

ROTARY DISTRICT 5220 SPEECH CONTEST 2026-27

Sample Area Speech Contest Agenda

1. Speakers Draw # 1 2 3 4 for order of speech upon arrival: [name of whom is responsible f
2. Sergeant at Arms: [Name]
3. Welcome and direct guests.
4. Club President [Name] Introduce Area Speech Contest Chair
5. Area Speech Contest - Opening remarks. Introduce Master of Ceremony: [Name]
6. Master of Ceremony – Opening remarks (2 minutes)

Good afternoon, everyone!

On behalf of **Rotary District 5220** and the [number] of clubs in **Area [#]Rotary Clubs**
[list of clubs]

we are honored to welcome you to today's **Area Speech Contest!**

We are delighted to have you join us for this exciting event.

Before we begin, I kindly ask everyone to take a moment to **silence or turn off your cell phones** to ensure our speakers have minimal interruptions. We will invite our contestants to join us on stage following the contest for photos.

Each year, the Rotary District 5220 Speech Contest gives participants a platform to share their voice, ideas, and passion for service. Club Speech contests are held in January, district-wide. Club winners then move on to the Area Contest.

Our Area contestants today will not only receive well-earned recognition but also **scholarship awards** as follows:

-  **First Place - \$350**
-  **Second Place - \$250**
-  **Third Place - \$175**
-  **Fourth Place Honorable Mention - \$100**
-  **Fifth Place - \$50**

First place contestants today will advance to the District Speech Contest on Saturday, March 20, 10:00-12:00 at 645 W. Main Street, Merced.

This year's theme, "**How Rotary Creates Lasting Impact**" challenges our contestants to explore the transformative power of Rotary—how simple acts of kindness, leadership, and service can create lasting change. Each speech is expected to be 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 minutes.

Let's go over a few guidelines:

- Each contestant will be introduced by number—**1, 2, 3, 4, 5**—not by name.
- Please **welcome each speaker with applause as they approach the podium** but **hold your applause at the end of their speech** to maintain fairness in judging.

Now, let's get started! Please join me in welcoming our **first speaker to the podium!** 🙌

Speech Contest Begins:

- **MASTER OF CEREMONY:** Please give a warm welcome to Speaker 1 [Speaker 1's Name]
- **SPEAKER 1** [Speaker 1's Name]
- **MASTER OF CEREMONY**
 - Reminder: Please hold your applause
 - Announcements
 - Introduces visiting District Dignitaries and visiting Rotarians
 - Wait for judges to raise their pencils and have scores entered
- **MASTER OF CEREMONY:** Please give a warm Rotary welcome to Speaker 2 [Speaker 2's Name]
- **SPEAKER 2** [Speaker 2's Name]
- **MASTER OF CEREMONY**
 - Give history of contest.
 - Wait for judges to raise their pencils and have scores entered

History of the Rotary International Youth Speech Contest

The **Rotary Youth Speech Contest** has a long-standing tradition dating back several decades. While the contest varies by district, its purpose remains consistent: to encourage young people to develop **public speaking skills, confidence, leadership abilities, and a deeper understanding of Rotary's values.**

Growth and Evolution

- The contest has produced **thousands of confident, articulate young speakers** who have gone on to careers in **public service, business, education, and advocacy.**
- Themes have evolved over the years, reflecting **current global challenges, leadership, ethics, and the impact of Rotary service projects worldwide.**

The Role of Rotary Districts

- The contest also strengthens Rotary's relationship with **local schools, educators, and communities**, reinforcing the organization's role in fostering leadership and civic engagement.

Impact on Youth and Rotary

- The contest encourages young leaders to think critically about Rotary's influence in the world and how they can contribute to positive change.
- Many past contestants have gone on to become **Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) participants, Rotaractors, and even Rotarians.**
- By promoting **ethical decision-making, leadership, and global awareness**, the speech contest aligns with Rotary's mission to develop future leaders.
- **MASTER OF CEREMONY**
 - Wait for judges to raise their pencils and have scores entered
 - Introduce Speaker #3 [Speaker 3's Name]
- **SPEAKER 3** [Speaker 3's Name]
- **MASTER OF CEREMONY** – Announcement

Rotarians worldwide are preparing for an incredible milestone—the **125th anniversary of Rotary International in 2030!** On **February 23, 1905**, in a small Chicago law office, **Paul Harris** and three friends planted the seeds of what would become one of the world's greatest humanitarian organizations.

From that first meeting, Rotary has expanded across the globe to 46,000 Clubs, bringing together world and community leaders, problem-solvers, and community builders under one shared mission of **Service Above Self**.

For almost **125 years**, Rotarians have dared to **imagine world peace, created hope** to eliminate polio, and shown the **magic of the seven areas of service**.

Rotarians share their expertise, time, and money, to support local and international humanitarian projects to address some of the world's most pressing challenges. As we continue our work we carry forward our legacy with **pride**.

Because when we **stand together as Rotarians with our community partners**, there is **nothing we can imagine that we cannot achieve**.

- **MASTER OF CEREMONY**
 - Wait for judges to raise their pencils and have scores entered
 - Introduce Speaker #4 [Speaker #4's Name]
- **SPEAKER 4** [Speaker #4's Name]
- **MASTER OF CEREMONY**
 - Wait for judges to raise their pencils and have scores entered
 - Introduce Speaker #5 [Speaker 5's Name]
- **SPEAKER 5** [Speaker 5's Name]

- **MASTER OF CEREMONY**
 - Wait for judges to raise their pencils and have scores entered
 - Introduce Speaker #6 [Speaker #6's Name]
- **SPEAKER 6** [Speaker #6's Name]
- **MASTER OF CEREMONY**
 - Wait for judges to raise their pencils and have scores entered
 - Scorekeeper collects judges tally sheets and prepares overall tally sheet
 - Introduce Contestants, Assoc Principals, Family, and guests
 - Thank Parents, teachers, principals, and guests in attendance.

While scores are being finalized, the contestants should be given the chance to share about themselves, including school, grade, interests, and plans for college. The Speakers may be asked to introduce family, guests, and others in attendance for them.

- **MASTER OF CEREMONY – FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - The District Speech Contest Chair obtains the results from the Head Teller
 - Treasurers fills out the checks or cash awards with name
 - Certificates are presented to the winners. (The District Chair writes the names.)
 - District Speech Contest Chair Presents the Awards
 - Speech Chair explains:
 - District Level Contest on Saturday March 20, 2027 at the Merced Multicultural Art Center at 645 W. Main Street Merced.
 - Winner of the District Speech Contests is presented at a District Rotary meeting [date, time and location to be determined]
- **DISTRICT SPEECH CONTEST CHAIR OR CLUB PRESIDENT** thanks Master of Ceremony, speakers and guests and closes the meeting