

Allowing positive things to  
happen.

by Patrick Douglas

Doing my Time at East Moline  
I had growth and a change in life.  
I never thought it could've happened  
like it did but I'm glad that it did  
happen and it all part of being that  
very member of Toastmasters. The person  
who I am today have completed competent  
~~Leadership~~ Leadership skills, listening and implementation.  
Building myself at Toastmaster allow me  
to use mentoring, motivational skill out-  
side the meetings. I've really become a  
person who evaluated and I give it  
all to Toastmaster and my members  
who become friends in my environment  
as well thank you for lessons.

I would like to first tell you that I am an inmate in the Illinois Dept. of Corrections. My name is Ryder Gray and I am the current Secretary of Hilltop Toasters 7889.

Toasters has not only been a great challenge but a wonderful experience. I got involved with toasters with the impression that it would help me to have some skills that I had already been working on. I didn't know that it also would help me to change the way that I thought. Since being incarcerated I have heard on many occasions that you need to change the way you think so you can stay out of prison. Toasters has helped me in this department.


Toasters gives you confidence to want to be better and do better. Toasters has set up their organization to keep people striving to do better and set goals to obtain awards. It has been my personal experience that when I set goals I tend to perform better not just as a toaster, but as an individual.

Incarceration is suppose to be about rehabilitating people to reenter society as a productive citizen. In my personal

opinion, Toastmasters gives people the tools they need to be a productive citizen. Toastmasters has had a profound impact on my life and on the lives of many other of our members.

It is my sincere hope that Toastmasters will one day be found in all general institutions.

Sincerely,



Rhyder Coray  
Secretary, Hilltop Toasters 7889

To Whom it may Concern,

MARCH 19, 2014.

From no hope to new horizons is how I can describe what Toastmasters has done for me. Toastmasters has not only had a huge impact on me but also on those around me. In the time I've been a part of this Program/club here in East Moline C.C. not only has my vocabulary improved dramatically but my behaviors and form of thinking as well.

I've re-invented whom I'd like to be in life, in general. I've tapped into potentials I never knew existed within me, discovering new horizons and opportunities that are at my reach through the many different manuals and Booklets Toastmasters has to offer. The diverse leadership skills I've obtained have taught me not only that through dedication and hard work great accomplishments can be achieved, but that ~~if~~ I have it in me to be disciplined and dedicated. This man, once a selfish, egocentric street punk has learned that I can work as a team and for others to accomplish collective goals and receive amazing gratification and a great feeling of self worth in doing so.

The club has also served me as an outlet for diverse feelings and emotions, always encouraging me to move forward not only as a part of the club but in life. I feel since I've joined Toastmasters my self-esteem has significantly improved, also my organization and preparational skills have become widely sharper. In conclusion Toastmasters has made me realize I am so much more than what I've thought <sup>myself</sup> to be.

Sincerely,

A Paul Toastmaster

Alberto MIRANDA RS9915  
EAST MOLINE CORRECTIONAL CENTER.

To whom it may concern,

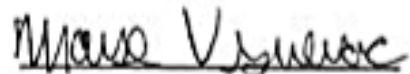
Toastmaster's has played an important part of my growth and rehabilitation in prison. Most importantly it has taught me how to communicate and organize my ideas and thoughts effectively and in a manner that is positive, quite the opposite of where I was before I joined toastmasters.

Being afforded the opportunity to participate in toastmasters has given me an outlet for my stress and things that weigh heavy on my mind such as being away from my family. It has also taught me how to be a leader which means being more objective and open to new ideas or others ideas. Toastmasters has given me a confidence about myself that I could have never imagined having.

The club atmosphere has also helped me to deal with the loneliness of prison, where I was once unsociable and an introvert, a loner so to say. I am now friendly and outgoing and enjoy participating in group activities. My club, the Hilltop Toasters has instilled a sense of family and camaraderie in its members; Because of this our club has flourished earning 24 educational awards this year so far, which is a great feat for any toastmaster club inside or out.

I cannot speak for other members of my club but I can say with certainty that toastmasters will be a big part of my life once released from prison; It has affected me that deeply. I would imagine that the impact of toastmasters is similar for other participants who are similarly situated. I urge you to consider seriously allowing a toastmasters club to form within your walls.

Sincerely,

  
Marse Visnevac  
President of the Hilltop Toasters

Dear Warden,


My name is Ramiro Rodriguez III, IDOC #B-46602. Unfortunately, this is not my first incarceration, but it most definitely has been life altering. The Hilltop Toasters Toastmaster Club here in the East Moline Correctional Center has been a major influence on how I've spent the last 42 months. I helped build this club when it was re-chartered in February of 2011. Since then I have been a part of the executive committee and I have held the office of President, Vice President of Education, and Immediate Past President.

I have earned many awards throughout my membership as a toastmaster, the most recent is the High Performance Leadership Award which took just over a year. It resulted in a trophy for our club in a district wide competition with over 90 clubs. My experience has been just as Toastmasters has promised. I have learned about myself and that I may speak confidently in front of my peers or in public. Toastmasters has helped me to prepare and organize speeches, presentations, and evaluations. I have gained the ability to communicate effectively in impromptu situations along with listening intently in those same situations. This has resulted in a higher self-esteem.

The opportunities to practice leadership skills have also taught me about taking on responsibilities, a characteristic I now look forward to encountering whereas before I would shy away. These experiences have also taught me about what and when to delegate those responsibilities and to whom. All in all, my experience has been fulfilling and I have picked up a few "Good" habits along the way.

Our volunteers have been especially supportive and they have provided much needed guidance. They have also located Toastmasters clubs in areas for inmates when we are ready to be released. Misses Kristin Bruchmann has also been very encouraging and motivating from the beginning. She believed in me and her support ultimately made me believe in myself. I encourage you to strongly consider adding a Toastmasters club to your list of programs. I feel it will be a breath of fresh air to your inmate population. Thank you

Sincerely



Ramiro Rodriguez III B-46602 VPE  
Vice President of EDUCATION  
HILLTOP TOASTERS #7889

To Whom it may Concern:

I joined Toastmasters about six months ago. At first I was very nervous, but it gradually got easier for me to get up in front of people & speak.

I have grown in many ways because of Toastmasters. Not only has my fear of public speaking subsided. It has also helped me to broaden my vocabulary. I have learned how to talk to people one on one and actually hold conversations.

I was voted into the executive committee as the vice president of membership. That alone has helped me develop some leadership skills as well.

All of these qualities I have picked up since becoming a member of Toastmasters. I will be able to take these qualities with me into society upon my release. I know by applying these tools in my life that they will help me to become a contributing member to society.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME

A VERY PROUD MEMBER OF  
HillTop Toastmasters Club 7889,  
Ron Everett #R14579