpose-driven leadership in this powerful keynote. Through raw storytelling and the 'G-Wiz Framework,' you'll discover how releasing pride, fear, and distractions can ignite your fire and transform the way you lead, live, and inspire others.

What's holding you back from living and leading with passion? In this engaging and interactive session, Gregory Rutledge, known as G-Wiz, will share how cutting away the weight of pride, fear, and distractions can unlock your true potential. You will learn to align with purpose, reignite your fire, and lead with clarity and humility—even in the most challenging times.

G-Wiz, is a dynamic speaker and mentor whose mission is to inspire individuals to align with their purpose and ignite their passion. He combines personal stories of transformation with timeless principles to teach humility, resilience, and bold leadership. Rooted in faith and fueled by experience, Gregory Rutledge will help leaders identify their strengths, release their burdens, and step into their full potential.

He combines personal stories of transformation with timeless principles to teach humility, resilience, and bold leadership. Rooted in faith and fueled by experience, Gregory Rutledge uses his unique "G-Wiz Framework" to help leaders identify their strengths, release their burdens, and step into their full potential.

*Friday Dinner Keynote — 7:15 pm  
Oak Ballroom*

*Sponsored by Phylliss Christian-Daniels*

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

## **Richard Marquez**

### THE DANGER THAT ILLITERACY POSES TO THE ECONOMY



Welcome to this crucial and thought-provoking keynote session. Today, we have the privilege of hearing from a distinguished leader in the field of education, a person whose dedication and innovative approaches have left an indelible mark on the lives of countless individuals. As the former president and CEO of Texans Can Academies, Richard led the organization from the brink of financial and academic bankruptcy to becoming an award-winning institution. Under his leadership, Texans Can Academies received the D Magazine Non-Profit of the Year Award in 2019. His efforts have greatly enhanced graduation rates and established educational standards that benefit students today.

Richard Marquez, a national expert in dropout prevention, has dedicated his professional life to education, especially for at-risk youth. As president and CEO of Texans Can Academies (2007-2020), he led the organization from financial and academic challenges to award-winning success. His career includes roles such as Special Advisor to the Secretary of Education, superintendent, principal, teacher, and entrepreneur. He has served as the annual presenter for Leadership Dallas and Leadership North Texas. Marquez's innovative initiatives have significantly impacted education, earning him numerous accolades. With degrees from the University of North Texas and personal experience as a high school dropout, he deeply understands the challenges students face.

*Breakfast Keynote — 8:00 - 8:50 am  
Oak Ballroom*

*Sponsored by Oliver Cozby*

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER



## **Steph Valadez**

### **FINDING PASSION IN VULNERABILITY: A VISIONARY TALE OF RESILIENCE AND INSPIRATION**

Life has a way of unraveling when we least expect it, and for Steph Valadez, that moment came all at once. Stripped of the life she had envisioned, she was forced to ask: Who am I now? Through resilience, vulnerability, and the courage to rebuild, Steph discovered not just a new path but a deeper sense of purpose. In this keynote, she shares her journey of transformation—one that proves even in our lowest moments, we have the strength to rise, redefine, and rebuild.

Steph Valadez is a dynamic leader with over nineteen years of experience in talent strategy and workforce development. In January 2023, she joined Heidelberg Materials North America—one of the world’s largest manufacturers of building materials and solutions—as the Talent Program Manager. In this newly-created role, she designs and leads initiatives to attract, develop, engage, and retain top talent across the organization. She partners with business leaders to strengthen talent pipelines, drive innovation, and support long-term growth.

Previously, Steph was the Managing Director for Per Scholas in Dallas/Fort Worth, where she expanded training programs and built employer partnerships to connect individuals with in-demand tech careers. Under her leadership, Per Scholas was a finalist for the 2021 “Outstanding Innovation” award, and she was recognized with the Tech Titans’ Technology Advocate Award in 2020.

Steph holds a B.A. in Mass Communication from Texas State University and an Executive and Professional Coaching certificate from UT Dallas.

*Luncheon Keynote — 12:15 - 1:15 pm  
Oak Ballroom*

*Sponsored by Burleson Toastmasters Club*



# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

## **Morag Mathieson, DTM**

**Immediate Past  
International President**

**RELEASING HIDDEN LEADERS**



The journey of leadership in Toastmasters can be as unique as we are! There is no single way to release the leader within you. Through it all we can grow ourselves as leaders and empower others to release their hidden potential.

Morag Mathieson, Immediate Past International President of Toastmasters International, is an enthusiastic and experienced Professional Development Consultant with a demonstrated history of working in the healthcare and the education management industry. She is skilled in nonprofit organizations, business planning, operations management, analytical skills, and coaching. She exhibits strong human resources skills. Morag lives in Nürnberger Land, Bavaria, Germany and joins us in person for a very special DTM Dinner keynote presentation at the District 25 2025 Conference in Fort Worth, Texas.

*Saturday Dinner Keynote — 7:30 pm  
Oak Ballroom*

*Sponsored by San Angelo Toastmasters*

# PRESENTER



## **The Art of Mentoring** **by Morag Mathieson, DTM** Immediate Past International President

Mentoring creates a ripple effect that has an impact on both individuals and their organization, today and tomorrow. She'll look at best practices and share experiences about what it takes to have mentoring that leaves a lasting imprint.

Morag Mathieson, Immediate Past International President of Toastmasters International, is an enthusiastic and experienced Professional Development Consultant with a demonstrated history of working in the healthcare and the education management industry. She is skilled in nonprofit organizations, business planning, operations management, analytical skills, and coaching. She exhibits strong human resources skills. Morag lives in Nürnberger Land, Bavaria, Germany and joins us in person for a very special DTM Dinner keynote presentation at the District 25 2025 Conference in Fort Worth, Texas.

*Friday Education Session 5:15 - 6:15 pm*  
*Irving Lecture Hall*

*Sponsored by Highway to Excellence*

# PRESENTER

## **Critical Thinking and Developing Vision, Inspiration and Passion by Richard Marquez**



In this workshop, Richard Marquez will guide us through a thoughtful discussion on how strategic and reflective thinking can shape our vision, fuel our inspiration, and ignite our passion. Drawing from his wealth of experience, he will delve into how thinking critically and creatively can lead to remarkable achievements, both personally and professionally. Prepare to be inspired as we embark on this journey together, exploring the transformative impact that thinking can have on developing a clear vision, finding inspiration, and fostering passion. Let's engage, share, and learn from each other as we dive into this vital topic.

Richard Marquez, a national expert in dropout prevention, has dedicated his professional life to education, especially for at-risk youth. As president and CEO of Texans Can Academies (2007-2020), he led the organization from financial and academic challenges to award-winning success. His career includes roles such as Special Advisor to the Secretary of Education, superintendent, principal, teacher, and entrepreneur. He has served as the annual presenter for Leadership Dallas and Leadership North Texas. Marquez's innovative initiatives have significantly impacted education, earning him numerous accolades. With degrees from the University of North Texas and personal experience as a high school dropout, he deeply understands the challenges students face.

*Education Session #1 **VIP=Purpose** 9:00 - 9:50 am  
Irving Lecture Hall*

*Sponsored by Weatherford Club*

# PRESENTER



## **Right People in the Right Seats** by Scott Prickett

In this presentation, Scott will show you how to transform organizational dysfunction into a competitive advantage and how to flourish where you may have been stuck suffering.

Scott Prickett works with business owners and executives to help them drive company sustainable results by putting the right people in the right seats and then managing the right way. He will discuss the power of leveraging human analytics in your own professional and personal development as well as the potential of multiplying your influence when considering how you communicate with and motivate others. Moving beyond gut instincts, personal bias, and unknown blind spots, Scott will show you how to transform organizational dysfunction into a competitive advantage and how to flourish where you may have been stuck suffering.

*Education Session #2 **VIP=Purpose** 9:00 - 9:50 am*  
*Trinity I Room*

*Sponsored by Electric Toasters*

# PRESENTER

## **Navigating Life's Lows and the Power of Passion** by Steph Valadez



Life's unexpected challenges can leave us feeling lost, but they also hold the power to reshape us. In this session, Steph Valadez shares her journey of rebuilding after personal and professional upheaval, offering a framework for resilience and reinvention. Through storytelling, reflection, and guided discussion, participants will explore how to navigate life's turning points, shift their mindset, and take meaningful action toward personal growth. This interactive session will leave you with practical tools to embrace change, redefine success, and move forward with purpose.

Steph Valadez is a dynamic leader with over nineteen years of experience in talent strategy and workforce development. In January 2023, she joined Heidelberg Materials North America—one of the world's largest manufacturers of building materials and solutions—as the Talent Program Manager. In this newly created role, she designs and leads initiatives to attract, develop, engage, and retain top talent across the organization. She partners with business leaders to strengthen talent pipelines, drive innovation, and support long-term growth.

Previously, Steph was the Managing Director for Per Scholas in Dallas/Fort Worth, where she expanded training programs and built employer partnerships to connect individuals with in-demand tech careers. Under her leadership, Per Scholas was a finalist for the 2021 “Outstanding Innovation” award, and she was recognized with the Tech Titans’ Technology Advocate Award in 2020.

Steph holds a B.A. in Mass Communication from Texas State University and an Executive and Professional Coaching certificate from UT Dallas.

*Education Session #3 **VIP=Drive** 10:00 - 10:50 am*  
*Irving Lecture Hall*

*Sponsored by Electric Toasters*

# PRESENTER



## **Wabi-Sabi: Imperfect, Broken, and Beautiful** by Lorie Burch

Wabi-Sabi is a Japanese philosophy that centers on appreciating the beauty of imperfection, impermanence, and incompleteness. Lorie will share her journey of how broken dreams, broken roads, and broken hearts all led to making something beautiful from the broken pieces.

From not realizing her dream of being a civil rights lawyer, to the ghosts of high school bullies in her head, to the sudden death of her father, Lorie was left standing among the broken pieces of the life she thought she was meant to live. In the wake of loss, she started over—building her own law firm, redefining success, and ultimately discovering her true path.

Lorie's story is not one of seamless success but of resilience, reinvention, and finding grace in life's messiest moments. Discover how Wabi-Sabi's belief that "nothing is perfect, nothing is forever, nothing is finished," reflects Lorie's philosophy of embracing life's journey and finding beauty in every step along the way. Attendees will walk away with a renewed perspective, understanding that every crack and scar in their lives adds character. By embracing the beauty of impermanence and the wisdom in life's unfinished chapters, they, too, can craft a life story that is beautifully, unapologetically imperfect—just as it should be.

Recently, Burch Law received the "Best Marketing Ad Campaign" award from Plano City Lifestyle Magazine. In 2004, for the fifth time, Lorie was voted Dallas' Best Civil/Family Law Attorney by Dallas Voice readers. Burch Law was also honored as Business of the Year by the North Texas LGBT Chamber in 2022. Lorie has been recognized as a 2013 Woman in Business by the Dallas Business Journal and one of the 2010 Top Ten Business Women by the American Business Women's Association.

*Education Session #4 **VIP=Drive** 10:00 - 10:50 a.m.  
Trinity I Room*

*Sponsored by Leaders-Speakers of Tomorrow & IT Egos*

# PRESENTER

## **You ARE Funny: Finding the Humor in Your Unique Story by Claire Daigle**



Do you envy speakers who are able to warm up any crowd with disarmingly funny remarks? You may think it's a skill some are born with and some are doomed to suffer without. Guess what? Comedy is an art form that can be learned! This workshop breaks down core principles of comedy into useful tools that you can use on the fly. You'll soon realize you're way funnier than you ever thought!

Claire Daigle has been hooked on performing since her first ballet recital at four years old. A lifelong southerner, she strongly believes that the Dallas comedy scene has potential to be among the best in the nation. As Director of Education at Dallas Comedy Club, her goal is to introduce more Dallasites to the performing arts through classes in various modalities of comedy. In just two years she has nearly doubled the size of DCC's Training Center class offering in her efforts to create a nationally renowned comedy hub in DFW. Claire performs regularly at Dallas Comedy Club and throughout the DFW area. Her favorite venue (after DCC, of course!) is telling jokes to her two dogs, who may or may not understand comedy.

*Education Session #5 **VIP=Creativity** 11:00 - 11:50 am  
Irving Lecture Hall*

*Sponsored by Electric Toasters*

# PRESENTER



## **Living With Intention: Uncovering Your WHY?** by Christian Traffon

This session will provide you with practical tools to uncover your WHY, empower you to design a life of intention, and help you build meaningful relationships. You'll also gain insights into emotional intelligence, guiding you to connect more deeply with yourself and others, while defining the legacy you wish to leave behind.

Christian Traffon is an experienced educator and leader with a strong background in character education, restorative practices, student discipline, and behavior management best practices. Currently serving as the Director of Character, Conduct, and Support at Uplift Education, Chris has significantly grown the department by 300% in the last three years, has coordinated and developed equity-based student behavior systems across the network. Chris supervises a team of 27 character specialists and collaborates with campus leaders to implement equitable student behavior management practices at 45 campuses for over 23,000 students.

With over 15 years of experience in education, including roles as a manager of restorative practices, behavior interventionist and Spanish teacher, Chris has a proven track record of improving school culture, enhancing student engagement, and fostering positive relationships. His expertise in data-driven strategies and leadership continues to drive student success and community growth.

*Education Session #6 **VIP=Creativity** 11:00 - 11:50 a.m.  
Trinity I Room*

*Sponsored by Electric Toasters*



# PRESENTER

## **Strength, Love, and Legacy: My Journey of Purpose** by Cameron Hernholm



Cameron explores overcoming adversity, from a traumatic brain injury to personal struggles, and embracing the power of giving back. She highlights the joy of motherhood through open adoption, the beauty of a transracial family, and the fulfillment of a lifelong career in fundraising. Centered on love, diversity, and legacy, Cameron inspires others to lead with compassion, embrace challenges, and create lasting impact. Join her on a heartfelt journey of resilience, purpose, and connection.

Cameron Hernholm, CFRE, is a seasoned nonprofit fundraising and development expert with over two decades of experience. As the Chief Philanthropy Officer at Nexus Family Recovery Center since 2021, she has raised over \$20 million to support programs for women and their children. Known for her collaborative approach and effective donor engagement, Cameron has led successful multimillion-dollar campaigns and built lasting community relationships. Beyond her professional roles, she holds leadership positions in various nonprofit and civic organizations, including AFP Dallas and League of Women Voters Dallas. With her deep commitment to philanthropy, Cameron continues to make a significant impact in fundraising and development.

*Education Session #7 VIP=Empowerment 1:45 - 2:35 PM*  
*Trinity I Room*

*Sponsored by Electric Toasters*

# PRESENTER



## **From Waiter to Greater: How to Level Up from Where You Are** by Gregory Rutledge

Gregory Rutledge, known as G-Wiz, the Shaman of Connections, shares info from his first soon-to-be-released publication. This presentation is perfect for leaders, entrepreneurs, and individuals seeking to grow purposefully, build resilience, and inspire others. You will learn practical tools to overcome challenges and lead with integrity in your professional and personal lives.

G-Wiz is a dynamic speaker and mentor whose mission is to inspire individuals to align with their purpose and ignite their passion. He combines personal stories of transformation with timeless principles to teach humility, resilience, and bold leadership. Rooted in faith and fueled by experience, Gregory Rutledge uses his unique “G-Wiz Framework” to help leaders identify their strengths, release their burdens, and step into their full potential.

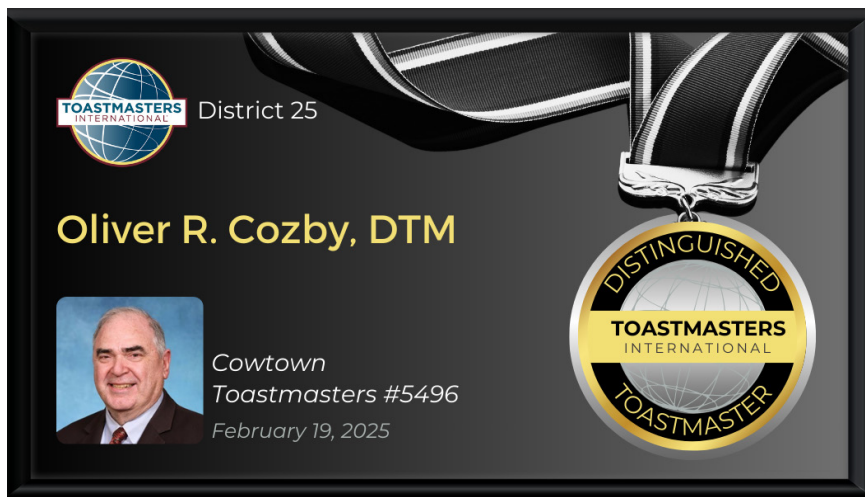
*Education Session #8 VIP=Empowerment 1:45 - 2:35 pm*  
*Irving Lecture Hall*

*Sponsored by Electric Toasters*

## DISTRICT 25 DTM CEREMONY



The District 25 DTM Ceremony stands as evidence to the enduring legacy shaped by remarkable leaders like **Bonne Stroman**, DTM, PDD, **Greg Pick**, DTM, PDD, and **Annaclaire Taft**, the widow of Past District 25 Director Maurice Taft. Their unwavering dedication and selfless service have left a deep-rooted mark on our District 25 Community.



**Home Club Name and Number:** Cowtown Toastmasters Club #5496

**Date you joined Toastmasters:** March 1998

**Occupation:** Cleburne City Council Member

**Which Pathways Did You Complete:** Team Collaboration and Leadership Development

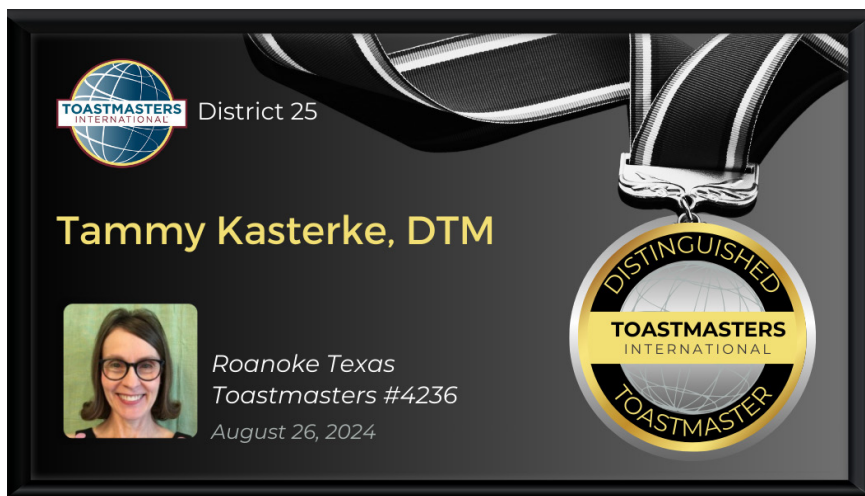
**What was your DTM Project?** Cleburne City Council Budget Process

**What did you learn through your DTM Project?** We must work together as a team to achieve our individual goals.

**How has your Toastmasters participation affected your life?**  
Elected to City Council

**What advice would you give to other Toastmasters?** Be there for others.  
The hope is they will be there for you.

**Now that you have achieved your DTM, what is your next goal?** Another Distinguished Toastmaster award.



**Home Club Name and Number:** Roanoke Texas Toastmasters Club #4236

**Date you joined Toastmasters:** March 2009

**Occupation:** Retired IT Professional

**Pathways You Completed:** Effective Coaching and Leadership Development

**What was your DTM Project?** Youth Leadership Chair for 2023-2024  
Toastmasters year

**What did you learn from your DTM Project?** To make Youth Leadership in District 25 a success, it was up to me to kickstart the initial connection with our community. Cold calls to libraries resulted in some “not at this time,” or “we will consider.” But then, a feeling of triumph when I received a “YES!” I thoroughly enjoyed connecting fellow Toastmasters and youth together to engage in a Toastmasters Youth Leadership Program.

**How has your Toastmasters Membership affected your life?** Toastmasters definitely increased my self-confidence. However, in this moment, I am thankful to Toastmasters for the connection I have with others.

**What advice would you give to other members?** My advice... attend your Toastmasters meetings regularly. Participate at every meeting in some capacity. You may “feel” you are not improving but YOU ARE! The moment will come when you realize Toastmasters is having a positive impact on your communication and leadership skills.

**Now that you have achieved your DTM, what is your next goal?**  
I enjoy the Toastmaster roles/positions that help others along their Toastmasters’ journey.



**Home Club Name and Number:** Blue Castle Collaborators  
Toastmasters Club

**Date you joined Toastmasters:** February 2022

**Occupation:** Director of Quality at Cook Children's Medical Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas

**Pathways You Completed:** Presentation Mastery and Engaging Humor

**What was your DTM Project?** I developed a club contest guide and Google site with structured resources to ensure success for all future club contests.

**What did you learn from your DTM Project?** This experience reinforced the value of preparation, communication and adaptability in effective leadership.

**How has your Toastmasters Membership affected your life?** Toastmasters has provided me with a network of supportive friends, refined my leadership skills, enhanced my recognition at work and empowered me to pursue new opportunities.

**What advice would you give to other members?** Embrace every opportunity to challenge yourself and grow. Enjoy the journey!

**Now that you have achieved your DTM, what is your next goal?** Embrace every opportunity to grow as a speaker and leader while actively supporting others in their own development.

# SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM



**Jesse Ford**  
District Director



**Phylliss Christian-Daniels**  
Program Quality  
Director



**Denise McConnell**  
Club Growth  
Director



**Samantha Watt**  
Public Relations  
Manager



**Patty Wyatt**  
Administration  
Manager



**Michelle Bayes**  
Finance Manager



**Emily Murray**  
Immediate Past  
District Director



# DIVISION DIRECTORS



**Jenny Riddle**  
Division A Director



**Nicole Dogan**  
Division B Director



**Clark Pfarner**  
Division C Director



**Najaf Dostaliyev**  
Division D Director



**Larry Harmon**  
Division E Director



**Jim Chappel**  
Division F Director



# SAVE THE DATE



## FRIDAY, May 16, 2025

- 4:00 pm Registration Opens  
5:15 pm Education Session (50 min) Irving Lecture Hall  
**Morag Mathieson, DTM**, Immediate Past International President —  
*The Art of Mentoring*  
6:15 pm First-Timers' Reception – Dogwood Room  
6:45 pm Oak Ballroom Doors Open  
6:45 pm Banner Parade Lineup  
7:00 pm Opening Ceremony with Banner Parade — Oak Ballroom  
7:15 pm Friday Night Dinner – **Keynote: Gregory Rutledge**  
*Letting Go to Lead with Passion and Purpose*  
8:30 pm Table Topics Contest — Oak Ballroom  
9:45 pm Friday Night Social — Oak Ballroom  
9:45 pm Hospitality Suite Opens and Closes at 11:00 pm

## SATURDAY, May 17, 2025

- 7:00 am Registration Open -- Doors open at 7:30  
7:30 am Breakfast – Oak Ballroom  
7:45 am **Keynote Richard Marquez—**  
*The Danger that Illiteracy Poses to the Economy*  
8:00 am Hospitality Suite Opens  
9:00 am **Education Session 1 VIP=Purpose 9:00 - 9:50 a.m.**  
Richard Marquez, *Critical Thinking and Developing Vision, Inspiration, and Passion*, Irving Lecture Hall  
Scott Prickett, *Right People in the Right Seats*, Trinity I Room  
10:00 am **Education Session 2 VIP=Drive 10:00 - 10:50 a.m.**  
Steph Valadez, *Navigating Life's Lows: And the Power of Passion*, Irving Lecture Hall  
Lorie Burch, *Wabi-Sabi: Imperfect, Broken, and Beautiful*, Trinity I Room  
11:00 am **Education Session 3 VIP=Creativity 11:00 - 11:50 am**  
Claire Daigle, *You ARE Funny: Finding Humor in Your Unique Story*, Irving Lecture Hall  
Christian Straffon, *Living With Intention: Uncovering Your WHY?*, Trinity I Room  
11:45 am Doors Open  
12:15 pm District Awards Luncheon – Oak Ballroom  
**Keynote: Steph Valadez — Finding Passion in Vulnerability: A Visionary Tale of Resilience and Inspiration**  
1:15 pm Raffle Drawing  
1:45 pm **Education Session 4 VIP=Empowerment 1:45 — 2:35 p.m.**  
Cameron Hernholm, *Strength, Love, and Legacy: My Journey of Purpose*, Trinity I Room  
Gregory Rutledge - *From Waiter to Greater: How to Level Up From Where You Are*, Irving Lecture Hall  
3:00 pm International Speech Contest — Oak Ballroom  
6:00 pm DTM Ceremony Rehearsal — Oak Ballroom  
7:00 pm Doors Open – Dignitary Lineup  
7:15 pm Dignitary Parade  
7:30 pm Saturday Evening Dinner & DTM Ceremony  
**Keynote: Morag Mathieson, DTM**, Immediate Past International President — *Releasing Hidden Leaders*  
9:00 pm Conference adjourns



