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Top Talkers to Converge on Connecticut!

Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif. (July 2009) – Toastmasters International, the world's largest educational organization devoted to teaching public speaking skills, will hold its 78th annual International Convention Aug. 12-15 at the MGM Grand at Foxwoods in Mashantucket, Connecticut.

Nearly 1,500 silver-tongued members from around the world are expected to attend, and do what Toastmasters do best: talk! Opening ceremonies are scheduled for **Wednesday, Aug. 12**, with a keynote address by **Sam Silverstein**, president of the National Speakers Association.

The four-day event hosted by local Toastmasters offers a variety of educational opportunities and culminates with the Olympics of oratory -- **The World Championship of Public Speaking**. To be held on Saturday morning, **Aug. 15**, the contest features 10 speakers representing regions throughout the world. There are no topic restrictions on the five- to seven-minute speeches, and speakers are judged on content, speech organization, voice quality, gestures and style.

Throughout the week, various experts on communication and leadership will share their insights on achieving personal growth and professional success. Toastmasters members will lead most seminars, and the lineup of top-rate speakers includes **local leadership expert Bruce Tulgan** (Thursday, Aug. 13), recipient of Toastmasters' most prestigious award, the Golden Gavel; and **comedienne and adventurer Fran Capo**, who is famous for being the World's Fastest-talking Female and will entertain her audience on Saturday afternoon, **Aug. 15**.

Toastmasters International has helped 4 million people develop their public speaking skills since the organization's humble beginning in Santa Ana, California, in 1924. This year, Toastmasters celebrates its 85th anniversary with more than 250,000 members in 106 countries and record growth. **Connecticut alone has 93 Toastmasters clubs**; Rhode Island has 18 and the city of Boston has 23.

For information about local Toastmasters meetings or Convention events, visit www.toastmasters.org or e-mail pr@toastmasters.org. The public is invited to register onsite and attend.