



**For Immediate Release**

**Media Contact:**

Kiminari Azuma

080-5092-3400

PXP05102@gmail.com

<http://www.district76.org/en/>

## **'Speaker of the Year Award' goes to Prof. Donald Keene**

**Tokyo, Japan, October 26, 2012**

Professor Emeritus Donald Keene is the winner of the 2012 Communication and Leadership Award (a.k.a. Speaker of the Year Award), he will receive his award at the Toastmasters All Japan Conference on Saturday November 17 at the Kawasaki-shi Sangyo Shinko Kaikan. This award is presented annually by Toastmasters Japan to a Speaker and/or a Communicator in our society who is highly influential in the areas of communication and leadership.



After the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, Professor Keene saw many foreigners leaving Japan. He thought that it was the time to voluntarily and wholeheartedly join the people in this time of disaster to convey his sense of gratitude to the Japanese people. He, then, retired from Columbia University and moved to Japan with the intention of living out the remainder of his life. He acquired his Japanese citizenship on March 8th, 2012. His courageous words and deeds, being a fine role model inspired and are inspiring many Japanese.

Professor Keene received his Ph.D. (1949) degree from Columbia University, and spent 56 years teaching at the university, becoming a pillar of Columbia's Japanese department. In 2002, Professor Keene was awarded with the honor of being "Person of Cultural Merit", one of Japan's highest honors, and given for his distinguished service in the promotion of Japanese literature and culture. In 2008, Professor Keene received another high honor, the Order of Culture, which the Japanese Government presents to those who have greatly contributed to Japanese art, literature, or culture. Professor Keene's Japanese publications include approximately 30 books, some written originally in Japanese, others translated from English.

### **About Toastmasters International**

Toastmasters International is a nonprofit educational organization that teaches public speaking and leadership skills through a worldwide network of clubs. Founded in October 1924, the organization currently has more than 280,000 members in 13,500 clubs in 116 countries. Each week, Toastmasters helps more than a quarter million people of every ethnicity, education and profession build their competence in communication so they can gain the confidence to lead others. For information about local Toastmasters clubs, please visit [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org). Follow Toastmasters International on Twitter [@Toastmasters](https://twitter.com/Toastmasters).

# # #