



Pittsburgh, PA – It was the Region VI World Series of public speaking, the Olympics of oratory, the semi finals bout for the heavyweight title of “World Champion of Public Speaking.” Who would win? Recently, a crowd of 200 Toastmasters from the Region VI Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, cheered for their favorite speaker at the Toastmasters International Region VI Speech Contest.

J.A. Gamache, 43, an eleven-year member of Toastmasters District 61 with the Club Dynamique de Laval in Montreal, Canada emerged victorious and claimed the Region VI Title of 2005 World Champion of Public Speaking. His speech, “How I Learn to Fly,” described how Like a Butterfly, it is the struggle to overcome our everyday cocoons that makes us stronger.” His seven-minute speech went from laughter to tears and uplifted his audience by his motivational message, and as J.A. Gamache said afterward, “My speech had a powerful message. I knew that the message was an important message, people would be moved and will be able to shift by me giving it.”

This is not J.A. Gamache's first attempt to win the crown. In 2001 he placed 3rd at the prestigious World Champion of Public Speaking event. After winning J.A. created his own website: www.jagamache.com dedicated to giving back to his fellow members the wealth of information he gathered during his many years of competition. His tips are read in 30 countries by more that 1000 readers who receive his weekly electronic magazine entitled : “Public speaking with J.A.” A professional D.J., a puppeteer and part time speaker. Winning the World Championship of Public Speaking would be an important step to become a full time professional speaker.

The speech contest will culminate Toastmasters International's four-day annual convention, will be held August 24-27, 2005, at the Westin Harbour Castle, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. A panel of 18 Toastmasters judges will evaluate the nine contestants, who had advanced to the finals following a year-long process of elimination, using club, area and regional speech competitions. Criteria used in judging included speech content, organization, voice quality and gestures.

Toastmasters International is a nonprofit educational organization that teaches public speaking skills through a worldwide network of clubs. The organization currently has over 200,000 members in 10,000 clubs in 80 countries. Since its founding 80 years ago in October 1924, the organization has helped more than four million men and women give presentations with poise and confidence. For information about local Toastmasters clubs in district 61, please call 877-918-6278 or www.toastmastersdistrict61.org.