



## **D112 DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **15 April 2022**

#### **The year in review**

As we approach the twilight zone of our Toastmasters year, I reflect with heart-felt gratitude on the amazing team that got us through a year that was challenging under the wand of Covid. A team that embraced the District mantra "Member First", and worked hard to support, embrace, and deliver the service to its members. We listened to the members and respected their views. The Top Table made themselves available to all members, and every endeavour was made to ensure the member experience was rewarding. The integrity of the District team has been magnificent, and we all got on with the work at hand. My Trio Directors, Wendy Wickcliffe and James Hippolite worked exceptionally hard at both front and back of house to deliver the service to members.

It has been an absolute pleasure working with the Division Directors who led and guided the magnificent team of Area Directors. It is fair to say, the Area Directors have been the backbone of the District for the work they do at club and area levels.

It is also fair to say, a District could never function without a team of very willing, able, and committed officers, and I am humbly grateful to my Trio Directors, all the Division Directors and Area Directors for their contributions to our District during their term in office. I feel I am the luckiest District Director on the planet. Thank you, team.

#### **District Officers Mentor support**

For the District Team to perform as well as it has this year, my goal was to have at least one mentor for each District executive. It was important that each team member started their year as a district officer feeling supported. The District team is not unlike any club membership, where all club members are supported with mentors. Toni Sharp carried out a sterling role as mentor for our team, and I thank her sincerely for all the support she has given them.

#### **District DSP goals and status**

At the beginning of our term, the Trio put together the District Success Plan (DSP) which was accepted by the District Council last September.

The DSP is in three sections - Team Charter, Goals and Additional Goals.

The Team Charter focused on respecting the time and effort of the team to the point where we made it clear that all our meetings would be purposeful and achieve an outcome. We planned our regular meetings around best available time and had an agenda to guide discussions and decisions. Identifying communication and leadership styles was a focus for the team as we all knew what worked best as individuals. Our goals were our KPIs, and one of them was to get District officers trained at the start of the year. I am proud to say this was achieved.



**Club payments** target was 5,666 and to date is 4698, a shortfall of 968. We have until 30 June 2022 to achieve this goal and will test us to bring back members who have held off renewing until clubs return to in-person meetings. **The District is placed 49<sup>th</sup> in the world and 5<sup>th</sup> in the Region.**

**Club Growth** goal is 165 clubs, and to date we are sitting at 135, a shortfall of 30 clubs. However, many existing clubs are short of one or two members, which means we can reduce the shortfall as we progress. In addition, we have some new clubs in the pipeline. We look forward to welcoming them to the D112 family when they charter. **The District is placed 44<sup>th</sup> in the world and 6<sup>th</sup> in the Region.**

**Distinguished clubs** target is 65 clubs, and we are working hard to achieve this. We do ask members to log their awards in Club Central as soon as they are completed. Historically, the District has achieved this goal, and I believe we can do it again this year. **The District is placed 73<sup>rd</sup> in the world and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Region.**

#### **District Team Stability**

I am pleased to advise that we have had no replacement members on the Top Table or Division Directors. We did replace four Area Directors during the year, which is an excellent sign of the District's strength. I want to congratulate the team for their stickability during testing times. Having the belief and support in the team has been a plus.

#### **District Executive Triple Crowns and DTM awards challenge this year**

The District Executives were challenged to achieve a Triple Crown award during their term in office, and the response has been interesting. Of the 87 awards, we have 20 from District Executives. I am confident the number of awards will swell closer to my initial target of 200 for the District.

Our DTM numbers will be slim, however, I am also aware of members nearing the completion stages of their awards. To date, we have one recipient, Wendy Wickliffe.

#### **Hybrid meetings**

Hybrid meeting is fast becoming the new norm. Clubs are slowly adapting to this meeting format. The landscape is still evolving. Check out the district website for more information on hybrid meetings and reach out to your Area Directors for direction about adapting to a hybrid meeting.

#### **District PRM stranded overseas**

At the beginning of our Toastmasters year our PRM, Elizabeth Viljoen, needed to return to South Africa on a family matter and this meant the District would have a remote PRM for approximately three months. As bad luck would intervene, Elizabeth was away for seven months in total. A high five to Elizabeth for managing to zoom in on all our meetings, irrespective of the time zone. The monthly newsletter video recordings were also produced and published remotely from South Africa. Thank you, Elizabeth, for being a stalwart for our District and for all the amazing work and support you have provided to our members.



### **Covid, Delta, Omicron, and vaccination passes and the overall effect on the District**

The "elephant in the room" topic has taken a great deal of time working through the implications on members and club meetings. A very emotional issue that kept my inbox full, and my phone running hot. Nevertheless, lessons learnt, and hard decisions have had to be made, which doesn't always please everyone. I hope that the members of District 112 can all revert to how things were pre-Covid, and that respect for our fellow members is maintained.

### **Taupo Conference 2022**

This year, the District conference was scheduled to be in person in Taupo and preparations were well on track for a fantastic event. Toastmasters International advised all districts at the start of the term to determine what kind of contest and conference they would like. We decided that we would hold our conference in person. At the Townhall session on 25 February 2022, it was evident that members' health, safety, and wellness were top of mind, resulting in the District reverting to online contests and conferences from that point onwards.

The Taupo Conference and the contests will be held online in May this year and the organising committee are determined to make it a memorable one. The theme is "Reach Out & Connect". Many thanks go out to Wendy Booth and her very able team for stepping up and taking care of the conference arrangements.

### **One-on-one communication sessions with Division Directors**

This year we have had four rounds of one-on-one sessions with the division directors where we provided them with support and direction. At times these sessions became three-on-ones with the Trio "ganging" up to show our united respect for the Divisions.

### **Team Bonding from DOT to Area and Division Contests**

This year the District has been blessed with an amazing team who gelled and bonded from the get-go. The first District Officer Training in June last year saw high energy levels and buzz as the members got to know each other, and the work ahead.

I feel hugely humbled and proud of the team for all the work they have put in from the get-go to now. Their commitment to the course has been maintained throughout the year – from District Officer Training to Club Officer Training to Area and Division contests - and the success of these events is evidence of the team spirit and a remarkable blend of experiences and personalities in our District team.

### **Peer Group meetings and training**

One area that the Trio regularly participated in was peer group sessions with other Districts in the Region. These sessions provided valuable information sharing to guide and support the work of district leaders. I believe these sessions helped to make us better leaders.



Toastmasters International is holding its first hybrid international conference in Nashville, Tennessee, in August this year. I strongly recommend that the incoming Trio attend this hybrid conference in person as it will be the making of lifelong international connections and friendships. It will not be a holiday, but the learnings you come away with are invaluable.

**Adieu**

This will be my last report to the District, and I want to take this opportunity to thank my team again for their support, understanding, commitment and hard work throughout the year. I could not have done my job without you. You are a dynamic team that any leader aspires to have.

Thank you, District 112, for the enjoyable experiences. I have had an amazing time leading the District through 2021-2022. We will finish this year on a high.

I wish the incoming team a successful journey ahead as they start planning for their year.

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