



Phyllis Kombol is advancing to the Regional Quarterfinals of the 2020/21 World Championship of Public Speaking. Judging is underway and results from each region will be announced in July.

In the District 37 International Speech Contest, Phyllis represented Concord's monthly specialty impromptu club, "Eat Your Words" (EYW) which she helped sponsor and was a charter member when it started in 2017. She is also a charter member of McDowell NC Toastmasters, and a charter member of the monthly Advanced Toastmasters of Asheville (ATA). Phyllis has been a member of Toastmasters for 12 years, her first club being Kannapolis' Goldmine Club (the club chartered in 1959—Phyllis was NOT a charter member!).

A Toastmasters Family:

She and her husband Tony lived in Kannapolis for over 35 years, raising their son Thomas (a past member of Goldmine, and current member of EYW), and Katherine "Kanne" (a past member of Goldmine and current President of McDowell NC). Tony was never a member of Goldmine but joined EYW mid-2017 and is also now a member of ATA and McDowell NC. Do you see a pattern here?

In 2017, Tony retired from his job, so Phyllis elected to retire from her work as clinical nurse specialist and certified Neonatal Intensive Care RN, and they moved to a log home in the foothills of NC.

Phyllis has held most club officer roles except Treasurer, and she is currently VP Education for Eat Your Words and McDowell NC, and VP Membership for Advanced Toastmasters of Asheville. She has completed three paths in Pathways and she is trained as a Pathways Guide. She is currently serving as your D37 **"Pathways Park Ranger"** for this year and will continue in the role for the 2021/22 year.

"Truth for Our Children"

Phyllis's winning speech was called *Truth for Our Children*. Phyllis says, "This message began about 4 years ago, as we celebrated the birth of a family friend's baby. They are Black, and it struck me how different the world is for children growing up in different circumstances and among my friends whose children took different paths in life.

“This message about what we tell our children kept nudging me to *say it again* as unfortunately, it is still a current issue. I truly had no expectation of winning—I just wanted to hone the speech because I think the message will have a future in other groups and settings.

“I am honored and a little stunned to be representing D37 in the Region 7 Quarterfinals. I cannot claim all the credit, because I have had a whole TEAM of people who have helped me. First the families whose stories I talk about, my Toastmaster family (Really, since my husband, daughter, and son are all Toastmasters!) and my ‘extended family of Toastmasters’ who have been my coaches, giving me feedback, and helping me refine the message and delivery. “