

District 15 Club Growth Director's Report

Trevor Nelson, DTM

At the beginning of the year, I stated my mission as District Club Growth Director was two-fold: to strengthen our current clubs from within and to help build new clubs throughout the District. While the COVID-19 pandemic definitely had an impact on Toastmasters activity in general across the District and the world, I still wanted to relay efforts that had been made in these areas along with pertinent updates for the District membership as a whole.

Strengthening Our Clubs

Throughout the course of this Toastmasters year, we were able to assign 8 members to be active Coaches for clubs in need. While this number fluctuates from year to year, Coaches are definitely a needed resource for the District and can bring a valuable outside perspective to a Club's executive leadership team. While a Club Coach can help the Club strive towards reaching Distinguished Status (a courageous goal all Clubs should strive for in some form or fashion), successfully completing a Club Coach assignment can also help a member reach their own goal of becoming a Distinguished Toastmaster. More recently, the District has also taken advantage of Sondra Nunez, Region 1 Advisor, holding Club Coach "best practice" sessions on a monthly basis. At the beginning of the 2021-2022 Toastmasters year, we'd love to be able to work with more Club Coaches and would request the help of Club Officers and Area/Division Directors to recommend members that'd be ready and willing to fulfill such responsibilities. It's MUCH BETTER to start the year off strong!

In addition to the Light Up Your Club incentive at the beginning of the year, we also implemented the District BINGO CARD to encourage continued engagement and involvement in Pathways educational goals, strengthening personal Clubs, and getting involved in District-wide activities. While the BINGO incentive goes until the end of this current Toastmasters year (ending June 30), we've already had some members turn in their cards for prizes and are positive we'll see more come in the coming months.

Building New Clubs

We'd like to "officially" welcome NRF (Naval Reactors Facility) Toastmasters (Idaho) to District 15! Their club officially chartered on January 26, 2021 with 20 members. We also have some prospective Clubs that have continued down the chartering process to some degree. Mountain Home Air Force Base (Idaho) has some personnel restructuring but have continued to gain necessary interest to charter and Dell Tech Toastmasters (Utah) have submitted all their paperwork, but have still be waiting to officially start their Club due to the pandemic.

While there has been limited activity with new Clubs this year, we have continued to work through viable leads that have come through the District: sPower turned AES (Utah); Minidoka Memorial (Idaho); Vivint (Utah); Proofpoint (Utah); Albertsons (Idaho); Utah State University School of Business (Utah); Balance of Nature (Utah); Rio Tinto (Utah)...along with trying to revitalize previous leads that diminished due to the pandemic.

Even though this past year has been difficult, there have been many Clubs that have still had the opportunity to add new members to their rosters. From the beginning of the Toastmasters year to the end of March 2021, the District in total has welcomed **235 new members**: Division A with 31 (*several Clubs adding up to **FIVE** new members*), Division B with 36 (*Jack C High Club adding **TEN** and Idaho Falls Club adding **NINE***), Division C with 25 (*More Toasting. More Doing. leading the pack with **EIGHT***), Division D with 71 (*Park City Toastmasters leading the District with **TWELVE***), Division E with 52 (*Lone Peak adding **TEN***), and Division F with 19 (*Speak Intuit adding **FOUR***). We would continue to encourage Clubs to find ways to hold Open Houses and/or promote their Clubs in this virtual environment. Multiple Clubs in the District could team up to make lighter work and the District is more than willing to help out in such efforts, as well.

We are also always looking for new ideas for personal and Club incentives that are desirable, relevant, and exciting to members and their Clubs. Any suggestions from the members throughout the District would be welcome and appreciated.

Path to Distinguished

While becoming Distinguished as a Club, Area, Division, and/or District is a worthwhile goal, we quickly realized that this was quite the lofty goal given all the roadblocks and challenges many have faced over the course of this year. The District started the year with 81 paid clubs out of 90 active clubs. By the end of March, that number was down to 72 paid clubs. With April dues renewal numbers still being finalized, we unfortunately expect that number of paid clubs to drop further.

The District also started the year with a total of 2,989 membership payments, while prior to April dues renewal numbers being finalized, that total was 1,826 membership payments.

The only reason I share these numbers is that I believe this year and much of next will be about rebuilding and revitalizing for the District. If your Clubs have lost members during the pandemic, reach out and see how they are doing! The discussion doesn't even have to be about Toastmasters, as that will likely come in time, but what we all need right now is relationships and connections! With the vaccine becoming more readily available and our District meeting places opening up a bit, we hope to see you all in person soon! In the meantime, stay healthy and safe, and keep toasting! ☺