

DISTRICT LEADER (DIV-5) BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION



Candidate's Name: Ryan O'Connor

Candidate's Office: Division Director J District Number: 55

Toastmasters member since: 1997 (Electronic records indicate 2004)

Education:
Graduated from Texas A&M (where I was President of Aggie Toastmasters, and a CTM)
Distinguished Toastmaster
Completed Leadership Development and Motivational Strategies paths

Toastmasters offices held and terms of service:
Public Relations Manager (Dec 2018-Current), VP PR (Jul 2018-Current), Club President (Dec 2017-Current) plus over a dozen terms since 2012.

Toastmasters honors and recognition:
Distinguished Toastmaster

Relevant work experience and how it relates to Toastmasters and your role as a District officer:
Former Battalion Commander in Texas State Guard leading volunteer force which required me to plan and execute missions and motivate volunteers who participate at great financial cost (over \$1,000 dollars to get required equipment). Manager at the Department of Public Safety leading, training, and developing a team with diverse professional skills and personal goals.

What experience do you have in strategic planning?
I've worked with developing the strategic plan for the Driver License Division of the Texas Department of Public Safety to align over \$250M in resources and nearly 2,000 employees towards Legislatively mandated strategic outcomes during radical organizational changes. I have also contributed quantitative needs analyses in legislative appropriations requests for over \$200M in additional resources.

What experience do you have in the area of finance?
I've worked with our Division finance manager at work to create the legislative appropriations requests mentioned above. In addition, as a manager, I managed a budget within my area of responsibility to align financial resources with business needs. As the District Store Manager, I managed a budget of over \$12,000 dollars in a given year.

(Div-5)

What experience do you have in developing procedures?

I'm a member of the District 55 Procedures Committee with Linda Williams. She can attest to my passion for creating effective and easy-to-understand procedures. I am developing a guide for Public Relations Managers to aggregate roles, responsibilities, and best practices into one central reference to make it easy for new PRMs to get a quick start into the role. As the District Store Manager, I created a handbook for future Store Managers. I managed a team of process analysts who, well, analyzed processes to make them more efficient. In one case, an analyst improved a process that took 72 hours down to 1 hour. I'll find a way to use that experience in my role as Division Director.

What lessons did you learn from previous leadership positions?

Leaders can't do it alone. Toastmasters can't rely on position to influence people and that leaders influence their constituents one on one. Leading volunteers requires a combination of vision, clear expectations, and ensuring the team has the resources it needs to succeed and excel. In most organizations, good leaders align the personal goals of each member with the goals of the organization. In an organization like Toastmasters, the opposite is true. The organization should align itself with the goals of each member.

Why do you want to serve as a district officer?

There are a few reasons. On a personal level, I'd like to stretch my leadership ability in an organization larger than a club and area. Next, I'd like to leverage my experience (earning 15 education awards in 2018, completing two paths in less than a year, chairing a TLI, coaching a club, and serving as President of two clubs which both achieved 10/10 DCP in the same year) in a way that helps areas, clubs, and members thrive.

In your opinion, what are the district mission's major objectives and how would you work to achieve them?

According to the Distinguished District Program, it is to build new clubs, grow memberships, and help at least 40% of clubs to reach Distinguished. In my experience with designing performance measures, I'd focus on educational achievement since that is a key driver of member retention. As PRM, I'm setting the stage for better interactions with the public to raise awareness of the Toastmasters Promise in the future. This will help with both club growth and membership growth.

Additional information about yourself:

I'm a member of American Mensa and enjoy the organization's Annual Gatherings and serving on the scholarship committee. I'm also a member of the Project Management Institute as a regular member. I've spent the last few years in the Texas State Guard working in a number of roles including commissioned officer training and education and a command position. As a former Cast Member at Walt Disney World, I earned a Ducktorate in Management.