Presenting the

COMMUNICATION ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

A WIN-WIN SITUATION!

Imagine an evening with the leaders of your local community, all gathered to honor a local dignitary with a Toastmasters award for excellence in communication.

The evening commences with outstanding speeches given by club members, continues with some fun and excitement as the larger community experiences Table Topics for the first time, and ends with a heartfelt presentation of the Toastmasters Communication Achievement award.

The recipient then gives a presentation on a relevant topic and thanks your Toastmasters club for the acknowledgment. Everyone at this magical event has learned the name of your Toastmasters club and several people ask you about visiting a meeting and perhaps joining.

The following week, the work you put into promoting your event pays off and a story about the Communication Achievement Award ceremony runs in the local online paper. Your next meeting has five guests who discovered the wonderful things your club is doing and want to learn more.

It's time to enjoy this wonderful event in your town. Setting up this award is easy, and the results will motivate and energize every member of your club *and your community!*

BENEFITS OF THIS AWARD

TO YOUR CLUB:

By presenting this award as part of a special event, your club will develop its relationship with the larger community and be recognized for excellence in communication and leadership.

TO YOUR COMMUNITY:

When community members are recognized for their leadership and extraordinary communication skills, the entire community benefits. Such acknowledgment can encourage more members of your city to step up and take responsibility for the well-being of the community.

The Toastmasters' Communication Achievement Award is your club's opportunity to honor someone outside your club, either in the community or your organization – a distinguished individual in the fields of communication or leadership. In addition to recognizing someone's achievements, the presentation of this award, if handled wisely, can result in excellent publicity for your club. Here are some guidelines to make the Communication Achievement Award event a success for your club:

WHEN AND WHERE TO PRESENT THE AWARD

- You can make it an annual event. However, since the high standards of the award should be maintained, do not feel that the award must be presented every year. Present it when the club feels that someone in the community or organization deserves it. By the same token, don't present it more than once in any given year.
- Look around your community. Is there a location that is well-known for special events?
- The award can be part of a special club program – an officer installation night, theme meeting, anniversary celebration or other special event.

CRITERIA – SELECTING YOUR RECIPIENT

- The recipient should be known in the community in which the club is based or by the organization sponsoring the club.
- The recipient should be distinguished as a leader or outstanding speaker. Examples might be a company executive who has been a spokesperson for a particular industry or trade association, a city mayor who has improved the community, a media person (radio, TV, Internet or print) who is an effective communicator – perhaps one whose articles or program have had particular impact or promoted Toastmasters.
- The recipient should be able to personally accept the award.
- The recipient can be a former Toastmaster who has gone on to become successful in business or other fields.

PUBLICITY – MAKING THE MOST OF THE EVENT

- Try to find a newsworthy recipient – someone the local news media would cover.
- Consult *Let the World Know, Toastmasters' Publicity and Promotion Handbook* (Item 1140) for more publicity ideas and news release examples. Also visit the Media Center at **http://mediacenter.toastmasters.org**.
- Distribute a news release well in advance of the meeting. Follow up to ensure receipt of the release, but don't depend on the media to cover the event.
- Take photographs of the acceptance speech and distribute a clear photo to your local media with a synopsis of the speech and your event.
- Be sure to provide your district's public relations officer with a photo and information about the award recipient for inclusion in the district newsletter and website.
- Also notify World Headquarters, at **pr@toastmasters.org**, about the news coverage you receive.

CEREMONY – PLANNING A MEMORABLE EVENT

Use *Put On a Good Show* (Item 220) as a guide in planning your arrangements. Here are some hints:

- Prepare a meeting agenda or program.
- Check with the speaker beforehand regarding his or her presentation needs. Handouts? PowerPoint requirements?
- Create an introduction of the award winner that emphasizes why he or she is being honored.
- To save time, introduce only the most important guests.
- If other clubs are represented, invite the president of each club to introduce his/her club without naming individual members.
- As a simpler alternative, you may wish to present the award within a regular club meeting.