



District Leader

Biographical Information

Candidate's Name: **Marcia D Antion**

Candidate's Office: **Program Quality Director**

District Number: **13**

Toastmasters member since: **2015**

Education:

BS (Neuroscience and Biology), PhD (Neuroscience)

Toastmasters offices held and terms of service:

South Hills Toastmasters: Secretary (2015), VP Education (2016, 2018, 2019, 2020), VP Membership (2021), VP Public Relations (2022), President (2017)
Area 4 Director (2020)
Division A Director (2021)
Pathways Guide (2017)
Pathways Chair (2022)

Toastmasters honors and recognition:

Education Honors: CC, ACB, CL, ACL, IP5, PM2
Triple Crown
STAR award
Division A Director of the Year

Relevant work experience and how it relates to Toastmasters and your role as a District leader:

I am an educator. Currently I am adjunct faculty at Waynesburg University; I teach biology classes and laboratories. Prior, I had a long tenure in academic research at Northwestern University where I was investigating novel therapeutics for the treatment of Alzheimer's Disease. I also currently lead community fitness classes as a part time hobby. These roles allow me to understand how to plan and instruct material. I often encounter students with low confidence in either academics or fitness that need encouragement and coaching to succeed. I enjoy nurturing ability and providing a fun environment to learn and grow. I see many parallels in my work experience with the Toastmaster organization and our club mission.

What experience do you have in strategic planning?

I have planned several events related to Toastmasters directly. For my HPL, I chaired the Club Officer Training Makeup Session for Divisions A/C event online, when this was still a new experience. This required strategic planning to accumulate and organize the talented presenters. I also helped my Area Directors fill their first virtual online speech contests with adequate staff as well as organized my own for Division A. These events require strategy to locate volunteers as well as agenda planning and training of the staff. Outside of Toastmasters, I have organized several community fitness events.

What experience do you have in the area of finance?

As an academic researcher, I did receive my own funding from charitable grant and was tasked with the sole responsibility of spending and accounting for each penny. This required me to allocate the limited resources toward supplies in a timely manner. I also had to be careful of deadlines and to spend carefully so as not to miss a deadline (and thus, lose money that would be returned if not spent). I created a budget and submitted materials on a quarterly basis to the funding agency. I also was constantly "thrifty" shopping so as to stretch the grant the furthest with greatest result and was tasked with difficult choices. Currently, I am a private contractor that provides fitness classes- and I am solely in charge of the finances for equipment, supplies and reporting the taxable income.

What experience do you have in developing procedures?

In the laboratory, it is a natural thing to develop step-by-step procedures and standardize them for the next experiment-or the next scientist who picks up on where my research left off. I definitely have a lot of experience with this. In addition, designing curriculum for college courses also has a lot of procedure development involved to optimize student engagement and success

What lessons did you learn from previous leadership positions?

A good leader recognizes every contributing member on their team and encourages participation from all. Leadership is not about the "fame" of the prestigious sounding title AKA PQD, but about bringing together the best out of each person that is part of the team or organization. A leader listens to the needs of the members or bodies that they represent and considers all viewpoints before making decisions fairly- and a leader, in my opinion, is happiest to sit back and let their team take credit for the amazing accomplishments they have pulled off.

Why do you want to serve as a District leader?

I feel that our district leaders have the opportunity to bring the best experience to every Toastmaster. When a person does connect with the Toastmaster experience, it can change their life in a forever positive way. I love to see that happen! I see it in members of my own club and that is what I most look forward to, personal growth and positive change. Sadly, some clubs do not reliably offer that experience because they may be struggling to stay afloat. District leaders may help and provide resources and encouragement to become the best they can be. I like that. I think the best role for me is PQD because I am very much interested in training our club officers and providing as many resources to them as possible to empower them to give back to their own clubs that first rate opportunity to discover their own connection with Toastmasters.

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

In my opinion the District ultimately is a servant to the typical Toastmaster of any club. That Toastmaster should have a great experience and space to experience personal growth. That is done by organizing the club officers, motivating them and encouraging them. Another major mission is to bring Toastmasters to anyone who may need it, growing into new healthy clubs all over District 13--while maintaining excellence in our current slate of clubs

Additional information about yourself:

I understand it may seem unusual I am running for PQD candidate, whereas in our District we seem to have a tradition of role progression from CGD. When I think about my current skills and what I am excited about, it was a far better fit for myself to apply for PQD. I feel that I have a lot to offer in this position, whereas I am not yet very talented or acquired any accommodations in areas of club growth (I have yet to sponsor a new club or see one born).