

# Plan your Dreams

*An Interview with Quinn Lemley, DTM*



## **Q. Discuss the theme of our conference, Plan your Dreams, how will you address that in your keynote speech?**

A. Plan your Dreams – What a powerful theme!

My keynote is about DREAMS. What is it to dream? How do we identify what exactly are OUR dreams, not the dreams of other people. How to figure out, how to bring that aspiration into reality? How to create a blueprint to be the architect of our dreams, even if we don't know how to start or think we don't have the resources! What to do when things don't work out as planned? Failure, what to do when we fail? We get back up! Process? Life is a journey, so often our dreams take us to uncharted territory we never imagined possible. We have to believe and keep putting one foot in front of the other. The people, resources and opportunities do show up when we envision our dreams, fearlessly step into action and manifest our desires, which changes the world in large and small ways. This is the power of a dream.

All of this is told in stories and examples from my career in show business from small cabarets to headlining major casinos and performing arts centers, personal stories and from other people's stories.

## **Q. Which Advanced Communication speech manuals have helped you the most?**

A. I love the manuals! I recently completed my DTM and finished my second Competent Communicator and am on track to complete my Advanced Communicator Bronze. Each manual challenges us to flex different muscles. I recently completed the Storytelling manual, which was the most fun! It allowed me to be theatrical and stretch the boundaries of normal speeches, giving speeches from Greek mythology (I am a huge Ancient Greek Mythology fan!) to inspiring stories about Julia Child and the brave, beautiful, powerful women from my family.

I also loved the Public Relations manual. It set the tone for all kinds of situations. I've never had to play the role of an advocate, just PR from my music. In my building in NYC, we are tenants fighting big developers who want to build a \$200 million dollar condo on top, underneath and around us, while we are living in the building! There is almost no Tenant Protection Plan. It has never been done before. This manual gave me a platform to advocate and to also do role reversals as if I were the developer's spokesperson! We have been fighting this for two years and they haven't begun construction to date. I think Toastmasters helped me and our Tenant's Action Group delay the process and raise awareness, not to mention gather a lot of signatures. Those speeches helped us in so many ways; it was beyond giving a speech.

Communicating On Video – was so much fun! It gave me the opportunity to interview, play all kinds of roles in various situations and after I completed it, I actually got a TV series, *Secrets of The Stage*, which is all about communication, speaking and performance! You never know where Toastmasters will lead you!

## **Q. Which Advanced Communication speech manuals did you find the most challenging?**

A. Technical Presentations – I am starting this manual. I am not a technical/mathematical type of person, so this is a manual that goes against my comfort zone. But I find that the things that I resist, I actually get the most benefit from because it develops another muscle in my brain. I envy my fellow Toastmasters that can dissect anything and make us understand how things work. So hopefully, after I tackle the Technical Presentations manual I will be a better technical presenter!

## **Q. What are your current goals as a Toastmaster?**

A. I am a member in District 46, your sister district! I just completed my Division G Area 73 director and my Division B Area 23 director position for the past two years. Thanks to my amazing teams, both years we were President's Distinguished! It takes a village. This year I was elected Division B director. I have big shoes to fill; both of my previous division directors were division directors of the year, so not only do we have to keep up President's Distinguished division, we have to go above and beyond to help our fellow areas and divisions.

Personally, I'm going to "keep working the program" because it works. Even though I just completed my DTM, it's been fun to complete another Competent Communicator and start new advanced manuals, but now I have different perspectives and subject matter to speak about.

## **Q. What is next for your performance/directing stage goals?**

A. I am thrilled to be District 83's Keynote this fall, Plan your Dreams!

We go back out on tour this winter with *Burlesque To Broadway* and *Rita Hayworth! The Heat Is On!* opening the Broadway season at SKyPAC in Kentucky.

In October, Paul Horton and I will be debuting a new concert we are creating called, *Rebel, Rebel – The Many Lives of David Bowie* at The Rose Theatre in Toronto. We are in the process of developing it; it's been thrilling and interesting to go into the extraordinary world of Bowie, musically, professionally and personally.

## **Q. Who are your mentors?**

A. Christine Lemley, My mom – her strength, inner wisdom, beauty and power. She has always been my rock. She is a visionary and before her time.

Julia Child – I had the privilege to get to know Julia and lunch with her and Paul Child in Cambridge. Julia taught me that you "just do it" and if it doesn't work out you can always order pizza! Her zest for life, humor and passion to follow her dreams was given to me through my mom.

Paul Horton – Paul was and is my manager, producer and has become my best friend and partner. Anything I ever dream or imagine, Paul says, "let's do it, let's make it happen!" Many times we don't know how, but we always know why. Nothing is impossible. We produced *Burlesque to Broadway* in the height of the recession. It's a big glamorous show full of inspiration. Whenever it seemed impossible, he kept pushing and would always think outside of the box for answers or to be creative. He pushes me every day to be a better performer and better person.



## **Q. Program Quality Director Janice Buffalow, DTM mentioned you are interested in storytelling. Tell us about that, please.**

A. Storytelling is all around us. It's in our speeches; it's in our day-to-day lives. I am a singer; my passion is the American Songbook, and each song is a story about our universal desires, dreams and experiences. The same is true in writing a show or a speech. It's especially exciting when I get to blend storytelling with music. One of my favorite experiences is to play Rita Hayworth in *The Heat Is On!* I take the audience by the hand into another time and place. They suspend their belief that they are actually watching Rita and are moved by her stories through the monologues and through the music.

[www.QuinnLemley.com](http://www.QuinnLemley.com)

*Photos courtesy of Quinn Lemley, DTM*