



District Leader

Biographical Information

Candidate's Name: **Vanessa Aurora Herrera**

Candidate's Office: **Division (E) Director** District Number: **52**

Toastmasters member since: **October 2017**

Education:

Bachelor of Science in Food Science and Technology with an Emphasis in Food Safety from California State University, Los Angeles, Fall 2013 - Spring 2017.
Graduated Magna Cum Laude (0.02 GPA points from Summa Cum Laude). Dean's List: 2017, 2016, 2015, and 2014.
+ Chapter Leader (Leadership) Training from the Institute of Food Technologists, Student Association, July 2016.

Toastmasters offices held and terms of service:

Area Director, Area 51, Div E, D52 - July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 (in progress)
President, Figuratively Speaking #4305 - July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 (in progress)
Vice President Education, Figuratively Speaking #4305 - July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020
Vice President Education, Figuratively Speaking #4305 - (July 1, 2018) August 13, 2018 to June 30, 2019
[Our officers were locked out of Club Central from July 1st, 2018 through August 12th, 2018.]

Toastmasters honors and recognition:

The Karen Hudson Award for Volunteering Excellence, District 52, 2019-2020

Team Collaboration: Level 5, Level 4, Level 3, Level 2, and Level 1.
Advanced Leader Bronze and Competent Leader awards
Advanced Communicator Silver, Advanced Communicator Bronze, and Competent Communicator awards
(President's Distinguished plus Beat The Clock with my home club as the Vice President Education after years of DCP underperformance.)

Relevant work experience and how it relates to Toastmasters and your role as a District leader:

2016-2017 Student Representative for the Institute of Food Technologists' Southern California section.

There had only ever been 1 voting seat on the Non-Profit's Executive Board for a student. To take office, I negotiated to have this 1 seat turned into 2; four years later it remains as 2.

What experience do you have in strategic planning?

Long-range planning

What experience do you have in the area of finance?

What experience do you have in developing procedures?

What lessons did you learn from previous leadership positions?

I came into Toastmasters hoping to grow in my ability to "push" people well. "Pushing" myself comes very naturally to me. "Pushing" others to reach for what they aspire to and even surprise themselves in the process is something I find intrinsically rewarding; it's almost an inherent need of mine to want to "push" people gently. What I learned on this journey is that wanting to "push" others is still good but also off base. ... I've learned to be more flexible and human; to blend "pulling" with "pushing" instead. To be more gentle as well as more forceful when necessary. ... I joined Toastmasters primarily to grow my leadership skillset as it is "Where Leaders Are Made." I knew from previous leadership experiences that what had most held me back in leading was my ability to communicate when "pushing" and "pulling" others. I'm ever curious, caring, empathetic, and grow as I continue.

Why do you want to serve as a District leader?

For other-ish reasons. Other-ish refers to high concern for others' interest combined with high concern for self-interest; a healthy blend of selflessness with selfishness. It means taking care of others without forgetting to also take care of myself; we cannot pour from an empty cup. I am by nature highly altruistic, loving to give selflessly without ever expecting anything in return from those in my care. I find a lot of pleasure in encouraging and supporting those around me to do more, share more, be more, etc. The work of a District leader is intrinsically rewarding for me in-and-of itself; even given the ups and downs of the journey. I would like to continue moving up the ranks serving in District leadership one role at a time; for both my own personal growth, as well as to give to my home District. Division Director is a logical next step in my journey. I believe I can serve well in the role for my Division.

In your opinion, what are the District mission's major objectives and how would you work to achieve them?

It is always best to refer to the District mission: "We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence."
The District's Major Goal should always from Day 1 be to achieve Smedley Distinguished District status, this is how we will reach a Smedley Distinguished District status, a President's Distinguished District status, a Select Distinguished District Status, a Distinguished District Status, or at the very minimum to be a District that does ALL we can to best serve the needs of our members. As PDD Lance Webster put it: "Every Member Counts."
Because as my Division Director and formal pathways mentor program mentor puts it: "Distinguished members lead to Distinguished clubs, Distinguished areas, Distinguished divisions, which leads to a Distinguished district."

Additional information about yourself:

We will carry my Division Director's torch to further build upon her efforts. I will ensure that my Area Directors are fully trained in the essentials within our 1st Quarter (June/July-September 2021). I will direct/coach/mentor/support/delegate to my ADs to the best of my ability from the start and through the year. We will do all we can to further increase the morale and involvement of our members in our Division/District/Organization; within my Division. Together we will aim for a President's Distinguished Division with all President's Distinguished Areas with all President's Distinguished Clubs; even if it is highly unlikely to go from where we are now to that level that quickly, we will still aim for that level of Excellence in our Service. My home Division has gone through a rough time this pandemic, but it's also been in need of much more support even before that. I, and together we, can provide that.