

## 2012 IATLH UTSAV

*Saturday, August 18, 2012*

Lincoln High School Auditorium

Tallahassee, FL 32308

### **Introduction to the inaugural IATLH Speech Contest 2012**

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### Benefits of Public Speaking

Hello, my name is Thayumanasamy Somasundaram and I am one of the Trustees of India Association of Tallahassee (IATLH). I would like to thank the Executive Committee (EC) of IATLH for asking me to say few words about the inaugural IATLH Speech Contest 2012 at Utsav. Let us first applaud the IATLH EC for taking the initiative for starting this new event. As you all know, the EC is here to create opportunities for every member of our association and introducing this event will further allow us to cater to our members' needs better.

We have about half dozen eager contestants for the inaugural event. EC would like to make this a stand-alone event and your participation and encouragement is really needed. Despite the small number of contestants, I am not discouraged because when Utsav started as a separate event we had a small audience and even fewer participants and it has grown to be a big event now. I am sure the Speech Contest will grow like Utsav soon.

Before we begin the event, I would like share with you some of the benefits of public speaking. I know it doesn't come naturally and for a person like me who had to learn to speak in English when I was 21 years old it was not always easy. But I persevered and slowly I was able to get better and better. So all the young members of IATLH, you have the benefit of English being your first language, so you should be able to do it too. Actually, you can master it by the time you graduate out of high school if you start early!

What are the benefits of public speaking? I will list the top eight benefits since I don't want to stand between you and the contestants.

1. **Builds confidence.** Those who can stand in front of a crowd and speak are really self-confident. They even look confident to others even if their legs are shaking and their mouth is dry. So you exude confidence!

2. **Builds a life-skill of communication.** As you know in this interconnected world and competitive workplace, those who can communicate their ideas will prosper. Those who can effectively communicate will likely become leaders.
3. **Interviewing and promotion.** Anyone who has interviewed for new openings, changed jobs, and applied for promotions can attest to this important aspect. Speaking is like selling your ideas and talents to other and you need it to succeed in job and life.
4. **Stopping the bully.** Since many of our members are students and young adults, remember that standing up for you and telling others to STOP is an important skill when you are faced with a tormenter. It helps you deal with difficult people. For example, it is important to learn to say “NO”. Public speaking helps you develop this important skill of saying NO!
5. **Focusing and paying attention.** Believe it or not, you need to really focus and pay attention while you speak so that you don’t lose your train of thought. This also makes you a better listener since you don’t want to repeat yourself. Focusing helps one to be more productive. This means more success at school and at work!
6. **Improved writing skills.** It may not be evident at first glance how ones writing skill will be improved with public speaking, but it does. For example, before I came here to talk to you, I wrote what I was going to say, rewrote it couple of time for brevity and clarity. So public speaking will help you master the language.
7. **Social advancement.** Those learn how to speak usually achieve greater social status by having more friends, colleagues, and a larger network of peers that can benefit them both socially and professionally.
8. **Express YOUR point of view.** Finally, like the important saying, *“The world is run by those who show up!”* Agenda, public policies, important decisions in life are sometimes set by those who speak up! You may have noticed that during the staff meetings, public forums, political debates, and Q & A sessions are devoted toward one or two subject areas by those who are vocal and speak up. Those may not be the subject MANY people are interested in but the ‘squeaky wheel gets the oil!’ So developing the skill of standing up speaking allows you to turn the attention of people, politicians, professors, and employers **to what matters to YOU!**

I hope you are able to see some of the benefits of public speaking. I thank the EC for this opportunity and you for the patience. So without a delay let me welcome the contents. Thanks.

[Thayumanasamy Somasundaram](#)

Trustee (2012-13), IATLH