

## DTM MENTORSHIP STORY

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I became a DTM in January 2009. I was an "accidental" DTM - I had not focused on the goal of DTM, I just plugged along finishing one or more goals per year. Before too long, I was only a few speeches and projects away. After becoming a DTM, I started thinking about my journey and how if I had had a mentor to guide me along, explain the requirements, and make the necessary connections, I could have cut my timeline in half. I approached then incoming Lt Gov Education & Training, Dave Wiley, with the idea of developing a DTM mentorship program. In our club, we had seen the benefits of the new member mentorship program and I thought why not a mentorship on the top end?

With Dave's support, I chaired a committee whose members were: Kristal DiCarlo, DTM, Greg Loo, DTM, Judy Edwards, DTM and Dave Wiley, LGET, ACB. We started by looking at the number of DTM's minted per year in our District. Using data from Marshall's tools website, we discovered that between 2004 and 2011, District 10 was adding an average of 5 DTMs per year. Next, we surveyed all existing DTMs in the District to find out the length of their journey to DTM as well as the obstacles they faced. Lastly, we researched DTM Mentorship programs across the US - finding none, we were on our own to craft a program. Our program was focused on finding DTMs who would agree to serve as mentors and reaching out to Toastmasters who had completed their ACB and ALB designations to pique their interest in becoming a DTM. The success of this program speaks for itself in the data I provided earlier.

The DTM mentorship program has the following benefits:

- retention of long-time members - those who have achieved DTM and are looking to do more
- recruitment of new members - who witness our DTM minting ceremony and become interested in pursuing that path
- reducing the "10 speeches and out" dropouts from District 10 - highlighting the longer term goal achievement

I wrote articles every month for the District 10 newsletter each one highlighting another project on the path to DTM on both the communication and leadership tracks and was a featured speaker at both the Fall and Spring Conferences. I called myself a matchmaker - matching up mentees to mentors. I was the DTM Mentorship Chair for the first two years of the program - then I turned that responsibility over to Kim Krajci.

Once we got the DTM Mentorship Program up and running, it was time to tackle the DTM Minting Ceremony with a separate committee. Prior to 2012, our minting ceremony consisted of calling the DTM up at lunch and putting confetti in their hair as they walked down the DTM line. Not very dignified for the work that is involved in becoming a DTM. Suffice it to say that the Minting Ceremony that took place on October 2, 2020 is very close to the one that we developed. I started by giving an overview of the requirements for achieving a DTM, each new DTM was introduced by their chosen introducer, awarded their DTM ribbon and walked the "line" of DTMs which grew longer at each successive conference.

People who know me know that I am a born coach, always looking to share what I have learned with others, to remove obstacles and to encourage and support them on their journeys. I am proud of the work that we did to help our fellow District 10 Toastmasters to attain the designation of Distinguished Toastmaster.