



Ignite the Lions Pride MD5M Multiple District Convention April 25-27, 2025



Lions of MD5M,

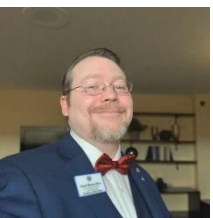
Attendees of the MD5M 2025 Convention in Bloomington, Minnesota will be in for a real treat with the lineup of guest speakers scheduled to appear. These speakers will provide you with heart-warming stories and inspirational talks on mental health, inclusiveness, service dogs, and helping others while making a mark in your community.



Joe Schmit is an award-winning broadcaster, community leader, author, and popular keynote speaker. He is a long-time youth mentor committed to advocating for several community organizations and has contributed time to many other charitable organizations including Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund, The Mind over Matter Foundation, VEAP, and the Fairway Foundation. Joe is also an author of three books: "Silent Impact," "The Impact Blueprint" and "The Right Thing To Do," a children's book about Minnesota Twins Hall of Famer Joe Mauer.



Katie Shatusky is the Executive Director and Co-Founder of Thumbs Up, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping others and uplifting the community. In 2014, she co-founded Thumbs Up in honor of her late grandfather, Bob Schmit, who died by suicide in 2010. Katie is also the author and illustrator of the children's book, *The Ladybug Hug*. One of her most profound experiences was donating a kidney to a complete stranger in October 2020, exemplifying her commitment to making a difference in the lives of others.



PDG Daniel Marney Elkins is a professional drug prevention specialist and is the executive director of the Bellevue Community Center. He specializes in creating youth leadership programming by teaching strategic thinking and service learning. PDG Daniel is one of the founders of the Lions Virtual movement and has presented at several International Conventions, USA/Canada Forums, Europa Forums, Anzi Forums, ISAME Forums and at district conventions around the world. He was appointed to the Lions' International Board of Directors in 2023 by Dr. Patti Hill. PDG Daniel has also served as a new club development consultant for Lions Clubs International.



PCC BJ Blahnik is originally from Seymour, Wisconsin, is the youngest of five children and was raised around farming. He was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) at about the age of ten. After his retirement due to his diminished vision, PCC BJ and his wife Victoria opened in 2017 their own business, Reach Forward, which works with special needs individuals through day services and a residential program. In 2006 PCC BJ's life changed forever when he received his first Leader Dog. In October of 2022, he returned for his current Leader Dog, Jackson, a male Yellow Lab. Prior to Jackson's formal training in Rochester Hills, MI, he was raised by traditional puppy raisers in SE Michigan. Leader Dog Jackson is PCC BJ's fifth Leader Dog, so he is calling him Jackson 5.



IP Fabrício Oliveira is a member of the Catolé do Rocha Lions Club since 1985 and has held several offices in the association. In recognition of his service as a Lion and to the association, he has received many awards including multiple International Presidents' Certificates of Appreciation, Leadership Medals, Presidential Medals, and the Ambassador of Good Will Award, the highest honor awarded by the association to its members. International President Fabrício and his wife, Amariles, also a member of the Catolé do Rocha Lions Club and a Melvin Jones Fellow, have two daughters, a son, and a granddaughter. International President Fabrício's theme for this year is **Make Your Mark**. The IP believes there is a leader inside every Lion and all leaders know that, through collective action and individual commitment, we can inspire and empower whole communities.

Joe Schmit, Katie Shatusky, and PDG Daniel Marney Elkins will be speaking at morning and afternoon seminars on Saturday, April 26th. IP Fabrício Oliveira will be our keynote speaker at the Saturday evening dinner. PCC BJ will be speaking at the morning brunch on Sunday, April 27th.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to hear from these wonderful speakers. Come to the MD5M 2025 Convention, hear our speakers' inspirational words, and take them back to your community to share with your fellow Lions. Please register today for the MD5M 2025 Convention!

Thank you for your consideration,

5M7 Lions MD5M 2025 Convention Planning Committee



April 2025
MD5M CONVENTION REGISTRATION