



Club Growth Director Report

Fall 2025

When I first joined Toastmasters, I didn't know the first thing about networking and starting conversations. I was the kind of person who would avoid small talk and stick to people I already knew. But Toastmasters changed that. It gave me the confidence and the reps to become someone who can start a conversation with anyone, anywhere. That transformation didn't happen overnight, but it's one of the biggest reasons I believe in this program, and one of the biggest reasons I want to share it.

While I might now be more at ease reaching out to a stranger, I know it's not easy for everyone. That's why I want to help make outreach feel more approachable—for all of us.

This fall, we're laying the foundation for club growth through both cold outreach and by reigniting warm leads, AKA conversations that were started in the past but never quite crossed the finish line. These are the low-hanging fruit, and there's a surprising amount of it. And as we warm those relationships back up, we'll also be casting new lines, reaching out to organizations and communities across the state to plant the seeds for new clubs.

This work isn't mine alone. I've brought on Keith Hardy—a 30+ year sales veteran—as our Club Extension Chair. Together, we're building systems so that every potential club gets followed up with and nurtured through the process.

I love leadership, and I love building high-performing teams. That's what this year is about: not just launching new clubs, but building a repeatable engine for growth. That means creating processes, onboarding new team members, and empowering Toastmasters across the district to step into new roles—sponsors, mentors, coaches, and demo team members.

A Challenge for You: Light the Room

This fall, I'm inviting every club in District 35 to take on the Light the Room Open House Challenge. It's a chance to introduce Toastmasters to people who would've never walked through the door on their own — until now.

Here's the challenge:

Host one Open House between now and March 31st.

Set a goal to welcome 10 or more guests, and we'll celebrate your success. Clubs who rise to the challenge will be recognized in our newsletter, featured on our social media, and will earn District Dollars.



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Last year, I helped organize an open house that brought in nearly 70 attendees. Your club can do the same. I'll be sharing the how-to, promotion tips, and support to help you make it happen.

When we open our doors, we open new possibilities—for our clubs, for our members, and for future leaders. Let's light the room.

Where We're At Today

- The Antigo Demo meeting was held on September 18th. It was well attended and the charter paperwork is being filled out. Their first club meeting is on October 16th and we fully expect them to have their 20 members needed to charter within their first couple of club meetings.
- The PONG Demo meeting is scheduled for November 24th. We're working on setting up the demo team.
- There are 36 leads in our internal lead tracker based on our own research and referrals brought to us.
- There are 56 leads in Toastmasters Lead Manager that Keith Hardy has begun reaching out to. We will have multiple points of contact with each of these leads by the end of this Toastmasters year.

How You Can Help

Think about the people you know: coworkers, alumni, community leaders, business owners, school staff, HR managers, or even church groups. Where do they work? What causes are they part of? How would they find value in Toastmasters?

Send us a lead. We'll take it from there. You don't need to pitch Toastmasters yourself (unless you want to). You just need to open the door.

Here's the form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScIrxxtgtdSNuoyRq61FI0s2HrcIb9vT5CTDbNxjX-A2c0I39A/viewform?usp=dialog>

You can also email me directly or find this link in every Weekly News issue and on the District website.

I'm recruiting for our demo team, sponsor/mentor pool, and club coach roster as well. If you've ever wanted to build a club from the ground up, or help one rise from a tough season, this is your time. And if you know someone who'd be great in one of these roles, send them my way. We'll get them trained and supported.

Where We're Going

By the time I give my next report in the spring, my goal is to celebrate at least five new clubs chartered. I want one of those clubs to come from a lead that you send.

Our bigger vision is bold: to eventually have a Toastmasters club in every county in Wisconsin. Whether we charter it this year or plant the seed for next year, every new contact moves us closer.

Let's make this fall a season of momentum. One where we stretch our comfort zones, build meaningful connections, and lead with purpose. I'm honored to serve as your Club Growth Director, and I look forward to the progress we'll make—together.

Respectfully submitted,
Bryson Bernarde
Club Growth Director, District 35