



TOASTMASTERS AT PURDUE NEWSLETTER

Summer 2016

Club #4685166 Toastmasters at Purdue Executive Committee

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VP Education
Zhenhua Zeng

VP Membership
Kristyn Childres

VP Public Relations
Jennifer Merzdorf

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Toastmasters at Purdue celebrates first anniversary with special meeting

By Jennifer Merzdorf

Toastmasters at Purdue marked its first anniversary as a chartered club with a special celebratory meeting on June 3 in Forney Hall on Purdue's campus.

President Cristina Farmus presented a stirring synopsis of our inaugural year, leaving all attending with a sense of anticipation at what the next year will bring for the club.

Our club was honored to have several Toastmasters from the state in attendance, as well as many guests and friends of Toastmasters at Purdue. Attendees included Lucy Nicksin, Deb Seders, and Don Buchman, pictured below.

The meeting included an encore presentation of the Area 71 award-winning speech by Phil Conrad, CC, entitled, "Press On." The special event also included a Table Topics session led by Nina Robinson, winner of the Area 71 Table Topics Contest. The anniversary meeting was followed by a reception.



Lucy Nicksin, DTM, District 11 Director



Left: Deb Seders, ATMB, Donald A. Campbell
Lafayette Toastmasters Club, Division G Director
Right: Don Buchman, DTM, Toastmasters at
Purdue club mentor

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President's Corner

Welcome to a new Toastmasters year! With a team of newly elected club officers and everyone's desire to succeed, we all look forward to a very successful year!

Some of our club's accomplishments in the past year are: Phil Conrad and Cristina Farmus completed the Competent Communicator manual and Korina Wilbert completed the Competent Leader manual. Congratulations! Many other members are very close to completing their CC or CL manuals!

In June, 2016, the club won the *District 11 Public Relations Contest for the Print Media category*. Congratulations to Korina Wilbert, the 2015-2016 VP of Public Relations, who took the initiative and invested a lot of time and effort to produce a Club Newsletter and to enter the District 11 contest! Congratulations and a warm "Thank You!" to all who contributed to this great achievement, especially to Jennifer Merzdorf, who helped with the graphics! Besides recognition, this award also brought us \$75.00 in gift certificates for the Toastmasters International Store.

The Club also won another \$25 gift certificate for the same store, for having *all seven club officers trained for the January–June 2016 period*. Well done! This period, most of the newly elected club officers attended the Officer Training on June 25, 2016, which was very informative and useful. The next opportunity to attend a similar training session is on August 27, 2016, in Forney Hall of Chemical Engineering, Purdue.

Although for some people summer is a time to relax, summer is a busy time for a Toastmaster! The club level *Humorous Speech Contest* window is July 1 – August 13, 2016. Our club's contest is tentatively scheduled for August 12 if there is enough interest. Every member in good standing, without a leadership role above club level, is encouraged to compete in the humorous speech contest. The winner will represent the club the Area 71 & 72 combined humorous speech contest, which will be held on September 24 at the TCPL-Klondike Branch Library. Will you be one of the contestants?

Gabriela Nagy

President
Toastmasters at Purdue

Join us at Toastmasters at Purdue!

Toastmasters at Purdue is open to Purdue staff, students, faculty, retirees, alumni, and family members of these groups. We meet every Friday in Room 3059, Forney Hall of Chemical Engineering, on Purdue's West Lafayette campus. *Check our website to confirm location; at times we move our meetings due to room schedule conflicts.* Meetings are 12:00 to 1:00 p.m., and you are welcome to bring your lunch!

Congratulations to our club meeting winners!

June 10

Best Evaluator

Korina Wilbert

Best Speech

Zhenhua Zeng

June 17

Best Evaluator

Nina Robinson

Best Speech

Jennifer Merzdorf

Best Table Topics Speech

Karissa Heckman

June 24

Best Evaluator

Kristyn Childres

Best Speech

Shankali Pradhan

Best Table Topics Speech

Cristina Farmus

July 8—one speech

Best Table Topics Speech

Nina Robinson

July 15

Best Evaluator

Jennifer Merzdorf

Best Speech

Phil Conrad

July 22

Best Evaluator

Kristyn Childres

Best Speech

Taylor Brodner

Best Table Topics Speech

Jennifer Merzdorf

Korina Wilbert earns Competent Leadership award

Congratulations to Korina Wilbert for earning the club's first Competent Leadership award in June. In addition to the leadership roles performed during meetings, she completed three special projects to finish the manual. She planned the club's one-year anniversary celebration, mentored a member through three speech projects, and chaired a PR campaign.

"I couldn't have completed these projects without the help and expertise of fellow members," said Wilbert. "Gabriela Nagy was instrumental in helping to plan and facilitate our anniversary party. And Jennifer Merzdorf gets all the credit for the professional layout of the newsletter." Wilbert added that partnerships like these make leadership projects more successful and fun while helping others complete leadership projects in the CL manual.

Congratulations to Toastmasters at Purdue

Toastmasters at Purdue ended its first year as a chartered club on a high note. We achieved Distinguished Club status and won the District 11 Public Relations Contest for Print Media!



Officers attend Toastmasters Leadership Institute

Toastmasters at Purdue officers attended the Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI) on Saturday, June 25. Training sessions for all officer positions were held on Purdue's campus in Forney Hall. Having all officers trained is one requirement for a club to reach Distinguished Club status. *Left to right:* Korina Wilbert, Gabriela Nagy, Jennifer Merzdorf, and Colby Vorland. *Not pictured:* Cristina Farmus, Zhenhua Zeng, and club mentor Arun Giridhar.

Meet Our Club Officers for 2016-2017



President Gabriela Nagy

Where did you live before coming to Purdue?

I was born and raised in Transylvania, the Northwestern part of Romania. Before moving to West Lafayette, Indiana, I was fortunate enough to live in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois (2 years), Stuttgart, Germany (2 years) and Loughborough, England, UK (for almost 8 years). I moved with my family to the West Lafayette area in December 2012, following my husband, who is a faculty member in the School of Chemical Engineering at Purdue. In February, 2013, I started in my new role as the Industrial Education Director in the same School. I love my role, as I interact every day with faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students. It is a very challenging and at the same time rewarding role.

What does Toastmasters at Purdue mean to you?

I have joined Toastmasters at Purdue Club mainly to improve my public speaking skills, and if I look back at how I felt one year ago, when I joined the club, I can definitely say that my confidence increased substantially. But it is not only the confidence in speaking publicly that I found in Toastmasters; I also found great friends and many opportunities to develop my leadership skills.

What are you looking forward to as an officer in the upcoming year?

In my role as Club President, I would like to continue the outstanding work of my predecessor, Cristina Farmus, and work with the newly elected team of Club Officers and with all of you to ensure a welcoming and positive environment in our Club, in which each member will have the help and support needed to find what they were looking for when they joined Toastmasters at Purdue.



VP Education Zhenhua Zeng

Where did you live before coming to Purdue?

I lived in Naperville, Illinois before I moved to Purdue. Before that, I worked and lived in Denmark for two years as a postdoctoral researcher. I got my PhD degree from Dalian Institute of Chemical Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences. In the last 17 years, I have always been on travel. I moved to a new home about once a year.

What does Toastmasters at Purdue mean to you?

Toastmasters at Purdue is a safe place to improve my English speaking and public speaking.

What are you looking forward to as an officer in the upcoming year?

As the VP education, I look forward to maximizing the members' opportunity for improving their public speaking and leadership skills.

Meet Korina Wilbert, Toastmasters Area G71 Director



Korina has served as VP Public Relations of Toastmasters at Purdue and is assuming her new role as Area G71 Director in July.

What is your position at Purdue?

I am Communications Specialist in the Weldon School of Biomedical Engineering.

What does Toastmasters at Purdue mean to you?

Toastmasters at Purdue is my home, a laboratory, a circle of friends, and a high dive. When a planned swan dive turns into a belly flop, it's the support group that pulls me out of the water and sends me back up the ladder.

What you are looking forward to as Area G71 Director?

I look forward to visiting the area clubs, meeting fellow toastmasters, and experiencing the unique culture of each club.

Meet Our Club Officers for 2016-2017



VP Membership Kristyn Childres

Where did you live before coming to Purdue?

I am the Director of Communication for the College of Education. I graduated from Purdue's professional and creative writing program and have also lived in northwest Indiana and snowy Madison, Wisconsin. In my spare time, I am a Zumba instructor at the Lafayette Family YMCA.

What does Toastmasters at Purdue mean to you?

I love Toastmasters because it has given me the confidence to speak out and be heard in a room full of people. Plus, the club is a really wonderful group of people.

What are you looking forward to as an officer in the upcoming year?

In the coming year, I am looking forward to growing the club's membership so that our club can have an impact on even more people.



VP Public Relations, Secretary Jennifer Merzdorf

Where did you live before coming to Purdue?

Prior to West Lafayette, my husband and I lived in Illinois, where I earned my undergraduate degree at Illinois State University. As the daughter of a professor, I've always lived in a college town and enjoy the variety of available activities. Now I am a Purdue alum, recently completing my Master's degree. I am the Marketing and Communication Specialist for Environmental & Ecological Engineering and Nuclear Engineering, so Purdue is my home away from home!

What does Toastmasters at Purdue mean to you?

Toastmasters at Purdue has allowed me to grow in confidence when speaking to others, both formally or informally.

What are you looking forward to as an officer in the upcoming year?

The upcoming year will allow me to build on the skills I've already gained through Toastmasters. I look forward to continuing the work begun by those who held these roles before me. I am actively looking for opportunities to speak with groups on campus to let them know the many benefits of Toastmasters.

Welcome to Our New Members!

We are happy to welcome the following new members who joined prior to July 1 to Toastmasters at Purdue!

Taylor Brodner

Information Systems Specialist for the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Effectiveness.

My goals as a Toastmaster: To get feedback and learn from other members in order to become a more confident speaker and leader.

Qinglin Su

Research Associate in School of Chemical Engineering

My goal as a Toastmaster: To "Never feel tired to get better!"

Colby Vorland

Ph.D. student in Nutrition Science

My goals as a Toastmaster: To become proficient and confident in my ability to communicate planned and impromptu speeches. In addition, I plan to further develop leadership skills and support others in their journey to foster their communication.

Meet Our Club Officers for 2016-2017



Treasurer Cristina Farmus

Where did you live before coming to Purdue?

Before Lafayette I lived in Romania. I came here as an adult, went to graduate school at Krannert and then started my career in business services at Purdue. I am still in Chemical Engineering where I started, though my role has changed a couple of times.

What does Toastmasters at Purdue mean to you?

For me, Toastmasters is an opportunity to develop skills that are useful in every aspect of my life: public speaking and leadership, in a supportive and professional environment. As a non-native English speaker I get to practice English and receive valuable feedback. While preparing speeches I methodically explore topics that interest me and take the time to crystalize my personal philosophy. An additional bonus of Toastmasters participation is the opportunity to meet amazing people. After just one year of involvement I see a lot of improvement in how I structure a talk, run a meeting or listen to a speaker. Through every speech I hear I develop my general culture and gain new insights into other points of view.

What are you looking forward to as an officer in the upcoming year?

As a Treasurer I plan to help the club to achieve at least distinguished status, assist members with their dues, and learn more about finances for a non-profit.



Sergeant-at-Arms Colby Vorland

Where did you live before coming to Purdue?

Before I came to Indiana, I hopped around Wisconsin, getting degrees in nutritional science at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay (in Green Bay) and the University of Wisconsin-Stout (in Menomonie). I came to Purdue to pursue a Ph.D. in nutritional science because of the high quality program and research opportunities here.

What does Toastmasters at Purdue mean to you?

I joined Toastmasters at Purdue to improve my general communication skills and more specifically to be able to effectively translate my research and knowledge to both specific and broader populations. Having a friendly and supportive environment with the shared interest of self-improvement to consistently practice such skills is important to achieving these goals. Toastmasters offers the unique opportunity to try on different hats and practice communication in a variety of roles. Taking small steps as is done in the group is an effective way to move toward your larger goals.

What are you looking forward to as an officer in the upcoming year?

As an officer, I hope to develop comfort in a greater leadership role and apply it to my everyday tasks as a student. I anticipate that it will help me reflect on my personal weaknesses and stay dedicated to addressing them.

The International Toastmasters Mission

We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.