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Chicago Resident is Semifinalist in the World's Largest Speech Contest

James Traywick rose above a pool of 30,000 Toastmasters participants.

CHICAGO, IL, Aug. 13, 2018 — James Traywick, of Chicago, IL, outshines more than 100 local contestants to win the district-level competition of the Toastmasters International Speech Contest. Traywick, advances to the semifinal rounds of the contest, vying for one of 10 spots in the World Championship of Public Speaking® to be held at the Toastmasters International Convention Saturday, Aug. 25 in Chicago, IL.

Traywick is a "Talk of the Town," Toastmasters Club member in Chicago, IL. He surpassed fierce competition to win over the judges with his speech, "When Life Gives You Lemons." The speech touched on the themes of bravery, passion, and confidence, emphasizing how one overcomes adversity and challenges. When it comes to connecting with an audience, he said, "The key is to have a storyline that is relatable and compelling."

Traywick will compete with 105 other winners from districts around the world who advanced to the 2018 semifinal round after a six-month process of elimination through club, area division and district speech competitions. Their five-to-seven-minute speeches were judged on content, organization, gestures, and style.

"Toastmasters speech contests are another way to build your confidence, sharpen your skills and speak to many different audiences," says Traywick. "I am looking forward to competing on a much larger stage in Chicago!" Traywick, a retired educator from Olive-Harvey City College, in Chicago, joined Toastmasters to become a better speaker and leader at work and in the community.

The Toastmasters International Speech Contest began in 1938 and is the world's largest speech contest, involving 30,000 participants from 141 countries. It culminates with the popular World Championship of Public Speaking held annually at the organization's International Convention.

To interview Traywick, learn more about the contest or Toastmasters club membership, contact Shannon Wright, Public Relations Manager, Toastmasters International District 103. View a recent interview with Traywick: <https://youtu.be/m14xoGXo39s>. Follow @Toastmasters International on Twitter to track Traywick's progress.

About District 103

District 103 is one of 106 districts, which comprises more than 116 corporate and community clubs in Region 5. To learn more about District 103, please visit www.d103tm.org.

About Toastmasters International

Toastmasters International is a worldwide nonprofit educational organization that empowers individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders. Headquartered in Englewood, CO, the organization's membership exceeds 352,000 in more than 16,400 clubs in 141 countries. Since 1924, Toastmasters International has helped people from diverse backgrounds become more confident speakers, communicators and leaders. For information about local Toastmasters clubs, please visit www.toastmasters.org. Follow [@Toastmasters](https://twitter.com/Toastmasters) on Twitter.

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