

CHORAL JOURNAL

JANUARY 2024

SPOKANE,
WASHINGTON

OMAHA,
NEBRASKA

LOUISVILLE,
KENTUCKY

ACDA

2024 REGION CONFERENCES

DENVER,
COLORADO

PROVIDENCE,
RHODE ISLAND

PASADENA,
CALIFORNIA

ST. OLAF CHOIR

ANTON ARMSTRONG · CONDUCTOR

2024 CONCERT TOUR



January 27 • 7 p.m.
Fort Collins First United
Methodist Church
Fort Collins, CO

January 28 • 2 p.m.
Montview Boulevard
Presbyterian Church
Denver, CO

January 31 • 7 p.m.
Germantown United
Methodist Church
Germantown, TN

February 1 • 7:30 p.m.
Callaway Auditorium
at LaGrange College
LaGrange, GA

February 2 • 7 p.m.
Trinity United
Methodist Church
Tallahassee, FL

February 3 • 7 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church
St. Petersburg, FL

February 4 • 3 p.m.
Moorings Presbyterian Church
Naples, FL

February 6 • 7 p.m.
The Church of
Bethesda-by-the-Sea
Palm Beach, FL

February 7 • 7 p.m.
First United Methodist
Church of Orlando
Orlando, FL

February 8 • 8 p.m.
Schwartz Center for
Performing Arts
at Emory University
Atlanta, GA

February 9 • 7 p.m.
First Baptist Greenville
Greenville, SC

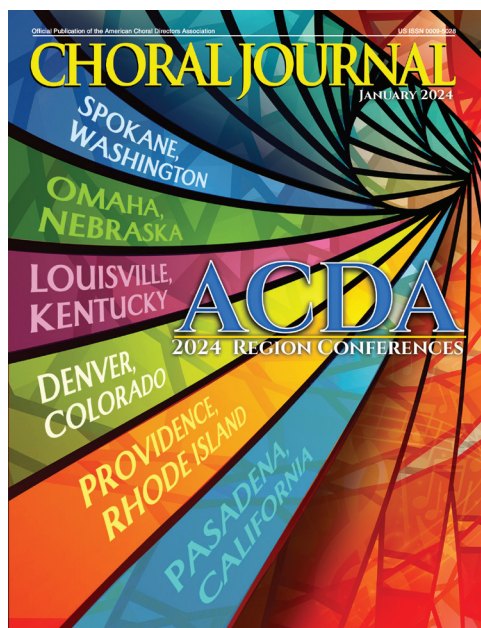
February 11 • 4 p.m.
Covenant Presbyterian Church
Nashville, TN

February 12 • 7 p.m.
First Presbyterian
Church of Kirkwood
Kirkwood, MO (St. Louis)

Ticket information at stolaf.edu/tickets

Get \$4 off* Enter promo code
ACDA at checkout

*Not applicable at all venues; please check
stolaf.edu/tickets for details. Discount applies
only to full price tickets.



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Conference Previews



Northwestern Region Conference

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 7 Headliners/Special Events | 20 Interest Sessions |
| 10 Performing Choirs | 28 Spotlight Repertoire Sessions |
| 18 Encounter Choirs | 32 Honor Choir Conductors |



Midwestern Region Conference

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 35 Headliners/Special Events | 47 Interest Sessions |
| 40 Performing Choirs | 59 Honor Choir Conductors |



Southern Region Conference

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 63 Headliners/Special Events | 77 Interest Sessions |
| 68 Performing Choirs | 85 Honor Choir Conductors |



Southwestern Region Conference

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 87 Headliners/Special Events | 112 Interest Sessions |
| 93 Immersion Days | 126 Honor Choir Conductors |
| 104 Performing Choirs | |



Eastern Region Conference

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 131 Headliners/Special Events | 149 Interest Sessions |
| 139 Performing Choirs | 164 R&R Sessions |
| 147 Insight Choirs | 166 Honor Choir Conductors |



Western Region Conference

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 169 Headliners/Special Events | 179 Interest Sessions |
| 171 Performing Choirs | 186 Honor Choir Conductors |

Editorial

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From the Executive Director



Robyn Hilger

Embracing Winter: A Season of Rejuvenation and Preparation for Spring

By the time you receive this issue, many of you will have rehearsed and performed hundreds of hours in the past months. From the energy of the start of school to the crescendo of the winter concerts, you have been running the annual choral marathon of the fall semester. Now, it's time for something completely different.

As temperatures drop and daylight wanes, winter often arrives with a reputation for hibernation and stagnation. However, amidst the frosty winds and snow-covered landscapes lies an opportunity for rejuvenation and preparation that is often overlooked. Winter, far from a period of dormancy, can serve as a valuable time for personal growth, reflection, and readiness for the vibrancy of spring.

The shorter days and longer nights of winter offer a natural invitation to slow down. It's a season to turn inward, allowing ourselves to rest, recharge, and reflect. Embracing this slower pace can be profoundly rejuvenating for our minds and bodies. Whether it's curling up with a good book, exploring a new hobby, or simply taking time for quiet contemplation, winter provides the perfect backdrop for self-care and introspection.

Moreover, winter can be a time of preparation, akin to nature storing energy and nutrients underground in anticipation of the coming spring bloom. It's an excellent moment to set intentions, plan ahead, and lay the groundwork for future endeavors. Whether in personal goals, professional aspirations, or even household projects, the stillness of winter offers an ideal canvas for strategic thinking and planning.

Culturally, various traditions and celebrations during winter—such as holidays and festivals—encourage connections with loved ones, fostering a sense of community and warmth. These moments of togetherness serve as a reminder of the importance of relationships and provide a sense of comfort during the colder months.

From a broader perspective, nature itself demonstrates the importance of winter as a period of rejuvenation. Many plants and animals use this time to rest, regenerate, and prepare for the upcoming growth season. Likewise, humans can draw inspiration from nature's wisdom and use this season to nurture their own growth and renewal.

In essence, instead of resisting or enduring the winter months, embracing them as a time of rejuvenation and preparation can be immensely rewarding. By allowing ourselves to slow down, reflect, plan, and prioritize self-care, we can emerge from winter with renewed energy, ready to embrace the vibrancy and possibilities that spring holds. Winter actually becomes a season of growth, setting the stage for the beauty of the seasons ahead.

ADVOCACY STATEMENT

The human spirit is elevated to a broader understanding of itself and its place in the world through the study of and participation in choral music. Singing in a choir produces more active and involved citizens. It affects self-worth in youth and adults. It builds connectivity throughout communities. Society benefits from the aesthetic beauty and community of singers created by choral programs within schools, houses of worship, and community organizations through involved citizenry, connectivity throughout communities, and feelings of personal self-worth. The American Choral Directors Association and its membership resolve to ensure the survival of choral programs for this and future generations by:

Actively voicing support for funding at local, state, and national levels of education and government; collaborating with local and national organizations to ensure the distribution of arts funding data and arts-related activism opportunities; advocating for full access to choral singing and inclusion of all singers in a choral program; and ensuring the distribution of advocacy statements and data regarding choral programs.

From the ————— □ President



David Fryling

January—named after Janus, the Roman god of beginnings, transitions, time, choices, and doorways/passageways—is the perfect month to start planning your personal schedules for the 2024 region conferences.

ACDA conferences are wonderful opportunities to make much-needed space in our often hectic work schedules for reflection and inspiration. They provide important spaces to observe best practices and learn from cutting-edge research. And they allow us to connect with each other in myriad significant ways. Never attended a conference, or are wavering on whether you have the time to fit one in your schedule? Here are three reasons why you cannot afford *not* to attend:

Reconnect with old friends and colleagues while meeting new ones

While video conference technology has on the whole been a force for good in the pursuit of trans-global human connection, nothing beats in-person connection. Being in a space with other people who are passionate about choral music allows us to resonate, literally and metaphorically, with each other. And there's simply no better way to expand your social network than by tagging along to lunch or dinner (or the bar) with your friend's group of friends to discuss a particularly engaging concert or interest session.

Learn from experts in our field, exploring new ways to approach what we do

Though the act of singing is as ancient as human civilization, we continue to learn from it and about it. From new social dimensions of community music making to the deep reservoir of non-Eurocentric traditions, and from Bingen to Bach to Burleigh, conferences bring together scholars, teachers, activists, and thought-leaders who challenge our status quo and encourage us to grow.

Hear new music and new ways of musicking

Nothing can replace the experience of hearing mountaintop choral concerts in magnificent conference venues. And nearly every truly revelatory experience I have had regarding what “choir” could be has occurred at an ACDA conference.

On behalf of all of our membership, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you—and congratulations!—to our six region presidents and their conference planning committees: Christopher Kiver, Eastern Region President; David Puderbaugh, Midwestern Region President; Steven Zielke, Northwestern Region President; Stanley Roberts, Southern Region President; Jeffrey Murdock, Southwestern Region President; and Michael Short, Western Region President.

Please consider joining them and so many others at your upcoming region conference. I hope to see you at the conference!

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In this January issue of *Choral Journal*, we flip the calendar page to 2024 and share with you the complete preview of the six 2024 ACDA Region Conferences. There are many exciting events, special performances, and interest sessions that you will not want to miss! Registration is now open. We do want to remind you that the information in this issue is current as of press time. Make sure

to consult acda.org/region-conferences or your region's website for the most up-to-date information.

As I mentioned in my column in the previous issue, we have several column editors rotating off the board and a new On the Voice editor. We will have a call for editorial board members later this year, as several term limits end. Look for an official call for applications in an upcoming issue. We welcome applications from any ACDA member who is interested in reviewing article submissions and has a strong background in choral music with specific areas of expertise. Board members serve a four-year term, with the option to be reappointed once for a total of eight years.

Looking ahead to articles and focus issues for the 2024 calendar year, consider how you may want to contribute research to *Choral Journal*, *ChorTeach*, and *The International Journal of Research in Choral Singing*. Our membership is broad, but our hope is that everyone can find something of interest within the pages of our various publications. Submissions are open! Find out more information at acda.org under the "Publications" dropdown.

Call for Summer Festival and Workshop Listings

The March/April 2024 issue will feature our annual free Summer Festival and Workshop Listing. **Submissions should be emailed to abumgarner@acda.org by January 15 in the following format:**

Event date

Event name

Event location

One-sentence description of the event

Contact information (name, phone, email, website)



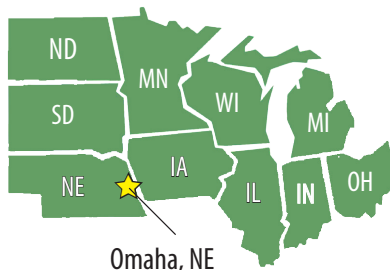
2024 ACDA Region Conferences

Northwestern



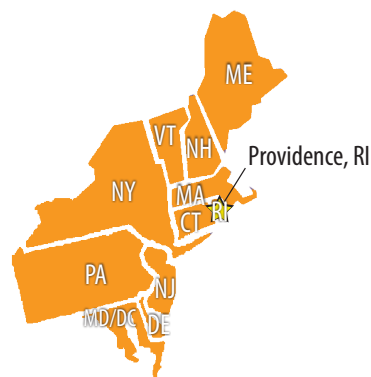
January 24 - 27, 2024
Spokane, WA

Midwestern



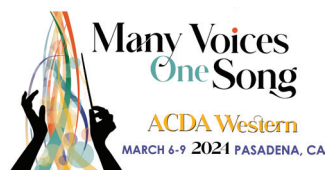
February 7-10, 2024
Omaha, NE

Eastern



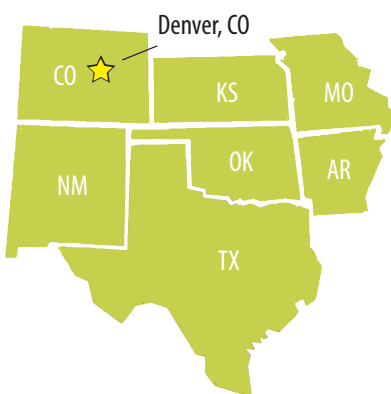
February 28 - March 2, 2024
Providence, RI

Western



March 6 - 9, 2024
Pasadena, CA

Southwestern



February 27 - March 2, 2024
Denver, CO

Southern



February 21 - 24, 2024
Louisville, KY

Registration is Now Open at www.acda.org

Exhibit at the 2024 ACDA Region Conferences

There are still opportunities to exhibit at the 2024 Regional Conferences. What a fantastic way to promote your business or institution with hundreds of American Choral Directors Association professionals in attendance. We cannot wait to see you there!



Northwestern Region - Spokane, Washington

January 24-27, 2024

10 ft x 10 ft Booth \$350

Each booth package includes: 8' back drape, 3' side drape, one 6' table, 2 chairs, a waste basket, and identification sign with booth number



Midwestern Region - Omaha, Nebraska

February 7 - 10, 2024

10 ft x 10 ft Booth \$550

Each booth package includes: 8' back drape, 3' side drape, one 6' table, 2 chairs, a waste basket, and identification sign with booth number



Southern Region - Louisville, Kentucky

February 21 - 24, 2024

10 ft x 10 ft Booth \$550

Each booth package includes: 8' back drape, 3' side drape, one 6' table, 2 chairs, a waste basket, and identification sign with booth number



Southwestern Region - Denver, Colorado

February 27 - March 2, 2024

10 ft x 10 ft Booth \$350

Each booth package includes: 8' back drape, 3' side drape, one 6' table, 2 chairs, a waste basket, and identification sign with booth number

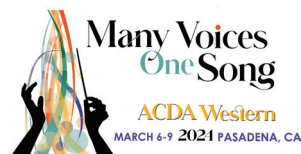


Eastern Region - Providence, Rhode Island

February 28 - March 2, 2024

10 ft x 10 ft Booth \$550

Each booth package includes: 8' back drape, 3' side drape, one 6' table, 2 chairs, a waste basket, and identification sign with booth number



Western Region - Pasadena, California

March 6 - 9, 2024

10 ft x 10 ft Booth \$550

Each booth package includes: 8' back drape, 3' side drape, one 6' table, 2 chairs, a waste basket, and identification sign with booth number

Contact Sindy Hail at shail@acda.org or at 405.724.7899 for more information or register online at <https://acda.org/about-us/advertising-exhibiting>

2024 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference

Headliners/Special Events

Two-Day Special Focus Tracks

The Northwest Region is excited to announce two special conferences on two-day tracks intended to provide special attention to Children & Youth and Music in Worship. The Northwest Institute for Children's and Youth Singing will be held on Friday and Saturday, including observation of the Children & Youth Honor Choir, led by Emily Ellsworth; special focus interest sessions; and Encounter Choir presentations by the Pacific Youth Elementary Choir, Nova 2, and Oregon Repertory Youth Choir. The Music Brings Us Together: A Music in Worship Concentrated Track will provide a two-day focus on Music in Worship on Thursday and Friday with special reading sessions, interest sessions, and an Encounter Choir presentation by Northwest Nazarene University Orchestra and Choir.

Focus on Mental Health/Work Life Balance

Recognizing the importance of building lives of balance and providing examples of this in our work and life, the Northwest ACDA Conference is providing a series of sessions designed to challenge and support attendees in learning how to bring this into our own life, and to have it impact our teaching and our relationships with our ensembles.

Gonzaga University Concert Choir

Meg Stohlmann

Linn-Benton Community College Chamber Choir

Raymund Ocampo

Montana State University Montanans (quartet)

Kirk Aamot

Oregon State University Chamber Choir

Steven M Zielke

University of Idaho Vandaleers Concert Choir

David Klement

Members of the University of Oregon Chamber Choir

Sharon Paul

This concert will also include a special Collegiate Showcase featuring the choirs in the combined collegiate choir performing songs on the theme of unity in a prism-style presentation. The opening concert will also feature performances by the University of Wyoming Statesmen, under the direction of Brian Murray; and the Western Washington Advanced Treble Chorale, under the direction of Angela Kasper.

Opening Concert

Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*,
André J. Thomas, conductor
Orchestra and eight university choirs from
throughout the Northwest

Central Washington University Chamber Choir

Nicole C. Lamartine

Eastern Washington University Symphonic Choir

Kristina Ploeger-Hekmatpanah

Closing Concert

Hyowon Woo, composer
MeeAe Nam, ARI Project Founder
Sinae Cheh, Korean Dance and Music Director
Timothy Westerhaus, conductor

Created by Korean composer Hyowon Woo (Seoul, South Korea) and her artistic partner, MeeAe Nam (Eastern Michigan University), Ari Project: Spring offers a choral drama celebrating the sights, sounds, and colors of spring. Through music and dance expressing

2024 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference

Headliners/Special Events

abundance and renewal, Woo's drama takes us on a journey of historical and contemporary reminiscences, invoking the symbols and spirits of South Korea. The dancers and musicians of Morning Star Korean Cultural Center join with singers of Choral Arts Northwest onstage, creating a kaleidoscope of traditional costumes, songs, folk dance, and storytelling in Korean and English, accompanied by piano, strings, and traditional Korean instruments.

Morning Star Korean Cultural Center



Morning Star Korean Cultural Center was founded in 1985 under the direction of Jiyeon Cheh with the purpose of teaching Korean dance, music, and heritage to those interested in sharing the Korean culture. Based in Lynnwood, Washington, Morning Star has continued to expand and diversify its repertoire, programs, and services to the community. Today, with the combination of its art preschool, library, dance, and music classes, Morning Star serves over 1,000 members of all ages. Under the direction of Sinae Cheh, Morning Star's mission is to promote cultural appreciation and encourage positive cultural exchange.



Hyowon Woo, ARI Project composer, has emerged as a formidable compositional voice blending traditional Korean musical elements with Western musical techniques. Woo has been composer-in-

residence with the Seoul Ladies' Singers since 1996 and with the Incheon City Chorale, led by the world-renowned Hak-won Yoon, from 1999 to 2014. Woo's works have been featured at National ACDA conferences and at the IFCM choral symposium. Woo previously taught at the Seoul Theological Seminary and Hansei University, and is currently on faculty at the Chorus Center Academy in Seoul. Her music is published by Walton and the Seoul Chorus Center in South Korea.



MeeAe Nam, ARI Project Founder and Professor of Voice at Eastern Michigan University, has established a highly respected performance career at the national and international levels. Known for her musical versatility, sensitivity, and genuine interpretation (the *Denver Post*), she has appeared as a soloist in major cathedrals and concert halls throughout the United States, Germany, Austria, Luxembourg, and South Korea. She has undertaken several projects focusing on audience-centered performance and diverse cultural inclusion. As an artistic director, Nam has recently co-founded the Ari project with Hyowon Woo to birth a new choral stage work and unique performance platform introducing the history, spirit, and culture of South Korea.

Choral Arts Northwest



Choral Arts Northwest is a community of singers

based in the Puget Sound area whose goal is to inspire, educate, and enrich the lives of others through the transformational power of choral music at the highest artistic level. As an ensemble of music educators, conductors, professional singers, and passionate choral artists, we aim to foster a world that is just, empathetic, and that values diversity and creativity. We celebrate our thirtieth anniversary with a vision to intentionally support important social causes and highlight the music of diverse groups of people.



Timothy Westerhaus is passionate about transforming humankind through choral music that fosters empathy, builds inclusive community, and deepens understanding through diverse programming and collaborations. He serves as the director of choral

studies at Northern Arizona University, where he directs the graduate choral conducting program. Since 2022 he has served as artistic director of Choral Arts Northwest in Seattle and Master Chorale of Flagstaff. From 2010 to 2021 he served as director of choirs and vocal studies at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, and was recently president of Northwestern ACDA Region. He performs professionally as a tenor, pianist, and continuo keyboardist. He received degrees from the University of Saint Thomas and Boston University.

The closing concert will also feature the Children & Community Youth Honor Choir, under the direction of Emily Ellsworth; and the University of Washington Chorale, under the direction of Giselle Wyers.

The Unarmed Child

Remembering victims of gun violence.

50 mt. Song Cycle for Choir & Chamber Orchestra



Hope On!

SATB • SSA • SAB • TBB



Where We Find Ourselves

SATB • SSAA • SAB • 2PTMX

30 mt. Song Cycle with lyricist, Shantel Sellers



I am a Voice that Sings

SATB • SSAA • TTBB • SAB • 2PTT • 2PTMX • Unison • Ember



Michael Bussenitz Quarm

Visit Michael's booth at ACDA
Eastern and Midwestern Conferences

www.ListenAfresh.com



2024 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference

Performing Choirs

Bellevue Presbyterian Church
Sanctuary Chorus

The Bellevue Presbyterian Church Sanctuary Chorus is in residence from September to June and is the primary worship ensemble for Sanctuary services. The eighty+-member choir encompasses varying levels of musical abilities including teachers, students, instrumentalists, and Seattle Opera chorus members. In addition to weekly worship, the choir presents choral-orchestral masterworks and newly commissioned pieces. The choir partners with local community ensembles and professional musicians in worship through music performances and Christmas Eve services. They also serve as mentors and role models for the church's kids choir program totaling 150 choristers.



Brennan Michaels is director of worship at Bellevue Presbyterian Church. In addition to planning and leading in worship, Michaels oversees the music ministry comprising 250 student and adult musicians. He conducts the Sanctuary Chorus, Pneuma, Bel Canto, and the Festival Orchestra and Brass. Prior to this appointment, Michaels taught in schools throughout Minnesota and Texas and served as artistic director of the Minneapolis chamber choir From Age to Age. Michaels also served as director at Northwest University. He holds a DMA from Michigan State University, an MM from Baylor University, and a BM from Concordia College.

Boise State University
Meistersingers

The Meistersingers are Boise State's premier choral ensemble and represent the finest in choral excellence at Boise State. Membership is open to all Boise State students with a passion for quality choral literature. This auditioned group performs music from all historical periods and various nationalities. In addition, the Meistersingers perform three to four times a year, including regional/national tours and at the annual Boise State Holiday Concert. Past international tours include France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany.



C. Michael Porter is director of choral activities at Boise State University, where he conducts Meistersingers and Vox Angelis, teaches choral conducting, and choral literature. Porter is also the artistic director of Critical Mass Vocal Artists—Idaho's semi-professional chamber choir—and has conducted choirs in Uruguay, South Korea, Belgium, the Netherlands, and France. He is also an editorial board member for the *Choral Journal* and associate editor for the NCCO Research Memorandum Series. Porter received degrees from the University of Iowa and Truman State University, and further conducting training at the Oregon Bach Festival with Helmuth Rilling.

Centennial High School Camerata



Camerata is the advanced mixed choir at Centennial High School in Boise, Idaho. Their strategy is to build a program where they love to be together as they make incredible music. They strive to create a space of inclusiveness, interaction, fun, and tremendous hard work. Once restrictions were lifted, they performed at the Idaho All-State in 2022 (wearing masks). In 2023 they performed in concert with Utah Valley University under the direction of Reed Criddle.



Annette Mackey began her career as a private music and voice teacher in Boise, Idaho. In 2007 she began working as a choir coach, assisting the local high school as an accompanist and assistant to the director.

In 2014 she began teaching full time. She has authored four books, including *Music Rhythm Worksheets*, which is available online as a free download for music educators. She loves teaching and feels honored to work with teenagers as they learn and grow in music. She teaches at Centennial High School in Boise, Idaho. Mackey holds a BM from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and a master's degree in secondary music education from Boston University.

Central Washington University Vocal Jazz 1



Vocal Jazz 1 is the premier jazz vocal ensemble at CWU and has gained the reputation as one of the finest university/collegiate vocal jazz ensembles in the United States. Known for their eclectic programming, polished live performances, emotional connection to the music, strong soloists, and creative arrangements, Vocal Jazz 1 has established a strong consistent record of producing outstanding jazz artists, educators, arrangers, and composers.



Vijay Singh is a professor of music at Central Washington University, where he directs the Vocal Jazz program, University Chorale, jazz combos, and teaches choral arranging/composition. Since arriving at CWU in 1999, he has consistently featured his ensembles at regional and national conferences of ACDA, JEN, NAFME, IAJE, and MENC.

Vocal Jazz 1 is CWU's premier jazz vocal ensemble and has been featured at National ACDA Conferences in Chicago (2011) and Salt Lake City (2015). The group is known for creative programming and polished live performances featuring new arrangements/compositions in various jazz and contemporary styles.

2024 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference

Performing Choirs

Graham-Kapowsin High School
Chorale

The Graham-Kapowsin High School Chorale is an auditioned mixed ensemble composed of students in grades 10-12 with a dedication to performing outstanding choral repertoire. The Chorale has been the premier choir at Graham-Kapowsin since the school opened in 2005. It is one of five vocal ensembles in a vibrant music department that serves over 400 students. They were awarded the 2018-2019 American Prize in Choral Performance for High School Chorus, and earned second place in the 2020-2021 competition. The choir previously appeared at the 2019 Northwest NAfME Conference, the 2018 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference, the 2018 WMEA Conference.



Jason Saunders has served as director of choirs at Graham-Kapowsin since 2014. He is artistic director of the in-district Vivace! Choral Program, featuring three community ensembles. In 2015 he was selected for the Washington ACDA Outstanding Emerging Choral Director Award. Saunders holds an MM from USC and a BME from Pacific Lutheran University. An active composer, he has published choral works through Walton Music, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, and Colla Voce Music.

Heritage High School
T-Wolf Vocal Jazz

T-Wolf Vocal Jazz is an ensemble open to high school students (grades 10-12) by audition. Accompanied by a rhythm section, this ensemble meets daily and travels frequently, attending jazz festivals and workshops throughout the year. This group performs difficult literature ranging from four to twelve parts in a variety of styles including swing, blues, Latin, funk, and more. Created during the pandemic, this ensemble started as a club and has developed into a course offering for students to share their love of singing this wonderfully diverse art form.



Billy Buhl has served as the director of choirs at Heritage High School in the Evergreen School District in Vancouver, WA, for the past three years. He received his BME and MME from Central Washington University. In his ninth year of teaching, Buhl previously served as the director of choirs at Mark Morris High School in Longview, WA, for four years. In the summer of 2021 he received the Outstanding Emerging Choral Director Award from Washington ACDA. He currently serves as the tenor/bass R&R Chair for the WA ACDA. An active performer and clinician, Buhl sings in the professional choir Chor Anno, which performed at the 2022 NW ACDA Conference.

Idaho State University Chamber Choir



The Idaho State University Chamber Choir is a select mixed collegiate choral ensemble open to all students of the University by audition. Chamber Choir singers rehearse twice per week and are selected based upon exemplary levels of musicianship and artistic commitment. Representative choral literature from the early Renaissance through the twenty-first century may be studied, rehearsed, and performed during a semester. The ISU Chamber Choir has performed in twenty countries around the world during nine international tours since 1994, and has been selected for performance at eight ACDA or NAFME regional conferences since 1998.



Scott Eric Anderson begins his thirtieth year as professor of music and director of choral activities in the Department of Music at Idaho State University. Anderson received his BM from Whitworth College, an MM in choral conducting from Westminster Choir College, and a DMA from the Conservatory of Music at UMKC. Anderson has led the ISU Chamber Choir or Camerata Singers on performance

tours of more than twenty-five countries over the past three decades. Anderson serves as the artistic director of the Idaho International Choral Festival held every three years in Pocatello, Idaho. He has conducted more than 100 choral festivals in eighteen states and Canada.

Memorial High School Varsity Treble Choir - Lorelei



The Memorial Varsity Treble Choir is one of five performance ensembles at Memorial High School. This is an auditioned group comprising thirty-eight students in grades 10-12. This group rehearses outside the school day and is a combination of students from our advanced treble choir (Bel Canto) and our varsity mixed choir (Meistersingers). The choir program is one of the most diverse organizations at Memorial High. Members have performed abroad and regularly qualify for state and national honor choirs during TMEA, SWACDA and ACDA conferences. This group performed for the 2021 Texas MEA Virtual Convention and the 2022 Southwestern ACDA Region Conference.



Lawrence Johnson is in his thirteenth year as the director of the Memorial High School Choirs in Houston, TX, and his twenty-seventh year of teaching overall. Johnson has also led middle school and

high school choir programs throughout Texas. Choirs under Johnson's direction have traveled domestically and abroad. His choirs have also won best-in-class and best-in-festival awards at various festivals throughout Texas. Yearly, his students qualify for region, state, and national choirs. Johnson has served as an adjudicator and clinician throughout Texas.

Performing Choirs

Portland Phoenix Chamber Choir



The internationally award-winning Portland Phoenix Chamber Choir was founded as the Marylhurst Chamber Choir, the premier choral ensemble at Marylhurst University in Portland, Oregon. Upon the sudden closure of Marylhurst, the choir was reborn as Portland Phoenix. The Chamber Choir has twice performed at OMEA and at Carnegie Hall. This summer, they will travel to the International Choral Kathaumixw in British Columbia. Chamber Choir has collaborated with Portland Chamber Orchestra, composers Morten Lauridsen and Gwyneth Walker, and renowned vocal ensembles Cappella Romana, Cantus and Roomful of Teeth. Their recording of the choral works and songs of Margaret Bonds will be released by Centaur Records.



Justin Smith is an assistant professor of music and director of choral activities at Queens University of Charlotte, where he conducts three choirs and teaches courses in music history, conducting, and film music. In demand as a clinician and guest conductor, he has adjudicated festivals in Turkey, Finland, and Greece as well as numerous events in the United States. Smith is also the director of the Portland Phoenix Chamber Choir, appearing at major choral competitions in Ireland, Italy, Wales, and Latvia, and by invitation at the NWACDA conference. He holds a DMA in choral conducting from the University of Houston with additional degrees from Wesleyan University and the University of Oregon.

University of Washington
Chorale

The University of Washington Chorale is an advanced undergraduate ensemble containing students from all majors across the Seattle campus. Last May, UW Chorale members premiered Wyers's composition *And All Shall Be Well* in Carnegie Hall. The chorus has collaborated with many prestigious artists including Seattle Symphony, Imogen Heap, Andrea Bocelli, and Ann Hamilton, as well as appearing before the Princess of Sweden and the President of Latvia. UW Chorale toured to the Baltics for the 2019 Estonian Laulupiduu Festival as one of the only invited American choirs. Their third CD *Resonant Streams* appeared in *Gramophone* magazine, and a fourth was recorded June 2023.



Giselle Wyers is the Donald E. Petersen Endowed Professor of Choral Music at the University of Washington, as well as conducting the fifty-voice Concord within the Columbia Choirs consortium. As a guest conductor, Wyers has led honor choirs and all-state choirs in fourteen states and in Canada, as well as working with semi-professional ensembles across Europe. She serves as an editorial board member for *Choral Journal* as well as a member of ACDA's Standing Committee on International Activities. She has composed thirty choral works, often on texts situated around her ardent love and pervasive concern for protecting nature.

University of Wyoming Singing Statesmen



The University of Wyoming Singing Statesmen are dedicated to providing outstanding service to the University, the state of Wyoming, and to the rich tradition of tenor-bass choral singing in the United States. While focusing primarily on the standard tenor-bass chorus repertoire, the Statesmen specialize in music unique to the University, state, and region. Membership is open to any tenor-bass singer enrolled at the University. Students from all walks of campus life are encouraged to participate in this ensemble. From athletes to valedictorians, leaders in student government, and clubs/fraternities/activities, the members bring with them a wide diversity in backgrounds and interests.



Brian C. Murray is the director of choral activities, vocal arts area coordinator, and assistant professor of music at the University of Wyoming. At UW he conducts the Collegiate Chorale and the Singing Statesmen and teaches courses in choral conducting. Murray received a BME from the University of North Texas, an MME from The Florida State University, and a DMA in choral conducting from the University of North Texas.

Vox Pacifica



Vox Pacifica is an auditioned choir of multi-generational alto and soprano singers based in Bellingham, Washington, under the artistic direction of Wendy Bloom. Since their debut in the fall of 2018, Vox Pacifica has continued to perform a diverse catalog of musical styles and repertoire that is a reflection of our mission to share joy, embrace diversity, build community, and affirm the worth and dignity of all people. Our season includes two choral performances and a popular cabaret-style fundraiser. Vox Pacifica is a recipient of a 2022 Working Washington Grant from the state of Washington.



Wendy Bloom has spent a lifetime in the service of choral music. In the early days, she taught choir for grades 6-12 in a private school, acted as director of music for a large church, and began working as an oratorio soloist. She moved into conducting and teaching voice at Concordia University, Ann Arbor, while continuing her performance career with a quartet, SATB, who sang together for seventeen years. Eventually, Bloom directed the Flint Symphonic Choir, traveled to Austin to sing with Conspirare, and to Santa Fe to sing with the Desert Chorale. She now directs Vox Pacifica in Bellingham.

2024 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference

Performing Choirs

Washington State University
Concert ChoirWestern Washington University
Advanced Treble Chorale

The WSU Concert Choir is Washington State University's premier auditioned choral ensemble. This SATB choir meets four times each week and performs approximately three to five times each semester. They sing music of all musical periods and styles, and produce challenging, creative, and intriguing audience experiences. The ensemble generally tours within the region in the spring and embarks on international performance tours every four to five years.



Dean Luethi serves as the director of choral activities, professor, and former director of the School of Music at Washington State University. He received degrees from the University of Wisconsin–

Green Bay, University of South Florida in Tampa, and University of Illinois–Urbana/Champaign. Before pursuing advanced degrees, Luethi was a high/middle school choir and musical theatre director in the Green Bay area. Known for his work as a choral pedagogue, he has presented research, workshops, or conducted choirs at regional and national festivals, conferences, and competitions in the United States, India, China, Cuba, Canada, Austria, Poland, and Germany.

The Advanced Treble Chorale is an auditioned large ensemble that performs music from around the world, music by composers representing historically resilient populations, and music from the large body of published pieces for treble choirs. This choir consists of music majors and non-majors, all grade levels, who are looking for an enriching choral experience that centers community, inclusion, and energetic music making. Collaborating regularly with culture bearers, the Advanced Treble Chorale works to perform diverse music using appropriate vocal timbres and traditional movement—and they have a great time doing so!



Angela Kasper is director of choral activities at Western Washington University. Her duties include conducting the Concert Choir, Advanced Treble Chorale, Western Voices, and teaching courses in conducting and global traditions for choir. Kasper's university choirs have performed for national, regional, and state ACDA conferences. Guest conducting engagements include honor choirs for six ACDA region conferences; the 2015 ACDA National Conference in Salt Lake City; numerous engagements in Asia, South America, and the Middle East; and all-state choirs in over forty states.

January 24-27, 2024

Westside Christian High School
Concert Choir



The Westside Christian High School Concert Choir is a fifty-voice choir from a small, private high school in Tigard, OR, with 280 students. Westside does not have a graded choir program; it simply welcomes any student desiring to sing. A small, auditioned class (Soli Deo Gloria) and a non-auditioned class (Westside Voices, 35-40 members) meet in separate classes, with the combined Concert Choir coming together on select days before school. Despite these limitations, the choir program has enjoyed numerous awards and honors, including performing at OMEA on several occasions and capturing fifteen consecutive OSAA 3A Choir State Championships!



Will Fox has taught thirteen years at Westside Christian High School in Tigard, Oregon. He directs all music at the school. His choirs have won the Oregon 3A Choir State Championship for

the past eleven consecutive years and numerous vocal jazz festivals. Fox started the Concert Band program in 2016, capturing four consecutive Oregon 3A Band State Championships. He directs the Oregon SenateAires barbershop chorus in Salem; owns a private music studio, Music at Will; and serves as an ORAC-DA Repertoire and Resources board member and is a certified choral judge in Oregon.

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Encounter Choirs

"I Am a Musician!" Fostering a Child's Artistic Identity

The children who first experienced choral singing on Zoom fill the ranks of children's choirs today. Pacific Youth Choir's Nova 2 singers and Kendra Kay Friar, conductor and Oregon's 2021 Outstanding Elementary Music Educator, lead an interactive session celebrating and highlighting the educational needs of today's youngest choristers. Children's inability to experience live performances at a formative age led to gaps in knowledge that had to be addressed in each rehearsal cycle. PYC focused on rebuilding community alongside individual artistry. The presentation will include a "buddy bench" activity and sharing time for participants. Selections include "Three Rhymes, Set 1" by Paul Bouman (earthsongs) and "Zol Zain Sholem" arr. by Joshua Jacobson (World Music Press).

Pacific Youth Choir Nova 2



In 2003, with talent, conviction, and enthusiasm, Mia Hall Miller (Savage) and a small team of dedicated musicians started two youth choirs: one for elite treble singers and one for high school students. Today's PYC comprises nine resident choirs, an alumni choir, and multiple neighborhood choirs supervised by new artistic director, Chris Maunu, and associate conductors, Amber Schroeder (Grades 6-8) and Kendra Kay Friar (Grades K-5).

Pacific Youth Choir strives to be the benchmark for choral excellence in the Pacific Northwest. Beyond the

field of choral music, we aspire to shape our community by fostering empowered skill development, community unity, and empathy in young people. We aim to create a world where choral music is a catalyst for making new connections, promoting personal growth, and embracing positive change.



Kendra Kay Friar, associate conductor, directs Nova 1 and 2 Choirs (Grades K-5) and supervises PYC's Neighborhood Choir Program serving multiple public schools. She received Oregon MEA's 2021 Excellence in Elementary Music Education Award. She is a current member of NAFME's Diversity Committee and a frequent speaker at national, regional, and music education conferences. She recently presented two NAFME Academy webinars highlighting curricular uses for the music of Scott Joplin and Margaret Bonds. Her work as a collaborative pianist appears on Portland Phoenix Chamber Choir's upcoming world premiere recording of the piano-vocal setting of Margaret Bonds' *Credo (Especially Do I Believe: The Music of Margaret Bonds)*, Centaur Records, 2023).

Think Choral, Shop Local! Commissioning in Your Community

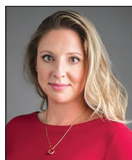
Working with a local composer creates meaningful, relevant, engaging, personal experiences for singers; builds community beyond the choir; exposes singers to creatives working in their own town; and can offer unique, collaborative musical experiences. This encounter choir session will demonstrate the breadth of projects Oregon Repertory Singers Youth Choir and composer-in-residence Stacey Philipps have created over the last two seasons while rebuilding the choirs. This session will also give practical advice on finding local composers and commissioning everything from the simplest song to extended, rich, long-term projects. This will include the nuts-and-bolts of contracts, deposits, and deadlines. Hear examples while learning how to harness the strengths and skills in your own

community to bring inspiration, innovation, and impact to your choirs.

Oregon Repertory Singers Youth Choir



The Oregon Repertory Singers Youth Choir serves over 160 young singers in three locations (Inner SE Portland, Beaverton, and Vancouver) with a growing staff of passionate educators. We meet singers in their communities, providing music education, literacy skills, and mountaintop musical experiences. Artistic Director Aubrey Patterson actively partners with area school programs as a choir clinician and sight-reading specialist.



Aubrey Patterson (she/her) taught for twelve years as a director of choirs in Oregon public high schools. She is currently the artistic director for the Oregon Repertory Singers Youth Choir in Portland, as well as the director of Voces Auream at Lewis and Clark. Patterson's Oregon high school programs have earned five state championships. Patterson enjoys adjudicating, clinician work, and premiering new and commissioned works with her ensembles. She enjoys the outdoors, being in water in any capacity, and adventures with her partner, Nathan; goldendoodle, Zoey Jane; and new addition, Silas William.



Stacey Philipps writes music to share the thrill of creation, collaboration, and performance influenced by modal harmonies, folk songs, hymns, shape note music, and the melodic and rhythmic elements of the world around her. Philipps is a multi-

instrumentalist and lifelong singer currently in the alto section of the Oregon Repertory Singers and the composer-in-residence for the Oregon Repertory Singers Youth Choir. Her music for choirs, chamber ensembles, soloists, and orchestras has been performed across North America. She is the proprietor of Sirensong Publishing, the primary distributor of her work.

University Choir and Orchestra: Repertoire and Impact

The University Choir and Orchestra is a public relations ensemble for the university. Along with great classical repertoire, many composers today are arranging for choir with the addition of orchestra. This session will explore the dynamic impact of this type of ensemble along with the challenges it poses in logistics such as travel, set-up, and needed sound reinforcement. The performance portion of the program will feature hymn arrangements, gospel, and classical repertoire.

Northwest Nazarene University Choir and Orchestra



Northwest Nazarene University Choir and Orchestra is one of our lead ensembles for music in the churches and fulfills the role of public relations for NNU. Under the direction of Dr. Philip Miller, this ensemble features over 100 students from a wide variety of majors across the campus. They perform extensively throughout the region and internationally. Their dynamic concerts feature music from hymn settings, contemporary Christian, gospel, classical choral/orchestral repertoire, and a cap-

2024 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference

Encounter Choirs

pella settings. High demands of excellence are placed on this group, and the students are outstanding ambassadors for the Lord, NNU, and music.



Philip Miller currently serves as the chair of the department of music at Northwest Nazarene University, where his duties include administration, recruiting, direct-

ing the University Choir and Orchestra, and teaching conducting. Miller holds a BME in piano from Oklahoma Baptist University, along with a master's degree and a DMA in conducting from the University of Oklahoma. His ensembles travel regularly and are known for having a dynamic and uplifting presence along with a warm choral tone.

2024 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference

Interest Sessions

And We're Back... Now... Teach Them How to Sing!

We are rebuilding programs and skills in these years following the pandemic. This session reviews and solidifies vocal technique for building choral tone in the ensemble, from middle school through collegiate settings. In a completely interactive session, we will explore and remember basic tenants of beautiful choral tone and technique: breath flow, vowel formation, spacious tone, high resonance placement, and confident and committed singing. Participants will experience the "voice lesson" that might be the front matter of a choral rehearsal, and how to identify and correct vocal development challenges. Additionally, we will explore how to change vocal tone to match repertoire.



Nicole C. Lamartine serves as the director of choirs at Central Washington University and is passionate about creating innovative, engaging, and diverse choral experiences to positively impact the next generation of choral musicians. She served previously on the faculties of the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the University of Wyoming. She has conducted numerous all-state and international honor choirs, and appeared with her own choirs at regional

ACDA and NAfME conferences. She is the conductor of Chor Anno and was the founding conductor of the Santa Barbara Gay Men's Chorus. She is a past president of Northwestern ACDA.

Breaking the Ice: Building Respectful Culture in the Choral Program

Since ensemble music making is inherently project-based, it is essential for students to operate healthily as a team as they reach their common goals. Team building in retreats as well as in class time will ensure that students work together respectfully. These enjoyable activities are pivotal to instructional needs because of their correlation to the National Core Arts Standards and National Institute for Excellence in Teaching Rubric. In this presentation, attendees will engage in various team-building activities designed to build community, create a healthy environment and respectful culture, and pave the way for student ownership in the choral ensemble.



Matthew Myers serves as associate director of choral activities at Washington State University, where he conducts the University Singers and Treble Choir and

teaches choral methods and conducting. He earned his DMA in choral conducting at Louisiana State University, MM in choral conducting from Northern Arizona University, and BA in vocal performance/music education from Luther College. Prior to his time at WSU, he taught choir at The American International School of Muscat in Oman; Boylan Catholic High School in Rockford, Illinois; and the University of Alabama. He conducts the Palouse Choral Society and co-hosts the Choir Fam Podcast.

Breathwork: Stress Relief for Directors and Singers

This interactive session will provide participants with a breathwork experience led through a trauma-informed lens and provide tools for use in their personal lives, careers, and with singers to reduce anxiety, relieve stress, and be more present. Breath can ward off burn-out, mitigate challenging behaviors, and supercharge energy. This session will include a list of various breath patterns that can energize, relax, and reset both directors and choirs. Breathwork is proven to lower blood pressure along with a host of other physical, mental, and psychological benefits. This session will be led by certified trauma-informed breathwork facilitator, energy healer, and NWACDA DEI Chair Brenda Winkle.



Brenda Winkle is a choral music educator with twenty-six years of experience across all levels. Winkle has taught in rural, suburban, and urban settings and understands the pressures facing music

educators and their students. She currently serves as NWACDA DEI Chair. In 2022 she pivoted to bring healing to teachers, parents, and students by bringing in breathwork healing to schools. In her business she supports highly sensitive people, over-achievers, perfectionists, people pleasers, and empaths (musicians) set boundaries, protect their energy, and heal their nervous systems. She lives in the Portland Metro Area in Beaverton, Oregon.

Building Relationships, Community, and Rapport

Building relationships is something we do every year. With these fun games and activities, your groups will become more connected and they will have fun in the process! Once students know how to play these games, they can easily be used for sub plans and time fillers. These activities also make great competition and can be used as formative and summative assessments.



Cassie Horner is currently director of choirs at Les Bois Junior High in the Boise School District. She graduated from Idaho State University in 2012 and earned a masters in educational leadership from

Boise State University in 2016. Horner is in her eleventh year teaching and her fifth year at Les Bois Junior High. Her top group, Improv, was selected to perform at the 2019 fall In-Service Idaho ACDA Conference and at the 2023 Idaho Music Educators Conference. She has enjoyed performing with the Boise Women's Chorus and in the choir at Cathedral of the Rockies.

Choral Singing in America: Nurturing the Country's Soul Special Film Screening

Jerry Blackston, artistic director
Emily Ellsworth, conductor & advisor
Brian Gukel, filmmaker
Matthew Workman, executive producer

Choral Singing in America is a visual representation of the breadth and depth of choral singing today. The film beautifully tells the myriad stories and sounds of



American choral singers and leader—stories that inspire, build community, foster hope, and showcase the tremendous social capital and community building

Interest Sessions

of singing together. America sings in schools, in communities, in concert halls, on the streets, in churches and synagogues, in prisons, in hospice centers, and wherever hearts are moved to join in song.

Clinical Mental Health and the Choral Rehearsal

The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated mental health issues for many people. With an emphasis on making mental health and wellness a priority and a shortage of mental health professionals, it is not unusual to wait months to receive counseling in a clinical setting, especially for underserved populations and those in rural areas. The purpose of this session is to introduce, demonstrate, and discuss evidence-based techniques through which conductor-teachers can optimize opportunities to augment the mental health and wellness of all people in rehearsal settings. Participants will leave the session with techniques they can use upon returning to their choral rehearsals.



Sarah Graham has been conducting choirs for over thirty years. She is an associate professor of music at Lewis-Clark State College in Lewiston, Idaho, and is working toward a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling.

Contemplation and Choral Music for Self-Resilience

Explore compassionate meditation resources and practices to build self-resilience as a choral conductor and to promote well-being in rehearsal and performance settings. During this hands-on contemplation session, Dr. Gloria Chien will teach practical and easy-to-implement mind and body skills that can improve

emotional well-being. Dr. Tim Westerhaus will share practical applications in rehearsal and performance, using choral music as a vehicle to foster self-awareness and cultivate compassion. The session closes by experiencing a model of public, guided contemplation by integrating elements of live choral music, resilience skills, and question-focused reflections to foster resilience and compassion among audiences.

Timothy Westerhaus will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 9.



Gloria (I-Ling) Chien is an associate professor in the religious studies department at Gonzaga University, specializing in Asian religions and Buddhist meditation.

Inspired by her research on the Tibetan Buddhist lojong (mind training) tradition, she became a certified instructor in the Cognitively-Based Compassion Training® contemplation program developed at Emory University.

Flexible Fach: Gender-Affirming Singing Pedagogy through Science-Informed Practices

In this interactive session, attendees will be invited to sing and discuss vocal exercises from a new protocol developed by the presenter that focuses on helping transgender and gender-expansive (TGE) singers produce an aural aesthetic that better aligns with their gender identity. Created through an understanding of the gendered associations and vocal characteristics of common Fach categories and voice classifications, this protocol synthesizes practices from gender-affirming speech-language pathology (SLP) with source-filter theory and science-informed vocal pedagogy to present a healthy gender-affirming practice routine for TGE singers who are seeking to masculinize or feminize their voices.



Stevie J. Hirner (she/her) is a choral conductor, composer, and singer who specializes in science-informed practices that promote transgender inclusivity. As a leading voice in trans issues in singing, Hirner has presented her research at the 2023 National ACDA Conference, 2022 Western ACDA Regional Conference, and 2023 World Symposium on Choral Music in Istanbul. Hirner is nearing the completion of her DMA in choral music from the University of Southern California and holds a BME from Auburn University and an MM in choral conducting from the University of Missouri.

A Garland of Madrigals: The Music of Vittoria Aleotti

Vittoria Aleotti was an Italian composer of the late Renaissance who was born around 1575 in Ferrara. Her 1593 collection of twenty-one Italian madrigals for four voices provides artful and accessible repertoire options for high school, college, and community choirs. The short works are settings of texts by the popular Italian poet Giovanni Battista Guarini and feature secular themes of love and longing. Attendees will receive free resources to facilitate the inclusion of this historical female composer into curricula and concert programs. Participants will also sing through madrigals from this collection.



Elizabeth Schauer serves as director of choral activities at the University of Arizona, where she has received recognition for her innovative and inclusive curricular approach. An award-winning educator, Schauer conducts Symphonic Choir and teaches graduate conducting and choral literature courses with a student-centered focus to an international population of learners. Choirs under her direction have performed at the conferences of ACDA, College Music Society (CMS), American Guild of Organists, and Arizona Music Educators. Former students are active as music educators throughout the world.

Group Composition in the Middle School Classroom

As a follow-up to a session presented in 2022 about group composition at the collegiate level, Dr. Steve Danielson breaks down the process of composing together as a class at the middle school level. Even beginning choral students can find success in this project. Hear student perspectives about their experience moving from choosing a class theme to completing and performing a fully-formed composition. Attendees will walk through every step in detail in a way that will allow immediate application in the classroom. He will talk about the challenges of the project and ways to improve it in the future.



Steve Danielson is currently directing choirs at Mountain View High School in Meridian, ID. He earned a DMA from the University of Washington, an MM from the University of Memphis, and a BA from BYU. He spent five seasons as the conductor and artistic director of the Ensign Symphony Chorus in Seattle, WA, and was previously the director of choirs at Jefferson Middle School in Olympia, WA (2020-2023). Danielson is also a composer with self-published works and pieces published through Two Bridges Music Press. He hosts the podcast “Moveable Do,” where he interviews living composers about their lives and music.

How Teaching Applied Voice Changed My Choral Rehearsals

The session will focus on how teaching applied voice can inform and change three specific areas in choral rehearsals. It will give effective and practical ways to approach breath support and healthy vocal production within a rehearsal context. It will also explore rehearsal methods that are commonly used by applied voice teachers to help their student's placement, range, diction, and tone color. Finally, it will examine how conducting gesture can better facilitate healthy singing. This session will

Interest Sessions

focus on ways to incorporate these methods within repertoire to maximize effective rehearsals for all types of choirs.



Andrew Robinette is an associate professor of music at South Dakota State University, where he teaches conducting, choral methods, applied voice, and conducts multiple choirs. He has presented his

research in more than two dozen conference sessions including national conferences of ACDA, NCCO, and MTNA. His publication placements include *Choral Journal*, *Anacrusis*, *The Choral Scholar*, and *American Choral Review*. Robinette's choirs have performed at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and state conferences. He is the former president of South Dakota NATS. His voice students have won state competitions for both MTNA and NATS.

Into the Great Unknown:

Strategies and Resources for First-Year Teachers

This session will offer strategies and resources for navigating the first year of teaching from educators with experience in choir, instrumental, and general music at all age levels. Topics will include communication/scheduling practices, “hacks” for effective classroom routines, recruitment and retention, low-cost online resources, tips for building understanding, empathy and rapport with colleagues and students, and much more. Research-based and trauma-informed self-care techniques will be included to address the needs of first-year teachers. Time for questions will be prioritized so attendees can ask for advice specific to their goals/concerns.



Kendra Taylor is a PhD candidate in music education at the University of Oregon. She holds an MA in teaching and a BM from Southern Oregon University. She holds an Oregon K-12 teaching license (music). Before working as a graduate teaching

assistant at the UO, she taught concert choir and choral methods at Southern Oregon University and was director of choirs at North Medford High School. She has given presentations on vocal health for music educators (Oregon MEA conference, University of Oregon C-NAfME, Bethel School district).

Love, Understanding, Positivity: Tenets for Building a Choral Program

A successful choral program fosters an energized, inclusive, and safe culture and merges the director's vision, core values, and style with the synergy and tangible realities of the students served. To achieve this, one must rely upon five tenets to innovate the choral program and support, motivate, and welcome all students. Dr. Eric Posada will share strategies that are diverse and relatable to educators of all levels. Topics include articulating a clear philosophy; building a program around core values; creating innovative themed rehearsals; participating in meaningful bonding activities; learning each learner; selecting engaging, artistic repertoire; inviting trust and empathy, and maximizing student potential via love, understanding, and positivity.



Eric Posada serves as director of choral activities at Angelo State University and founder/artistic director of Pasi3n and the San Angelo Chorus. Previously, Posada held academic appointments at the University of North Carolina Charlotte, Tyler Junior College, Texas A&M University, and Texas Tech University. He has presented interest sessions for twenty-four regional and state music conferences. His professional chorus, Pasi3n, won third place in The American Prize for two categories—Choral Performance and the Performance of American Music—and performed the 2021 Texas Choral Directors Association Conference.

MusicSpoke Reading Session

MusicSpoke will present a reading session of new, artist-owned sheet music that focuses on usable music for high schools and universities. The reading session will include material from under-represented composers. We will provide the reading session materials. MusicSpoke reading sessions always prioritize composers from the state and region where the session is held.



Kurt Knecht's compositions have been described as “funky” and “joyous” in the *Washington Post*, and “brilliant in concept” in *The Tracker* magazine. His music has been performed at the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, and the Kimmel Center and by Grammy Award-winning groups like the KC Chorale and the Washington Chorale. As an eclectic performer, Knecht has been a featured soloist with groups ranging from Smokey Robinson to The Florida Orchestra. He is the frequent collaborative organist/pianist for the KC Chorale. He is the organist at St. Paul's Episcopal in Kansas City and the co-founder of MusicSpoke.

Nosotros Existimos: Mexican Choral Repertoire and Resources

The goal of *Nosotros Existimos* is inclusion and belonging for the choral conductor's students and community through programming. This session's information on Mexican repertoire and resources, through handouts and websites, will connect our growing Chicano/a/e student population to this large body of music. By the end, attendees will have more insight on Mexican choral music history, know where to find Mexican and indigenous repertoire, and have access to resources to lead culturally responsive performances. Using this session's offerings, participants can generate deeper belonging amongst their students and community, share unheard voices, and continue to build community through music.



Raul Dominguez is the director of choral activities at Regis University. Through his research focus (the choral music of the United Mexican States), he seeks to provide choirs with the resources to facilitate artistic performances of Mexican choral music. Dominguez earned BM degrees from Oklahoma City University and then led the choirs at Clear Lake High School in his hometown of Houston, TX, for four years. After Clear Lake, he earned his MM at Ithaca College and his DMA at the University of Colorado Boulder.

An Organic Approach to Text Setting: Unleashing Your Musical Imagination

This practical, interactive session on composing effective and meaningful musical settings focuses on several rarely discussed topics. Through a combination of lecture, guided discovery, and practical application, attendees will learn techniques for: (1) Choosing a text, (2) Analyzing the structure and meaning of a text to gain a deeper understanding of it, (3) Internalizing the text so that it influences your musical imagination and allows the music to emerge organically, and (4) Ideation: Developing a compelling concept for the composition. Additional guidelines include how to avoid composing “too soon” before understanding the text, how to avoid getting compositionally “stuck,” how to mark up and sketch conceptual and musical ideas on the text, and how to compose using voice first and piano later.



John Muehleisen is a composer whose 150+ vocal and choral works have been described as “masterful, imaginatively harmonized, beautifully realized, and brilliantly crafted.” Muehleisen's compositions have focused on topics ranging from humor—*Eat Your Vegetables!* and *Cantata Caffeinata*—to more serious issues, including spiritual and emotional dimensions of suffering and healing, gun violence, immigration, how we treat those different than ourselves, hate crime, and

Interest Sessions

the personal cost of war (in his award-winning oratorio, *But Who Shall Return Us Our Children?* A Kipling Passion). He served as ACDA R&R Chair for Composers and Composition for the NW Region (2017-2022).

The Power of Two: Developing Pianist and Conductor Collaboration

This session will explore the benefits of building a relationship between conductors and collaborative pianists from the perspectives of both pianist and conductor. We will explore ways in which conductors can invite pianists into a collaborative relationship; techniques to help pianists pedagogically assist choirs in rehearsal and performance; how a conductor can “think like” and talk efficiently to their collaborative pianist; how a pianist can “think like” a conductor; how gesture positively and negatively communicates with your pianist; and what this relationship looks like in rehearsal. Attendees will participate as a choir led by Geoffrey and Amy Boers. Conductors and pianists are encouraged to attend together.



Amy Boers is a well-known collaborative artist in the Puget Sound region. She is affiliate artist at Pacific Lutheran University and principal keyboard with Symphony Tacoma Orchestra and Voices. She is noted for her ability to anticipate what conductors want and assess what singers need to be successful.



Geoffrey Boers began conducting in the Pacific Northwest in 1977 and enjoys working with choirs and pianists of all levels and abilities. Geoffrey and Amy are co-directors of music at Grace Lutheran in Des Moines.

They have learned richly from each other, and work to create a unified, powerful, pedagogical “gift” for choirs.

Presenting the ARI Project and Hyowon's Music

An in-depth introduction to the ARI project and the music of Hyowon Woo, contextualizing the music presented at the final conference concert on Saturday evening. Additionally, information will be presented on other compelling and important Korean choral repertoire.

Hyowon Woo will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 8.

MeeAe Nam will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 8.

Supporting Teachers: Success Strategies for America's Title I Musicians

Nearly half of public schools in the United States qualify for Title I funding. Title I support is offered when at least 40% of the student population within a school comes from low-income families. Children affected by poverty are at a higher risk for emotional and social challenges, cognitive lags, and health and safety stressors. Choral educators nurture student success with meaningful repertoire and an environment that helps improve cognitive function, social and life skills, and quality of life. Understanding the effects of and practicing success strategies for our Title I musicians are vital to their success.



Katy Green is a doctoral student in choral conducting at Michigan State University. She is the conductor of Campus Choir, an undergraduate ensemble at MSU, and regularly clinics, conducts, and adjudicates middle and high school choral ensembles. Green began her teaching career at West High School and Romig Middle School in Anchorage, Alaska. Upon

receiving her MME at Murray State University, she returned to Anchorage to teach the choirs at Bartlett High School. Her research topics include rehearsal effectiveness, inclusionary practices, and equitable audition procedures for honor choirs.

Teaching Snowboarders to Teaching Choirs: A Holistic Pedagogical Approach

Have you ever enjoyed an amazing athletic experience? A choral rehearsal where suddenly everything clicked for you as a singer? The success of each activity hinges on holistic teaching that strives to engage individuals comprehensively, resulting in personal growth and social connection. This interactive session leads participants through an introductory snowboard lesson and explores an assessment of indicators to facilitate holistic teaching. Participants receive an indicator inventory for singers, created by the presenter, and work through strategies to mindfully create intersections of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains to empower limitless potential and foster community.



Christopher Haygood serves as associate director of the Michael and Anne Greenwood School of Music and associate director of choral studies at Oklahoma State University. Haygood has conducted choirs and appeared as a clinician across Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. He has published pedagogical resources in the *International Bulletin of Choral Music*, *Teaching Music through Performance in Choir*, and *The Choral Conductor's Companion*. Additionally, Haygood is certified by the Professional Ski Instructors of America and American Association of Snowboard Instructors as a ski and snowboard instructor, with additional certification as a children's specialist.

Voices in Transition: Gender Inclusive Choral Voicings

The session will provide choral voicing options to meet the needs of both the changing transgender voice and those of cis-gender singers. As choir directors are faced with more students who identify as transgender, the need to be able to choose literature that meets those needs is imperative. In addition to existing voicings, options for adapting scores with a new "flex" part using guidelines created by Stevie J. Hirner will be included.



Roger Emerson is a professional composer/arranger and educator. He has taught vocal music at all levels but is best known for his arrangements and compositions of "You Raise Me Up," "Seasons of Love," "Shoshone Love Song," and "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel." He has appeared at numerous ACDA and NAFME conferences presenting sessions on middle school, changing voice, vocal jazz, and popular music.

Vocal Jazz in the Choral Classroom

Directing a vocal jazz or contemporary music ensemble can raise a myriad of questions such as, what vocal warmups should be used? What is appropriate repertoire for an SAB ensemble? What vocal technique is best suited for a ballad, Latin, or swing piece? Through her doctoral research, Dr. Lara M. Moline has gathered information for the less-familiar to the well-informed choral conductor in order to aid in the process of introducing or maintaining the vocal jazz ensemble. The information provided will address the similarities of pedagogy between choral and vocal jazz styles, transition material, repertoire and listening suggestions, and a list of vocal jazz resources.



Lara M. Moline is the assistant professor of voice and choral music education at St. Cloud State University. Her dissertation research, "Vocal Jazz in the Choral

2024 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference

Interest Sessions

Classroom: A Pedagogical Study,” introduces transitional elements that are accessible to choral directors of any level and involves an observational curriculum study. Moline has presented her dissertation research at the Jazz Educators Network Conference, and Wyoming, Colorado, and Minnesota state conventions. As a sought-after adjudicator, clinician, and conductor, she has worked with students from middle school to college levels in solo voice to large vocal ensembles in both traditional and vocal jazz idioms.

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2024 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference

Spotlight Repertoire Sessions

Children and Community Youth

Children and Youth Repertoire:

The DEI Mistake You May Not Know You are Making
and The Thing You Think is a Mistake That's Not

Brenda Winkle and members from the NWACDA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee will use a DEI lens to discuss intentional programming for children and youth repertoire. Topics explored will include: one DEI mistake that you may inadvertently be doing, one thing that you may think is a mistake but isn't, providing resources toward intentional programming, and Q&A with members from the DEI Committee.

Brenda Winkle will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 21.

Eastern Europe! We will explore the pitch material, complex meters, and characteristic rhythms of music from this region as we sing through pieces in the reading packet. Where applicable, we will learn about folk traditions that inspired the choral compositions and investigate how we might introduce these pieces to our choirs. Countries represented may include the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Angela Kasper will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 16.

Community

Taking the CODA:
Cultivating Opportunities
and Discovering Artistry

There is a weight in the phrase “easier said than done”! As our conversations expand beyond literature to help our singers connect with matters outside of rehearsal, conductors find themselves questioning the authenticity of their actions. Join Coty Raven Morris for a discussion and interactive experience on how your programming can be both impactful, authentic, and engaging for both singer and audience. Participants will leave with new repertoire, tools, and a full heart.

College and University

Treasures from Eastern Europe:
Choral Repertoire for College, University,
and Upper-Level High School Choirs

Come sing choral pieces in various voicings from



Coty Raven Morris is a proud alumnus of Texas State University-San Marcos and Michigan State University, where she attained a master's in choral conducting.

Morris is a sought-after clinician, speaker, and artist across the country and has recently served as the clinician and headliner for Florida ACDA and Minnesota ACDA. Along with her work at Portland State University as the visiting professor of choir, music education, and social justice, she is also the founder of Being Human Together (BHT), a budding community utilizing music education to normalize difficult topics in our field. She was nominated for the Portland State University George C Hoffman Faculty Award and was a quarter-finalist for the 2023 Music Educators Grammy.

Junior High/Middle School

Through the Lens of Literacy

This reading session will examine how we can develop literacy through rehearsal of repertoire with emerging, intermediate, and advanced middle school and junior high ensembles. Anchored in score analysis techniques inspired by secondary Kodály practices, we will explore varied methods of designing, preparing, and practicing literacy activities that can be embedded within a choral rehearsal.



Kyra Rengstorf is pursuing her MM in choral conducting at Western Washington University, where she directs the University Choir and teaches aural skills and secondary choral methods. She has taught

middle school and high school mixed, SA, TB, and jazz choirs; piano, theater, musical theater, and elementary general music. Rengstorf holds a BM from Barnard College of Columbia University, and a Post-Baccalaureate Degree in Music Education and a WA teaching certificate for K-12 general, instrumental, and choral music from the University of Washington. She serves as treasurer on the board for the Northwest Kodály Educators.

Music in Worship

Singing from Sunrise to Sunset

Choirs in our places of worship provide rich opportunities for multi-generational music making and social and spiritual interaction. By learning how to effectively work with senescent (aging) singers, we preserve the tremendous impact they can have on the following generations. Part reading session and part interactive workshop, this session will provide both new and tried-and-true repertoire for church choirs and give practical tips for working with senescent singers both from a psychological and a technical point of view.



David B. Gardner, DMA, has conducted college, community, and church choirs for more than three decades, and since 2014 has served at University Presbyterian Church in Seattle, WA, where he is the director of worship and the arts. He holds degrees from Seattle Pacific University, Western Seminary, and The University of Arizona. Gardner has served as a guest conductor at honor choirs and festivals in six states and has traveled with his choirs nationally and internationally. He is a past president of the Kansas Choral Directors Association, and currently serves as the NWACDA R&R Chair for Music in Worship.

Geoffrey Boers will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 26.

Versatile Jewish Choral Repertoire for Concerts and Worship

Many choirs perform Jewish choral music in December, but the repertoire is vast and just waiting to be programmed year-round. Jewish music comprises disparate cultural traditions. This session will address how to select literature and perform it with sensitivity. Attendees will learn some chestnut and contemporary

Spotlight Repertoire Sessions

Jewish choral selections and discuss how to avoid tokenism.



Jacob Finkle is proud to serve as music director of the Seattle Jewish Chorale and as the conductor of University Unitarian Church's All Voices Choir. He also serves as Washington ACDA's Music in Worship R&R Chair. Finkle teaches general music at Silver Fir Elementary in Everett, WA. Originally from upstate New York, he received a BM from Vassar College and then moved to Seattle, where he completed an MM in choral conducting and a Music Education Teaching Certification at the University of Washington.



Coreen Duffy is director of choral activities at the University of Montana School of Music, where she conducts Chamber Chorale and University Choir, teaches conducting, choral methods, and supervises student teachers. She serves as artistic director for the UM-Missoula Community Chorus. Under her direction, UM Chamber Chorale performed at Cadogan Hall (London, 2022), the NW ACDA Conference (2022), and Montana International Choral Festival (2023, 2019). Duffy is an active clinician and composer with works published by Walton Music, ECS, Pavane, and Hinshaw. A specialist in Jewish music, Duffy has presented at ACDA, NCCO, and the International Conference of the European Center for Jewish Music in Germany. She is president-elect of NWACDA.

Senior High School

Starting from the Beginning: Entry High School Repertoire from NWACDA Performance Choir Directors

This high school spotlight repertoire session will feature the directors of multiple high school choirs with regional conference performance invitations. They will present a handful of repertoire ideas for the beginning high school ensemble in multiple voicings.



Pat Ryan is in his 24th year of teaching, and his 13th year at Great Falls High School in Great Falls, Montana. Ryan has had choirs present at conferences in '09, '15, '18, '19, and '22.



Sean Kane is in his 18th year of teaching and his 9th year at Timberline High School in Boise, ID. Kane has had choirs present at conferences in '18, '19, and '22.



Barbara Tappa recently retired after 23 years of teaching, with the last 15 years at Ferris High School in Spokane, WA. Tappa has had choirs present at conferences in '09 and '20.



Ellen McKenzie is in her 22nd year of teaching and her 10th year at Hellgate High School in Missoula, Montana. McKenzie has had choirs present at conferences in '20 and '22.



Corrina Steinbach is in her 18th year of teaching and her 8th year at Hellgate High School in Missoula, Montana.

SSAA/Women's

Stirring Up Treble: The Defiant Power of Song

Throughout history, singing has been a unifying element in society. It is especially so for those moments on the precipice of change. Our spotlight reading session will explore soprano/alto repertoire that stands up to injustice, defies the status quo, and empowers agents of change for all stages of vocal and musical development.



Sandra Babb is associate professor of choral music education at Oregon State University, where she directs Bella Voce and the University Chorale. Her choirs have performed for state, regional, and national conferences of ACDA, and she has presented and conducted all-state and honor choirs throughout the United States. Babb is a contributing author for *Composing in Choirs*, and *Teaching Music through Performance in Choir, Volume IV*, and *Voices in Concert*. She received the BME, MME, and PhD from The Florida State University and is a National Center for Voice and Speech certified vocologist. Babb serves as NW-ACDA R&R Chair for soprano/alto choirs and is the president-elect for Oregon ACDA.

TTBB/Men's

Redefining the Tenor/Bass Choir: Creating a Safe Space for All in Voice Specific Choirs

In collaboration with the Gonzaga Glee Club, Dr. Meg Stohlmann will share repertoire, resources, and experiences regarding intentionality about our language, uniform choices, and how we create a safe space for all singers in our voice specific choirs.



Meg Stohlmann is the director of choral and vocal studies at Gonzaga University, where she conducts the Glee Club, Concert Choir and Discantus Treble Choir. She also serves as the director of the Spokane Symphony Chorale. Stohlmann serves on the ACDA Northwest Region's board. She was selected to participate in the 2023 ACDA International Conductor's Exchange program in Germany. She taught choir and guitar at the middle and high school level in Lexington, KY, and conducted the Danville Children's Choir. Her children's choir and high school advanced women's choirs performed at the Kentucky Music Educators State Conferences in 2014 and 2015, respectively.

Vocal Jazz

Concepts through Repertoire

Along with demonstration group Pacific Northwest Voices, jazz musician and music educator Kirk Roa will engage participants in rehearsal strategies, jazz concepts, and techniques for improving your ensemble using varied literature from today's top arrangers. Many new and diverse selections will be included.



Kirk Roa is a jazz musician and music educator born and raised in the greater Seattle area. In addition to private vocal and piano instruction, he also teaches and directs the choirs at Bishop Blanchet High School as a proud alumnus. Roa is the director of the Pacific Northwest Voices, a nationally recognized vocal jazz group dedicated to honoring and expanding the vocal jazz idiom. They performed at the 2023 ACDA Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. He is currently in pursuit of a jazz studies master's degree at the University of Arkansas Monticello.

2024 ACDA Northwestern Region Conference

Honor Choir Conductors

6 - 8 Grade



Rollo Dilworth is vice dean and professor of choral music education in the department of music education and therapy at Temple University's Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts in Philadelphia, PA. Prior to his position with Boyer College, he taught music education and was the director of choral activities for thirteen years at North Park University in Chicago. Dilworth's contributions extend to conducting the Temple University Singing Owls Campus/Community Chorus, leading the Singing City Choir, and conducting the School District of Philadelphia High School All-City Chorus. He is a prolific composer and arranger, with over 200 published choral works.

9 - 12 Grade Jazz



Jennifer Barnes, a renowned vocalist, educator, and arranger, is a professor of music at the University of North Texas (UNT), and directs Vocal Jazz Studies and the award-winning UNT Jazz Singers. She has conducted music festivals across sixteen states and taught at Jamey Aebersold Jazz Camps. She received the 2016 Jazz Education Achievement Award from *DownBeat* Magazine. Previously based in Los Angeles, her voice is featured in films (e.g., *Wall-E*, *Star Trek*), TV ("Glee"), and advertising campaigns. Barnes's acclaimed solo jazz recording is "You Taught My Heart." She is a member of Vertical Voices, a professional vocal group. Barnes holds degrees from the University of Miami and Western Michigan University.

9 - 10 Grade SATB



Jace Kaholokula Saplan (they/he) is the director of choral activities and associate professor of music learning and teaching and choral conducting at Arizona State University. They oversee the graduate program in choral conducting, conduct the ASU Concert Choir, and teach courses blending decolonial and critical theories with vocal practice. Saplan is an Obama Asia-Pacific Leader, focusing on equity-driven choral arts. They serve as a DEIAB consultant for organizations like Choral Arts Northwest, and The Phoenix Chamber Choir. As a Kanaka Maoli advocate, artist, and culture bearer, Saplan leads the Nā Wai Chamber Choir, preserving Hawaiian choral music.

11 - 12 Grade SA



Jonathan Talberg serves as director of choral activities at the Bob Cole Conservatory, where he is conductor of the international award-winning Bob Cole Conservatory Chamber Choir and the CSULB University Choir. His choirs have shared the stage with diverse groups from the Kronos Quartet to the Rolling Stones. Talberg conducts honor choirs nationwide and has taken his choirs to global venues, including theistine Chapel and the Great Hall of the People in China. Talberg serves as director of music at the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Bach Festival, and as an editor at Pavane Music Publishing. His proudest role is mentoring the next generation of choral musicians. He holds degrees from Chapman University and the University of Cincinnati.

11 - 12 Grade TB



Rosephanye Powell, coordinator of voice studies and conductor of the women's chorus at Auburn University, is a frequent presenter, adjudicator, and clinician at national and international conferences and festivals. Powell conducts all-state and honor choirs across the United States and has led choirs in Italy, Australia, and the UK. She has been hailed as one of America's premier women composers of choral music and her works are published by leading publishers such as Hal Leonard, Gentry Publications, and Oxford University Press. Her compositions have been performed in prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, and have been premiered by celebrated conductors and professional ensembles.

Children and Community Youth



Emily Ellsworth has conducted all-state choirs and prestigious festivals across thirty US states, as well as honor choirs for ACDA regions. Her global appearances include directing festival choirs in various countries and presenting for national choral directors in Brazil. In academia, Ellsworth contributed to Luther College's choral faculty, conducted the Elmhurst University Concert Choir, and lectured at Northwestern University. She served as artistic director of Anima-Glen Ellyn Children's Chorus for over two decades. Accolades include the 2014 Tribute Award from Chicago A Cappella and 2013 ASCAP award for Adventurous Programming from Chorus America. She holds vocal performance degrees from Macalester College and the University of Southern California.

Northwestern Region Registration Information

Register at acda.org/region-conferences

Attendee \$255 Retired \$190 Student \$80

Registration after 11:59 PM CST January 4, 2024

Attendee \$285 Retired \$225 Student \$100

Two-day Registration Options

Music in Worship \$175 Children & Youth \$175



Congratulations!

St. Elizabeth Chorale

Dr. Nicki Bakko Toliver, Conductor

Midwest ACDA 2024

Music Scholarships

Meistersinger Music Scholarships range **up to \$5,000 per year** and are open to music majors and non-music majors. All-State musicians are guaranteed a \$2,500 minimum scholarship. A select few students of exceptional music ability will be considered for **endowed music scholarships up to \$10,000 per year**, replacing all other music scholarships.

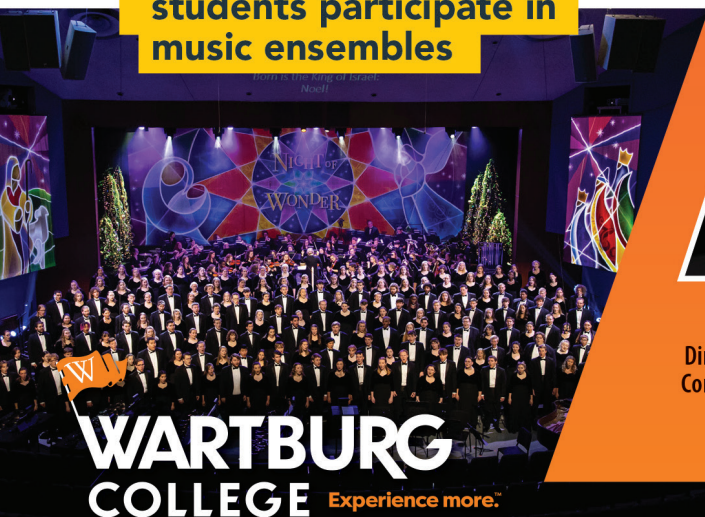
Scholarship Audition Dates

Feb. 17, 2024

March 11, 2024

April 5, 2024

**MORE
THAN 450**
students participate in
music ensembles



Choral Faculty



Dr. Lee Nelson
Director of Choral Activities,
Conductor of Wartburg Choir
and Ritterchor



Dr. Nicki Bakko Toliver
Conductor of Castle Singers,
St. Elizabeth Chorale,
music education



Dr. Karen Black
Conductor of Kantorei,
college organist,
sacred music

Learn more at wartburg.edu/music.

Headliners/Special Events

Overview

Your Midwestern Region of ACDA is gearing up for its celebration of choral music in Omaha, Nebraska! From February 7 to 10 we will gather to reflect on our work in choral music, finding rejuvenation through inspirational performances and speakers, and rejoicing together in song and spirit.

The Midwestern Region Conference will feature headline performances by the professional vocal ensemble Kaleidoscope, a showcase of varied ensembles from Nebraska, and a performance of John Rutter's *Gloria* on the 50th anniversary of its 1974 world premiere in Omaha. Additionally, the conference highlights fifteen of the top choirs from across the region, twenty-five engaging interest sessions, reading sessions, and four honor choirs.

The conference will also host the R3 Choirs, a reference to the conference theme: Reflect, Rejuvenate, Rejoice. These choirs will engage you, the conference goer, in performance! Three of our region's finest conductors—Aimee Beckmann-Collier, Ann Howard Jones, and Tom Trenney—will lead the entire conference in rehearsals culminating in a gala performance: a chance for all of us to engage with, rather than simply listen to, great choral music with master conductors during the conference.

Aimee Beckmann-Collier's R3 Choir will perform choral gems of the modern era; Ann Howard Jones's R3 Choir will present masterwork choruses; and Tom Trenney's R3 Choir will focus on sacred choral repertoire. The Omaha conference will be an opportunity for all of us to Reflect, Rejuvenate, and Rejoice together, with one voice!

Headliners

Kaleidoscope Vocal Ensemble



The Kaleidoscope Vocal Ensemble presents vocal music with artistic excellence while celebrating racial, ethnic, and gender diversity. The group of professional singers from around the United States have thriving national and international solo careers, and focus primarily on presenting early and new music. In addition to performances and artistic residencies, the ensemble engages in creative educational outreach, particularly in communities of color, and promotes the study, research, performance, and recording of music from various eras with special attention to the intersection of arts and social justice.



Arianne Abela is director of choral activities at Amherst College and is founder and artistic director of Kaleidoscope Vocal Ensemble. She is a sought-after clinician in composition, conducting, and DEIA initiatives. Kaleidoscope has performed as a headliner at ACDA, Podium in Canada, and other renowned festivals and conferences. Abela founded the Detroit Justice Choir and Detroit Women's Chorus, as well as guest-conducted with Detroit's OperaMODo and Vancouver-based opera company, Re:Naissance. Abela holds a doctorate from the University of Michigan, master's from Yale University, and bachelor's from Smith College.

River City Mixed Chorus



For forty years, the River City Mixed Chorus—Omaha's only LGBTQ+ community choir and one of the oldest mixed GALA choruses in the country—has been giving voice to the hopes of many who yearn for a more fully inclusive and diverse society. RCMC has grown from a group of ten friends singing at local churches and gay bars to more than 160 singers who perform multiple times a year at Omaha's most prestigious performing arts venues. RCMC offers singers and audience members alike safe spaces to celebrate all that makes us unique, diverse, and joyful. They headlined the 2019 Iowa Choral Directors Association conference with a multi-movement commission, *Quiet No More*, to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Stonewall riots.



A. Barron Breland is in demand throughout the country as a conductor, chorus-master, clinician, and adjudicator. He has prepared choruses for Grammy and Tony-winning artists and conductors. With

degrees in music theory and choral conducting from the University of Georgia and the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, Breland has a diverse background in many different fields of music, including the piano and saxophone. He is dean of the Graduate School and vice provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. Besides his work with the Omaha Symphony and Omaha Performing Arts, he is also the principal conductor of *Résonance* and the artistic director of the River City Mixed Chorus.

Nebraska Showcase



Derrick Fox is the associate dean of graduate studies and creative endeavors and a professor of choral conducting at Michigan State University. Prior to MSU, he was the director of choral activities

and distinguished professor of music at the University of Nebraska-Omaha and assistant professor of choral music at Ithaca College. Fox has taught at the middle school, high school, and collegiate levels. His conducting experiences have included singers from upper elementary choirs through collegiate and community choirs. He was awarded the 2021 Bryan R. Johnson Service Award by the Nebraska MEA and the 2022 University of Nebraska Omaha Award for Distinguished Research/Creative Activity.

Meadowlark



Meadowlark is a select group of high school musicians from the state of Nebraska. Being a part of their high school's Pop A Cappella group garnered these singers the opportunity to audition for and create Meadowlark. The music performed has been selected with students in mind—trying to sing pop songs of their age without jeopardizing the complex harmonies and rhythms necessary for an educational setting.



A. J. Reimer has been teaching vocal music since 2003 and has been at Bellevue West High School since 2006. He received his undergraduate and master's degrees in music education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. At West, Reimer helps direct the eight choirs in its program, including West High Singers, Project 424, and Concert Choir. Reimer has presented, conducted, and performed several times at state conventions for both NMEA and NCDA. In 2014 he represented Nebraska at the regional ACDA conference as a conductor of the Collegiate Honor Choir. Reimer is a past president of the Nebraska Choral Directors Association.

the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is an accomplished vocalist and composer with his works available through several publishers and performed by festival/honor choirs, all-state choirs, and professional and university choirs such as Seraphic Fire and the Oakwood University Aeolians. Recent commissions and premieres include Harvard University and the Turtle Creek Chorale. He regularly serves as a choral clinician and guest conductor for festival and honor choirs throughout the country.

Nebraska Festival Singers



The Nebraska Festival Singers is a new choral organization in the Midwest. The membership comprises teachers of all levels—inclusive of music and non-music areas—and community members. Providing community performances of the highest quality, the Nebraska Festival Singers is dedicated to engaging and inspiring through impassioned singing while expanding awareness and appreciation of the choral arts. In its second season, the choir is conducted by Marques L. A. Garrett, founding artistic director.



Marques L. A. Garrett is associate professor of choral studies at the University of North Texas. After completing a PhD in music education (choral conducting) at the Florida State University, he was an assistant professor of music in choral activities at

SNJ Singers



SNJ Singers is a select a cappella ensemble comprising talented high school singers from across the Omaha metropolitan area in their own school choirs, show choirs, and musicals. SNJ Singers perform repertoire ranging from classic choral literature to contemporary a cappella. The ensemble rehearses at SNJ Studio of Music on Sunday evenings for ninety minutes each week during the school year. In addition to fall, winter, and spring concerts, the SNJ Singers perform in the Omaha Symphony Christmas Celebration and hosts the annual SNJ A Cappella Festival, featuring high school and collegiate a cappella ensembles of all styles.



Joel Johnston is director of vocal music at Midland University in Fremont, Nebraska, where he conducts the University Choir and Clef Dwellers, Midland's contemporary a cappella ensemble. Additionally, Johnston teaches courses in music education and vocal pedagogy. Known for his positive and dynamic leadership, he is in demand as a vocal clinician, conductor, choreographer, and adjudicator. He has

Headliners/Special Events

conducted more than forty choral festivals throughout the Midwest and is a frequent judge at show choir competitions. He teaches voice at the SNJ Studio of Music in Omaha and conducts the SNJ Singers, a select High School A Cappella Choir. He served as president of the Nebraska Choral Directors Association, and chair of choral affairs for Nebraska MEA.

University of Nebraska—Lincoln University Singers



University Singers, the University of Nebraska—Lincoln's premier and historic flagship choral ensemble, presents the finest and most versatile choral singers in the University. In 2022, they performed in many of France's most famous Gothic cathedrals. While many of the choir's singers are music majors, students from throughout the University are encouraged to audition and participate. This ensemble performs music from the thirteenth century through the present, including works written especially for them. University Singers has performed for state conventions of the Nebraska Choral Directors Association, Nebraska MEA, regional North Central ACDA conferences, and regional and national meetings of the Music Educators National Conference.



Peter A. Eklund is the current president-elect of the UNL Faculty Senate, and a Hixson-Lied Endowment Professor of Music. He was recently named one of the national quarter-finalists for the Grammy National Music Teacher of the Year and was a national finalist for the NFHS Outstanding Music Educator in 2019. Trained as a classical pianist and organist in the finest traditions of Western historical music, he is also a strong advocate for ethnic and world music spanning all genres. His academic choirs have performed on over forty-five ACDA and NAfME state, regional, and national conventions. Eklund studied conducting and score study at the University of Iowa. He divides his time as conductor, guest lecturer, editor/arranger, and teacher/mentor.

R3 Choirs



Aimee Beckmann-Collier is the Ellis and Nelle Levitt Distinguished Professor Emerita of Conducting at Drake University, where she served as director of choral studies from 1989 through 2019. A frequent clinician, adjudicator, and guest conductor for high school and college choral festivals, contests, and all-states, she has conducted in Carnegie Hall and Avery Fisher Hall. Drake ensembles under her leadership performed in major venues throughout Europe, as well as for conferences of ACDA's North Central Region. Beckmann-Collier's professional service includes terms as president of ICDA and ACDA's North Central Region. She chaired North Central's 2012 and 1992 Conferences and was assistant chair of the 2015 ACDA National Conference, as well as editor of *Sounding Board* and *Melisma*.



Ann Howard Jones is professor emerita of music at Boston University (1993), where she was director of choral activities and conducted the Chamber Chorus and the Symphonic Chorus. She was responsible for the highly regarded graduate program in choral conducting. She received the Robert Shaw Choral Award from ACDA (2011) for distinguished professional accomplishment and service, the Distinguished Service to the Profession Award from Chorus America (2014), and the Metcalf Award from Boston University (2003). She was awarded a Fulbright professorship to Brazil. Jones has written extensively on score preparation, rehearsal techniques, and healthy singing in the choral rehearsal. She was awarded degrees in vocal performance and the DMA in choral conducting from the University of Iowa.



Tom Trenney is a composer, conductor, organist, preacher, and teacher. He has been blessed to serve as minister of music to First-Plymouth Church in Lincoln, Nebraska, since 2009. In 2019 he became associate professor of music and director of choirs at Nebraska Wesleyan University. Trenney's choirs have been honored to perform for state, regional, and national conferences of ACDA, and they have been award winners in the American Prize for choral ensembles. He serves as Music in Worship Chair for Midwest ACDA. Trenney has been a featured performer at churches, colleges, and concert halls across the country. His choral compositions are published by Augsburg Fortress, Beckenhurst Press, Choristers Guild, E.C. Schirmer/Galaxy, Morningstar, Musicspoke, Pavane, and G. Schirmer. He is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Eastman School of Music.

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Performing Choirs

Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs Cantanti Singers



The Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs—Cantanti Singers is an SATB community choir with members representing thirty-six different high schools around the Minneapolis and St. Paul areas. The singers in grades 9-12 rehearse once a week and are conducted by Philip Brown with collaborative pianist Jamie Schmidt. The award-winning Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs (ACYC) program was founded in 1980 and currently has nine ensembles for singers in grades K–12, an adult alumni choir, and a music class for singers with special needs. Singers in ACYC performed at the 2018 Super Bowl.



Philip Brown is the director of choral activities at Totino-Grace High School and conductor of the high school choirs with Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs. He graduated from Bethany College (KS) and received his MME from Northern Arizona University. At Totino-Grace he conducts the curricular choirs and heads the competitive show choir program. Brown also conducts the Cantanti Singers, Treble Singers, and Tenor/Bass Ensemble—choirs of high school singers from across the twin cities as part of the Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs organization. He conducted the Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs—Treble Singers at the 2019 National ACDA Conference.

Ankeny High School Concert Choir



The Ankeny High School Concert Choir is the premier choral ensemble at Ankeny High School in Ankeny, Iowa, and is one of six performing ensembles in an award-winning comprehensive vocal music program. Students in grades 10-12 undergo a competitive audition process for selection each year. The ensemble has shared the stage with numerous collegiate and professional choirs, was the featured guest choir at the Wartburg College Meistersinger Honor Choir Festival, and was selected to perform for the 2020 Midwestern Region ACDA Conference and for the Iowa Choral Directors Association's Iowa Choral Showcase in 2018.



Ben Walters is in his eighteenth year of music education in Iowa, and eighth as director of choral activities at Ankeny High School in Ankeny, Iowa, where he oversees an award-winning comprehensive vocal music program of six ensembles involving approximately 275 singers. He conducts Ankeny's most select choral ensemble, Concert Choir, the auditioned treble ensemble Cantorei, and the varsity show choir, Visual Adrenaline. Walters is in demand across the metro and state as a judge and clinician for show choir, all-state, and solo/ensemble contest events in addition to frequently serving as an adjudicator at numerous Iowa High School Music Association Festivals and Contests.

Bowling Green State University Volaré



The “Treble Clef Club” is the oldest vocal ensemble at Bowling Green State University. Now named “Volaré” (most recently Women’s Chorus) we proudly serve treble voices across all ages and disciplines at the university. Volaré consists of sixty-five undergraduate sopranos and altos and predominantly includes non-music majors. Volaré regularly commissions and premieres new works. The chorus performs both on and off campus and has performed at several professional conferences, including Ohio MEA in 2022. Volaré last performed at ACDA thirty-five years ago and is honored to return.



Emily Pence Brown serves as associate professor of music education at Bowling Green State University, where she teaches choral music education undergraduate courses and directs Volaré.

She holds a BME from Rutgers University, a master’s from the Florida State University, and a PhD from The University of Southern Mississippi. Brown’s research on teacher vocal health and job-related stress has been published in *Journal of Music Teacher Education* and *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*. Additional publications include *Music Educators Journal*, *Research Perspectives on Music Education*, and *TRIAD*.

Iowa State University Cantamus



Cantamus was founded at Iowa State University in 2000 with the principal goal to diversify the repertoire, practice, and reach of treble-voice ensembles. Our literature spans from early works to premieres by living composers, and from Western classical music canon to oral-tradition folk music and experimental contemporary pieces. Vocally, Cantamus singers learn how to healthily produce a wide spectrum of sound across the full treble range—lofted to brassy, lean to lush, crying to soaring. Embedded in this practice is both a greatly expanded definition of beauty and an active embrace of songs and singers of disparate backgrounds and traditions.



Jennifer Rodgers is the assistant director of choral activities and assistant teaching professor of voice at Iowa State University, where she directs the Cantamus and Lyrica ensembles and teaches voice in studio and classroom settings. Her career and teaching has been dedicated to building bridges: between contemporary and traditional singing and between choral and solo voice professionals. As a vocalist, Rodgers performs in a wide variety of styles. She is the lead singer for the Indigo Monks jazz band and one of sixteen singers on the inaugural roster of withonevoice, a professional choir based in Chicago and Western Illinois.

Performing Choirs

Johnston High School Cantus



Cantus is the premier auditioned choral ensemble at Johnston High School, consisting of fifty singers. Students in Cantus represent many facets of the Johnston High School academic, athletic, and fine arts programs. The core values of Cantus are independence in music literacy, a commitment to programming wide varieties of repertoire from across the globe, and captivating audience members with heartfelt performances.



Hannah Ryan teaches at Johnston High School in Johnston, Iowa, where she directs Cantus, Cantate Treble Choir, Mixed Choir, and Synergy Show Choir. Her choirs consistently earn Division I

Ratings at large group contest and solo/ensemble festival, and multiple students are selected for the Iowa All-State Chorus under her leadership. Cantus most recently had the honor of being selected for the 2022 Iowa Choral Showcase. In 2013, Ryan was awarded the “Outstanding Educator of the Year” Award from the Johnston School Foundation. In 2016, she was awarded the Aspire Award for “Best New Director” from the FAME Show Choir National Championship Series.

Linn-Mar High School Chamber Singers



Chamber Singers is the forty-three-voice advanced mixed choir from Linn-Mar High School in Marion, IA. This ensemble is one of three mixed choirs and seven total concert choirs that serve the 400 students enrolled in choir at Linn-Mar. Over 750 students are enrolled in at least one of sixteen curricular ensembles offered in the choir, band, and orchestra departments. Chamber Singers focuses on exposing audiences to a rich and diverse repertoire of styles, stories, and experiences chorally.



Trent Buglewicz is a vocal music teacher at Linn-Mar High School in Marion, IA, where he has spent the last nine years. In addition to directing the advanced mixed chorus, Chamber Singers, since the fall of 2020, he also conducts Linn-Mar’s bass chorus, Fortis, and one of the school’s treble choruses, Cantemus. Outside of curricular choir, he is the director of Linn-Mar’s extracurricular varsity show choir, Tenth Street Edition. He received his BME from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. In 2020, Buglewicz and his choir, Bella Voce, performed at the Central and North Central ACDA Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Morningside University Morningside Choir



The Morningside Choir, the university's premier forty-member auditioned choral ensemble, has maintained a respected tradition of artistic excellence for one hundred years. The choir consists of undergraduate student musicians from various major areas of study. In addition to performing at the 2024 Midwestern ACDA Region Conference, the ensemble was featured as a demonstration choir at the 2023 ACDA National Conference Undergraduate Choral Conducting Institute Masterclass.



Ryan Person serves as director of choral activities and assistant professor of music at Morningside University in Sioux City, Iowa. He conducts the Morningside Choir, which tours and performs at continental and national destinations each year. His choirs have been invited to participate ACDA national conference, North Central ACDA conference, Dvorak Music Festival in the Czech Republic, and Iowa Choral Directors Association Showcase. Additionally, he has co-presented at the NCCO conference and been invited to conduct numerous honor choir and all-state festivals. Person earned a DMA from Texas Tech, MM from Michigan State University, and BA from Luther College.

Pleasant Valley High School Leading Tones



The Pleasant Valley Leading Tones are an extra-curricular ensemble specializing in a cappella performance of vocal jazz literature. The ensemble strives for flexibility of tone through a variety of genres within vocal jazz. Their studies include exploration of standards, listening to essential recordings and artists, exercises in improvisation, and solo performance. Members are expected to prepare independently or in student-led sectionals so that rehearsals are truly a group-led effort. Students in the Leading Tones are notably self-reliant, while giving their all to a remarkably cooperative, team-based ensemble. Leading Tones members also represent PVHS in the all-state chorus, all-state jazz choir, and ACDA honor choirs.



Meg Byrne is the director of vocal music at Pleasant Valley High School, a position she has held for twenty-nine years. She directs the Chamber Choir, Treble Chamber Choir, and the Leading Tones, an a cappella jazz choir. A quarterfinalist for the Grammy music educators' award in 2022 and 2023, she also teaches AP Music Theory and has worked as music department chair and instructional lead for vocal music. Byrne sings regularly with the Augustana Choral Artists under the direction of Jon Hurty. She holds degrees from Bryn Mawr College, the University of Northern Iowa, and Western Illinois University. She is the High School R&R chair for the Iowa Choral Directors Association.

Performing Choirs

Purdue University Varsity Glee Club



With integrity and passion, the members of the Purdue Varsity Glee Club have proudly served as ambassadors of Purdue University for 130 years. Under the leadership of William E. Griffel, the Purdue Varsity Glee Club has an established reputation for musical and academic excellence, representing diverse backgrounds and hometowns, with majors ranging from engineering to education. Founded in 1893, the Purdue Varsity Glee Club has inspired audiences across the globe and been invited to perform for six presidential inaugurations.



William E. Griffel is the director of Purdue Musical Organizations at Purdue University. He directs the internationally recognized Purdue Varsity Glee Club and produces and directs the annual

Purdue Christmas Show. Griffel has traveled internationally both as a director and as a performer. As a professional vocalist, his voice can be heard on many commercial and professional recordings. In 2016, he was selected as a quarterfinalist for the Grammy Music Educator Award. He received his bachelor's degrees in music education and vocal performance from Viterbo University in LaCrosse, WI, a master's in vocal performance and a performance certificate in vocal performance from DePaul University in Chicago, IL.

St. Michael-Albertville High School Concert Choir



The STMA High School Music program prides itself on excellence and inclusion for the over 500 students that it serves. The STMA Concert Choir is one of fifteen performing ensembles offered at STMA High School. Recent performance highlights include invitational performances with American Public Media, ACDA, and Minnesota MEA. STMA has enjoyed collaborative performances with numerous high schools, collegiate ensembles and professional ensembles. Upcoming highlights for the 2023-2024 Concert Season include performances with VOCES8, and the midwest premiere of Christopher Tin's *The Lost Birds*.



Joe Osowski is one of two choral directors at St. Michael-Albertville High School. He holds a BME and MME from North Dakota State University. At STMA High School, Osowski directs four curricular

ensembles, one co-curricular ensemble, and serves as the vocal director for the annual high school musical. Osowski is also the conductor of Bring the Sing, a community singing initiative. He is in demand as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. Osowski recently served as the Northeast District Chair for ACDA-MN. He was selected as a conducting delegate representing the United States for the 2017 International Conductors Exchange Program.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Concert Choir



Concert Choir is one of six choral ensembles at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Concert Choir performed at the 1996, 1998, and 2019 ACDA Region Conferences and the 1997 ACDA National Conference. The choir has performed at five Wisconsin MEA Conventions and at the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association Convention. The Concert Choir has performed with outstanding orchestras including the Minnesota Orchestra, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, and the Philadelphia Brass. The ensemble has traveled to Europe on eight concert tours, including two appearances at the anniversaries of the D-Day Invasion in France.



Frank A. Watkins is an associate professor of music and director of choral studies at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Watkins taught secondary choral music in Texas for six years. He holds degrees from Jackson State University (BM), the University of Arkansas (MM), Northwestern University (MM), and Michigan State University (DMA). In 2016 he was appointed conductor and music director of the Eau Claire Chamber Orchestra. Choirs under his direction have performed at the Wisconsin Music Educators State Conference (2018, 2023); Wisconsin Choral Director's Association State Conference (2023), and the North Central ACDA Region (2020).

Vocal Artists of Iowa



Vocal Artists of Iowa is a semi-professional choir based in Cedar Rapids and Iowa City whose membership draws primarily upon the region's community members, music professionals, and music educators. VAOI is a project-based group that performs five to six concerts per year, with rehearsals and performance dates dictated by the availability of its constituency. Featured and invited performances have included the Iowa Choral Director's Association Choral Showcase in 2018 and 2023, the Luther College Dorian Summer Music Festival, the ICDA Summer Symposium, and the Midwestern ACDA Region Conference.



David Haas is director of choral music at West High School in Iowa City, Iowa; founder and artistic director of Vocal Artists of Iowa, a semi-professional choir based out of the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City area; and a PhD candidate in music education at the University of Iowa. At West High, Haas directs Treble Choir, Iowa City West Singers, and leads several sections of Digital Music Production. Prior to his tenure at Iowa City West, Haas held church choir and public school teaching positions in Iowa, South Dakota, and Florida. He holds a BA in vocal performance from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, and an MM in choral conducting from the Florida State University.

Performing Choirs

VocalEssence



The VocalEssence Chorus is a group of talented and enthusiastic singers from many different walks of life, united by their love of singing and community. Performing a wide variety of musical styles, premiering new works, and sharing the stage with a diverse array of guest artists, the VocalEssence Chorus is a welcome home for singers who wish to continue making music throughout their adult lives. Our ensemble seeks to live out our belief that singing is an essential form of human expression and can be a powerful tool to connect us together across the dimensions of difference.



G. Phillip Shoultz III is associate artistic director of VocalEssence and founding director of The Singers Of This Age. Shoultz uses spoken word and song to foster community and inspire action among people of all ages and abilities. He conducts festival choirs and leads workshops across the United States and beyond. He serves on the faculty of the University of St. Thomas and guides the ministries of worship at Westwood Lutheran Church. The Minnesota Orchestra engages Shoultz to host Young People's Concerts. The winner of the ACDA Graduate Conducting Competition and multiple Teacher of the Year awards, he founded "Table for More" in 2020 to help organizations address issues related to innovation, equity, and belonging in the arts.

Wartburg College St. Elizabeth Chorale



The Wartburg College St. Elizabeth Chorale is a non-auditioned, soprano-alto ensemble that performs treble literature from various historical periods and styles. The Chorale is featured during Christmas with Wartburg and mentors the high school treble participants of the Meistersinger Honor Choirs. The Chorale takes its name from a famous resident of the college's namesake, the Wartburg Castle in Germany. Elizabeth (1207-1231) lived at the castle and carried on an active food ministry by smuggling bread from the castle kitchen in her cloak. Today, Wartburg College hosts a service week dedicated to her memory.



Nicki Bakko Toliver serves Wartburg College as the associate director of choral activities and associate professor of music (choral music education). She conducts The Wartburg Castle Singers, a twenty-eight-voice chamber choir, and St. Elizabeth Chorale, a seventy-voice treble ensemble. In addition, she teaches K-12 music methods courses, mentors future music educators in the Teacher Education Program, and supervises student teachers. Toliver enjoyed a distinguished career in both public and private school systems in four states. Toliver holds a DMA from North Dakota State University, an MM from Arizona State University, and a BM from Concordia College, Moorhead.

Western Illinois University University Singers



The Western Illinois University Singers is the “flagship,” auditioned choral ensemble at WIU. University Singers performs diverse repertoire from Renaissance to contemporary commercial music with special focus on versatility and authenticity of voice quality. Membership is open to all university students, most of whom

receive talent grant awards. This award-winning ensemble presents six major concerts each year, including a student choral conductor’s concert and a yearly masterworks concert with the WIU Symphony Orchestra. The University Singers won the 2021 American Prize Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for the Performance of American Music (College/University Division).



Brian J. Winnie, DMA, is the director of choral studies at Western Illinois University, where he supervises the graduate choral conducting program; teaches courses in graduate and undergraduate choral conducting, pedagogy, and literature courses; and conducts the University Singers, Chamber Singers, and Treble Choir. He has worked with festival choirs throughout the United States and presented at international and national conferences on the topics of choral pedagogy, gesture, and voice training in the choral rehearsal. He is also an Estill Mentor and Course Instructor and Master Trainer of Estill Voice Training. He is the editor and contributing author to *The Voice Teacher’s Cookbook* and *The Choral Conductor’s Companion*.



Omaha, NE February 7-10, 2024

2024 ACDA Midwestern Region Conference

Interest Sessions

Beyond Repertoire Selection: Reimagining Your Whys

This session will focus on how repertoire selection can help choirs advance goals that go beyond musical standards. Following the Covid-19 pandemic, conductors and music teachers of all grade levels have reported new challenges in rebuilding their choral programs and helping their singers engage and connect in a group setting. This session will propose strategies for repertoire selection that will help conductors reflect on broader goals and choirs rejuvenate. While musical

growth should remain a core value for literature selection, the need to find text and music that help students connect emotionally and socially has never felt greater. Conductors will be invited to reimagine new “whys” in their search for music that speaks to broader programmatic needs and help students rebuild their ability to connect and form meaningful relationships.



Mariana Farah is the director of choral activities at UW-Madison, where she conducts the Concert Choir, Treble Choir, teaches courses in graduate choral conducting, and oversees all aspects of a com-

Interest Sessions

prehensive choral program. Prior to her appointment at UW-Madison, Farah served as the associate director of choral activities at the University of Kansas. Choirs under her leadership have successfully performed at the Missouri, Kansas, and Wisconsin MEA conventions and at the 2008 and 2018 Southwestern ACDA Conferences. In addition to her work at UW-Madison, Farah is often sought out for her expertise in Brazilian choral music. She has presented papers at NAFME and ACDA conventions and has served as the president-elect for SWACDA.



Liz Olson is in the second year of doctoral studies in choral conducting from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she was awarded the University Fellowship and serves as a choral teaching assistant.

At UW-Madison, Olson is the director of the Advanced Treble Choir, co-directs the University Chorus, and is Dr. Mariana Farah's research assistant. She presented her research on gender bias in choral music on a panel during the 2023 ACDA National Conference. She has earned degrees from the University of South Carolina and the University of Colorado Boulder.



Sam Speer is a second-year DMA student in choral conducting at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he is the conductor of the University Chorus and is also the TA for Chorale. A native of the

Rockies, Speer earned his MM and BM at Brigham Young University, where he conducted the University Chorale and taught conducting and sight-singing. He also sang baritone with the Madeleine Cathedral Choir in Salt Lake and was company manager for the Santa Fe Desert Chorale.

Breaking the Ice: Building Respectful Culture in the Choral Program

Since ensemble music making is inherently project-based, it is essential for students to operate healthily as a team as they reach their common goals. Team building in retreats as well as in class time will ensure that students work together respectfully. These enjoyable activities are pivotal to instructional needs because of their correlation to the National Core Arts Standards and National Institute for Excellence in Teaching Rubric. In this presentation, attendees will engage in various team-building activities designed to build community, create a healthy environment and respectful culture, and pave the way for student ownership in the choral ensemble.

Matthew Myers will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 20.



Sara Bray is in her seventh year as the choral director at St. Amant High School in Ascension Parish, Louisiana. She received her bachelor's from the University of South Dakota and her master's in choral

conducting from the University of North Dakota. Bray serves as the high school coordinator for the District IV Choral Directors Association, where she organizes the Louisiana MEA round one auditions and the District IV Honor Choir. She is an active performer, singing soprano with the Baton Rouge Artists of Choral Excellence and performing on stage with Ascension Community Theatre. She has also music directed stage productions with ACT and the St. Amant High School Theatre.

Choir as Garden: Rejuvenate the Choral Ensemble through a Flexible, Person-Centered Approach

Many choral ensembles take pride in offering singers a welcoming place to belong, relate to others, and experience freedom of expression. Unfortunately, sometimes singers in choral ensembles feel judged, taken-for-granted, or marginalized. How can choral leaders help every singer feel seen and valued while supporting individual singers' growth within the larger group? This session encourages choral leaders to reflect on their practices and to rejuvenate choral ensembles using the model of choir as a garden. When an ensemble is cared for as a garden, each singer grows in a dynamic ecosystem with others. Each voice is recognized, nurtured, and valued for the qualities it brings to the group. Session attendees will explore specific practices that honor all singers' voices. These practices include teaching and learning away from a printed score, inviting democratic leadership, facilitating creative and improvisatory activities, engaging in singer-led community-building, and encouraging varied vocal tone qualities and varied choral traditions.



Jennifer C. Hutton serves as a lecturer in choral music education at the Peck School of the Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where she teaches graduate and undergraduate music education courses and leads Bella Voce, the university's auditioned treble choir. For over two decades, she taught choral and general music to individuals of all ages in public-school, independent-school, and community settings. As a researcher, she studies connection during choral singing, culturally responsive vocal pedagogy, and teacher-student relationships in music classrooms. She received her PhD in music education from Temple University and is certified as an Estill Master Trainer.

Choir Reborn: The Joy of Authentic Expression

Many choral directors would like the singers in their choirs to be more facially and physically expressive, but they're not quite sure how to facilitate that expression. This interest session will present a practical technique that can immediately transform a choir's expressiveness, leading to a new connection with Self, the music, other singers, and audience members. Based on cutting-edge neuroscience and Method acting principles, this session is applicable to singers and directors of all levels. The session will begin with the participants and demonstration choir engaging in fun and simple exercises to illustrate the basic concepts. After these foundational ideas are explored, the participants will learn how singers can play with them while they sing. Using a very simple framework, the demonstration choir will apply these tools to some of their repertoire.



Tom Carter has sung in numerous choirs, including the San Jose State Choraliers under the direction of Dr. Charlene Archibque. A professional stage director and acting teacher as well as a singer, Carter combined his passions by working with the Choraliers and other choirs on stage presence. Although he conceived them with a college group, he continued to develop and hone his techniques while working with adult, high school, and children's groups. In 2005 he wrote *Choral Charisma: Singing with Expression*, and since then he has traveled across the country to work with choirs and present interest sessions. He previously worked as an English and drama teacher in Northern California.

Creating Meaningful Gatherings to Revitalize Music Ministries

This interactive and practical session will provide tools to revitalize ensembles in music ministry settings and enable meaningful experiences for singers and

Interest Sessions

congregation members. Based on concepts found in the book *The Art of Gathering* by Priya Parker, the first part of the session will present a framework about intentionally creating memorable events, rehearsals, and worship services to build stronger ensembles and communities. Stories from over fifteen years in music ministry will demonstrate how the concepts can be applied in a wide variety of contexts. In the second part of the session, attendees will brainstorm ideas. Attendees will have practical ideas to take back to their own worshiping communities and feel rejuvenated and empowered to make positive changes in their own context.



Austen Wilson is the director of music ministries at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Iowa City, Iowa, where he oversees a comprehensive music ministry of choral, handbell, and instrumental ensembles and works collaboratively with staff. He believes that music builds community, preaches the Gospel, helps us find belonging, and builds our faith. In addition to planning and leading worship, Wilson founded Melodious Harmony: Concerts at St. Andrew in 2023, which seeks to provide accessible, affordable, and inspirational performances for the Iowa City Community. He holds a BA from St. Olaf College and an MM from Colorado State University.

A Distant Music: Introducing Choral Music of Australia

Australian choral composers have long been active in writing music for choirs but are almost totally unrepresented by publishers in the United States. This session will introduce choir directors to this music and the themes that are reflected in this repertoire—some of which is distinctly Australian and much of which is universal. Participants will sing highlights, listen to recordings, and learn how to access these resources. Attendees will take valuable insights as well as a packet of samples. The session is intended to cover a wide span

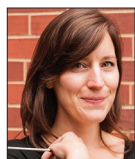
of repertoire for school, church, and community, but can be tailored to any one of these sectors.



Graeme Morton is considered one of Australia's most eclectic choral musicians. He is senior lecturer and choral fellow at the University of Queensland and director of music at St John's Episcopal Cathedral in Brisbane. He is also founder and director of the Brisbane Chamber Choir. He was the foundation conductor of The Australian Voices and artistic director of the National Youth Choir of Australia. He has commissioned many of the pieces that have become synonymous with Australian choral music, including *Past Life Melodies* (Hopkins) and *Ngana* (Leek). His compositions are published by Augsburg Fortress, Crescendo Music, and Morton Music.

Don't Fear the Reverb: Making Sound Technology Accessible

Whether you need a refresher on sound technology or to establish a foundation, join Nathan Edwards and Shannon Gravelle for a presentation and Q&A on sound technology. This all-encompassing session will provide an overview of some of the most common technical challenges that choral directors face. The goal is to capture or amplify the best possible quality of sound for the least amount of effort, complexity, and investment. This will allow directors to focus on what they care most about—the sound of the choir—while ensuring that the technical setup maximizes their sound. This presentation will provide a foundation so that directors who have sound technicians can communicate their needs most effectively, and directors without technicians can create quality recordings.



Shannon Gravelle is director of choral activities at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. Her current research examines how identity, gesture, and conducting

pedagogy intersect. Advocacy is a centerpiece of her community building. Other areas of research include silenced voices in music history, choral works of Russian composer Sergei Taneyev, early choral works of Johannes Brahms, life and works of Barbara Strozzi, and music education advocacy. In addition to conducting and scholarly activities, she enjoys singing, playing piano, collaborating with others, running, and going to baseball games.



Nathan Edwards is a professor, award-winning sound engineer, and music creator from Wisconsin. He is the director of audio production at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh and previously served as assistant professor of audio technology in the digital arts and design program at Dakota State University in South Dakota. His musical work has been featured on MLB Network, WWE Network, CTV Television Network, American Public Media, Oprah Winfrey Network, and on popular podcasts and YouTube channels. He has had audio/visual work featured in numerous museums and art centers, as well as at conferences including the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music National Conference and Electronic Music Midwest.

Eco-Choral Music: Mobilizing the Choral Art for Environmental Activism

In the Western choral tradition, there has recently been a growing trend to address important social concerns through new compositions and innovative programming. One of the subgenres of this socially conscious repertoire is music that focuses on environmentalism and the growing anxiety regarding climate change. This presentation will address recent activity in the eco-choral genre, including new compositions, grassroots movements in the U.S., and current sociological and psychological research related to the topic. Musical examples from recent compositions will be shared. A case will be made for choral music's utility

in mobilizing an effective environmentalist movement within the field and strategies for achieving a synergistic course of action. With hundreds of thousands of singers participating in choral music worldwide, a coordinated campaign to address climate change through singing could produce a powerful forum for conversation, education, and action.

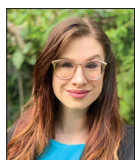


Kirsten Hedegaard has enjoyed a varied career as a singer and conductor. Currently director of choral and vocal activities at Loyola University Chicago, Hedegaard is also artistic director of Voices of Madonna and Bella Voce Camerata. As a singer, she has appeared with ensembles across the country. As co-founder of The EcoVoice Project and artistic director of the New Earth Ensemble, Hedegaard is dedicated to bringing together musicians to explore how the arts can support environmental action.

Experiences of Gender Nonconforming Students in the Choral Classroom

The goal of this session is to give current and pre-service music educators recommendations for the creation of safe learning environments from the perspectives of gender nonconforming choral students and their teachers. Traditionally, biological sex has contributed to choices that choir teachers make regarding students' voice part identification, uniform, repertoire, ensemble names, and more. People who do not express their gender in a way that matches their biological sex are known as gender nonconforming. This presentation will outline existing research on the experiences of choir students who identify as transgender, nonbinary, or gender nonconforming, provide examples of vocal exercises appropriate for trans voices, video interviews from gender nonconforming choral students, and steps educators can take to ensure they are creating a safe, welcoming choral learning space for all students.

Interest Sessions



Jessica L. G. Steuver (pronounced STY-ver), she/her, is a PhD student in music education at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH. Her research interests include intersectional feminism in music, theater, musical catharsis, choral curriculum and assessment, and mental health and choral participation post-pandemic. In addition to her work as a graduate assistant, Steuver serves as the artistic director for University Chorale at CWRU and Windsong, Cleveland's Feminist Chorus. She holds degrees from Bowling Green State University (BM) and University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music (MM).

Gender Issues and a Brief Introduction of Choral Literature by Eastern Asian Female Composers

This research presentation focuses on gender issues in Eastern Asian choral literature and underrepresented Eastern Asian composers. This research study addresses the gender issue and bias toward female composers in Eastern Asian musical cultures and argues that the underrepresentation of female composers and compositions in the Eastern Asian Choral Canon shares astonishing similarities to the gender issue in the Western European Classical Music Canon.



Pingyi Song is the director of choral activities at Coker University, SC. As an active conductor and clinician in the U.S. and China, Song is dedicated to promoting cultural exchange between Western and Eastern Asian Music. Song's research was presented at the 2023 National ACDA Conference. Song holds a Choral Summer School Certificate from Oxford University, U.K., a DMA degree, and a PBC certificate in music education from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, and other degrees from West Virginia University, Mansfield University of Pennsylvania, and Guangzhou University, China.

Improving Vocal Ensemble Intonation

Seeking to "rejuvenate" our choral sound, this session focuses on concrete tools and vocal/choral exercises to strengthen the ears of choristers for more consistent intonation and more focused vocal production. Attendees will learn the methodology behind various ensemble exercises and will participate in singing example exercises that can be brought home to their own choirs. Research behind these exercises is based partially on Edwin Gordon's music learning theory and also the research of the presenter. This session gives tools for exploring intonation without bias toward any particular choral sound or genre.



Albert Pinsonneault is director of choral activities at the University of St. Thomas, where he conducts the Chamber Singers and Concert Choir and teaches in the graduate program in choral music education. Pinsonneault is also founder and artistic director of the Madison Choral Project, Wisconsin's only fully professional chamber choir. Previously he was associate director of choral organizations at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music. He is a graduate of St. Olaf College (BM), the University of Minnesota (MM), and the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati (DMA).

Interactive Concerts and Refreshing Ways to Engage Audiences

This session proposes simple strategies for informing, inspiring, and connecting to audiences through interactive concerts. While program notes and onstage remarks do help orient listeners, actively engaging audiences leads to more soul-stirring listening experiences and builds community in the concert hall. This session will demonstrate how to engage audiences by selecting an effective aesthetic "entry point" into a piece of

choral music, connecting to what the average listener already knows, and creating an interactive experience that hooks listeners before they hear the concert in its entirety. Attendees will act as a sample audience and will leave this session with a collection of interactive concert activities, games, and unique concert formats for different types of choral pieces.



Lindsey Bruner Woodcock is director of choral activities and coordinator of music education at Meredith College in Raleigh, North Carolina. She directs three choral ensembles and teaches conducting,

secondary choral methods, and elementary music methods. Bruner Woodcock holds degrees from the University of Georgia, University of Iowa, and Iowa State University. As a singer and double bassist, she has immersed herself in community music making and has held leadership roles in numerous civic music organizations. Her doctoral research is focused on audience engagement and the ways in which interactive performances can enhance the concert experience.

Joy in the Groove: Percussion Techniques for the Choral Conductor

Adding percussion instruments into a choral rehearsal can quickly rejuvenate our repertoire and spark great joy in our singers. While many contemporary choral composers write music with percussion accompaniment, often “ad lib” is the only instruction. Whether you are playing the part yourself or helping students find success, playing technique can drastically augment or diminish a performance. This hands-on session will provide playing techniques for all levels of experience, sample repertoire from across the globe, survey a wide variety of Western and non-Western percussion instruments, and explore substitutions when instruments are not readily available. Participants will leave inspired and more confident to incorporate percussion into rehearsals and performance.



Adam Zrust is director of choral studies and assistant professor of choral music education at Northwest Missouri State University. He maintains an active schedule conducting honor choirs and is frequently invited to present at various conferences across the United States and abroad. Zrust’s scholarly expertise is grounded in rehearsal efficiency. Zrust earned a PhD and MME in choral conducting and music education from the Florida State University and holds degrees in music business and music education from the University of Nebraska-Kearney.



Will Alderman serves as the professor of percussion and music theory at Northwest Missouri State University. An avid performer and composer, Alderman has toured and premiered works in a variety of mediums worldwide. Currently, he performs with his quartet, Without Borders, which has recorded and released its own marimba quartet transcription of Béla Bartók’s *String Quartet No. 5*. The ensemble has performed the work in Taiwan, Japan, and throughout the United States.

Mind, Body, Voice: Boosting Choristers’ Potential through Body-Mind Warm-Ups

Choir singing requires energy, engagement, and readiness. To achieve the full potential of expression, vocal technique, and musicality, singers and conductors must train their bodies and minds as they train their voices and music. This interactive and practical session will provide conductors and teachers of any choir level with a systematic approach to body and mind engagement in warm-ups and rehearsals, rooted in the Alexander Technique, Yoga, Tai Chi, and workout sequences. Each activity will accompany a science-based explanation of how physical exercises can impact students’ ability to engage, focus, improve their vocal technique, enhance body presence, and build a strong community

Interest Sessions

in the classroom. In addition, this session will provide alternative exercises to promote inclusive practice.



Letícia Grützmann's career as a conductor, singer, and active clinician spans over fifteen years. As a Brazilian artist, she has performed in Europe and North and South America. In 2023, Grützmann was appointed the assistant professor, director of choral activities at the Saginaw Valley State University, Michigan. She conducts the Cardinal Singers and the Concert Choir and teaches conducting and voice area classes. Her research is dedicated to developing mind-body-based techniques for choirs since she incorporated the Alexander Technique into her teaching philosophy.

Mirror, Mirror

Ensemble conductors often feel as though we are racing against the clock, constantly attempting to balance the needs of our students, administrators, community, colleagues, and ourselves. Often, in an effort to “save time,” conductors develop habits that unintentionally work against our best efforts for efficient and effective rehearsals. Drawing on her experience as a classroom teacher, ensemble conductor, and student teacher supervisor, Emilie Bertram will offer observations of common problems that may not be working in your favor, as well as tips to address the issue. This session is primarily aimed at teachers who are five years or less into their journey, but also offers opportunity for all conductors to reflect on their teaching behaviors.



Emilie Bertram serves as DCA, department chair, and assistant professor at Waldorf University, where she directs the Waldorf Choir, Schola Cantorum, and teaches conducting and methods

coursework. Bertram's ensembles frequently perform throughout the United States and abroad. She has collaborated with groups such as ASTER Women's Chorus, Nordkor Children's Choir, and Una Vocis Choral Ensemble. An active clinician, adjudicator, and scholar, her research “Utilizing the Principles of Storytelling to Create Engaging Concert Programs” was featured in the *Choral Journal* (2021). She holds degrees from University of Colorado Boulder, Ithaca College, and Concordia College.

Nosotros Existimos: Mexican Choral Repertoire and Resources

The goal of *Nosotros Existimos* is inclusion and belonging for the choral conductor's students and community through programming. This session's information on Mexican repertoire and resources through handouts and websites will connect our growing Chicano/a/e student population to this large body of music. By the end, attendees will have more insight on Mexican choral music history, know where to find Mexican and indigenous repertoire, and have access to resources to lead culturally responsive performances. Using this session's offerings, participants can generate deeper belonging amongst their students and community, share unheard voices, and continue to build community through music.

Raul Dominguez will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 25.

Raising Up the Treble Choir

Treble choirs play a vital role in our choral community but often hold a middle role in our choral programs. In this session, we'll explore the treble choir from multiple angles—equitable structure and role, strength of community, and diversity of sound—and seek to expand the parameters and potential of modern treble ensembles. A central component will be a participatory exploration of healthy “brassy” and “lofted” timbres that can open up a palette of tone and expression to use across widely diverse repertoire. The Cantamus ensemble from Iowa State University will demonstrate distinct vocal timbres. Student leaders will present on the ensemble's community and culture, including an alum who conducted research observing the social dynamics, leadership, and practical functioning of the choir.

Jennifer Rodgers will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 41.

Rejoicing in O\ur Diversity: Teaching Traditional South African Choral Music

This session will give an overview of the traditional languages found in South Africa and how to prepare to teach traditional South African choral music to your choir. The presenter will focus on authenticity, the importance of textual research, appropriate choreography, and authentic inclusion of percussive accompaniment. Some attention will be given to clarifying social, political, and religious contexts of six to eight selected pieces. The presenter will also cover the pronunciation of the most common clicks, unique consonants, and other unusual sounds. The attendees will sing through sections and practice pronunciation with the presenter.



Gerrit Scheepers, director of choirs and assistant professor of music at South Dakota Mines, hails from South Africa. He previously served as director of choral

studies at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Scheepers has worked as guest conductor and clinician for various high schools and festivals across the United States, Europe, and South Africa. He is also sought after internationally as an external examiner of master and doctoral dissertations in choral music. Recent professional engagements include presenting at the International Conference on Arts and Humanities (IICAH) in 2023 in Honolulu, HI.

A Rondo Reconciliation and Renewal: A Black History Month Concert of Connection, Healing, and Transformation

As choral artists and educators, we are called to respond to the recent issues of racial injustice and violence, yet doing so can be fraught with conflict and controversy. This session shares a process of how groups of musicians from within and beyond the Rondo neighborhood of St. Paul, Minnesota, came together to jointly heal. Activities included service projects, artist/social activist panel discussions, and a community supper with facilitated table dialogue. The collaboration grew out of relationships built over the years between Concordia University, St. Paul's music program, Walker|West Music Academy (a community music school uplifting Black musical culture), Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church (a prominent Rondo Black church), 29:11 International Exchange from South Africa, NUNNABOVE, and other area partners.



David Mennicke has been Concordia University, St. Paul director of choral studies since 1989, with degrees from St. Olaf College and the University of Arizona. He has conducted 300+ festivals/guest choirs in the U.S., MidEast, Europe, and Africa, including: ACDA-MN All-State Children's Choir, MMEA All-State Tenor/Bass Choir, Lutheran Summer Music, National Lutheran Choir. He was in the Grammy-winning Oregon Bach Festival Chorus and is currently a tenor section leader in the Minnesota Cho-

Interest Sessions

rable. 29:11 International Exchange is a professional music ministry from South Africa. The ensemble has been a featured collaborator with the Minnesota Orchestra on each of 29:11's last three U.S. tours.



Carl Clomon is the music director for the Amazing Grace Chorus and minister of music at Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church. He composes pop, R&B, classical, and jazz tunes, specializing in gospel music. He has produced concerts at Twin Cities major venues, has performed as a keyboardist with national and international recording artists, and has led music clinics and workshops locally. He chaired the board of directors for Gospel Choirs United for over twenty-five years. Clomon completed a music composition major at Concordia University, St. Paul, in 2023 and is pursuing a master of business administration from the University of St. Thomas.

Singing Makes the World Go 'Round: A Relational Pedagogy

This session will use singing and interactive elements to invite participants to consider a pedagogy of relationships that fosters belonging, awakens artistry, empowers creativity, affirms identities, and creates a space for courageous singing that seeks to bridge across differences. Members of the VocalEssence Singers Of This Age (SOTA) will share how the "family" has shaped their lives in ways both expected and unexpected. Four SOTA case studies will provide a framework for embracing transformational relationships that nurture the development of diverse choral communities, and provide more compelling musical experiences for our singers, our communities, and ourselves.

G Phillip Shoultz III will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 46.

Sounds Before Sight: Sight-Reading with Voice Quality

Research suggests that better sight-readers tend to be better performers. Yet few research studies have investigated the effect of voice quality training on pitch accuracy, intonation, and expressive sight-singing scores. This workshop will explore the commonly assessed categories of sight-singing and integrate a "sounds first" perspective using the principles of Estill Voice Training. These categories include rhythm, tempo, pitch, tone, intonation, and expression (including phrasing, articulation, and dynamics). We will answer questions about sequence of instruction and how many elements to focus on at one time and will also discuss strategies to teach students how to analyze a score before sight-singing. Participants will actively engage in a sight-singing activity and label their attractor state habits.

Brian J. Winnie will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 47.

The Virtuoso Conductor: Solutions for the Most Challenging Conducting Problems

This session is a deep dive into the most challenging conducting problems and practical solutions so our gestures are clear and artistically communicate the composer's intent. Using excerpts from the repertoire, Frank Eychaner will identify specific challenges and then lead participants to effectively conduct the music themselves. Some topics to be addressed will include the four types of fermatas, tempo changes, utilizing dry beats and beats of de-emphasis to effectively communicate the artistry of a work, achieving an independent left hand and its essential role in artistry, understanding how publishers use notation to reveal the composer's intent, effectively conducting asymmetrical meter,

changing meter, how to mark difficult scores, and more. Session participants will be conducting for the majority of the session. There will be a generous resource packet with diagrams, excerpts, and links to resources.



Frank F. Eychaner is an internationally celebrated conductor, teacher, author, and clinician. He is professor, director of choral activities, music department chair, and endowed professor in the Humanities at the University of Texas Permian Basin. He has conducted honor choirs across the US, in Cuba, Korea, and Mexico. Eychaner is the author of *Foundations of Conducting Technique* published with GIA and has presented 140 sessions around the world. He has directed choirs at nine professional conferences. Most recently, the UTPB choir performed as insight choir at the 2023 National ACDA Conference, featuring commissioned works from composers from diverse backgrounds.

Vocal Pedagogy for Choral Students

This session will focus on key elements for developing the voices of choral students. The human voice is a powerful tool. Singers use their voices to express meaning and emotion in vocal literature. However, this cannot be effectively achieved without a basic understanding of how the vocal mechanism functions. Many students will enter the choral classroom with a love of singing but knowing little about healthy vocal production. Choral students who have a strong foundation in vocal pedagogy will also foster good vocal habits, prevent vocal injuries, and contribute to a balanced choral sound. Participants in this session will gain knowledge and tools to assist choral students in achieving their full vocal potential.



Tamarceo Shaw is a male soprano and voice teacher from Florence, Mississippi. He graduated from Simpson College with a BM (Voice), Austin Peay State University with an MM in vocal performance,

and Auburn University with an educational specialist degree in vocal music education. His unique soprano voice has afforded him the ability to shape a career as a solo artist. Shaw has presented his research in vocal pedagogy at conferences through MTNA, ACDA, and NAFME. In 2022 he was awarded a Teacher Enrichment Grant by the Music Teachers National Association Foundation Fund. Currently, Tamarceo is working on his PhD in vocal music education at Auburn University.

PURSUE YOUR PASSION

AUDITION DATES

Wednesday, January 24, 2024

Saturday, February 10, 2024

Saturday, March 2, 2024

uwec.ly/mus-the

Department of Music
and Theatre Arts

University of Wisconsin
Eau Claire

Interest Sessions

Voices in Transition: Gender Inclusive Choral Voicings

The session will provide choral voicing options to meet the needs of both the changing transgender voice and those of cis-gender singers. As choir directors are faced with more students who identify as transgender, the need to be able to choose literature that meets those needs is imperative. In addition to existing voicings, options for adapting scores with a new “flex” part using guidelines created by Stevie J. Hirner will be included.

Roger Emerson will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 27.

You Are the Voice Teacher: Teaching Technique and Authenticity of Vocal Production in Choral Singing

“Blend. Drop your jaw. Straight tone. Darker.” Most people have likely heard one of these phrases before in a choir, but do these ideas really help inexperienced singers? What terminology can we use to give clarity to singers that connects them in a relatable way and takes away some of the mystery? By bringing concepts and skills from voice pedagogy into the choral rehearsal, conductors can better support their singers in their vocal development. This session will provide practical applications of how to teach singers to find and use their authentic voices by sharing suggestions from various vocal pedagogy approaches, including Estill Voice. It is applicable to directors working with high school, college and older community singers.



Amy Johnston Blosser was the auditioned choirs chair for the 2023 ACDA National Conference and for nine years was on the national board as the R&R committee chairperson. Since 2013 she has served on the national conference planning com-

mittees. Under her direction, Bexley H.S. Vocal Ensemble has performed at NAFME and ACDA state conferences, including Central Region performances in 2012, 2016, and 2020. Blosser is the associate director of music at First Community Church and the artistic director of the Bexley Choral Society. She was selected to serve as one of fourteen conducting fellows for the 2015 ACDA International Conductors Exchange Program to Sweden.



C. Andrew Blosser serves on the voice faculty at The Ohio State University, and is the director of music at First Community Church in Columbus, Ohio. He has presented master classes, performed roles, and given recitals throughout the United States and Europe. Blosser has been a featured soloist with orchestras and ensembles throughout the Midwest. He served as cantor for services at the Berlin Cathedral, as well as soloist for Mozart’s *Missa Longa* at the Salzburg Cathedral. A recent project includes a performance on the recital *Singing Our History*, the American story told through the works of American composers, at NATS. Blosser holds degrees from The Ohio State University (DMA & MM) and Capital University (BM).

Midwestern Region Registration Information

Register at acda.org/region-conferences

Attendee \$290 Retired \$215 Student \$100

Registration after 11:59 PM CST January 17, 2024

Attendee \$340 Retired \$240 Student \$120

One-Day Registration \$190 (only available on-site)

Honor Choir Conductors

Elementary



Melissa Trevino Keylock serves as artistic director and executive director of the San Diego North Coast Singers. She taught eleven years at the Princeton Girlchoir, and previously worked at American Boychoir School, Rider University, and the Indianapolis Children's Choir. She founded the annual Princeton Girlchoir Children Making a Difference benefit concert, raising over \$30,000 for non-profits. She has taught public and private school, including K-12 vocal music and AP Music Theory. Throughout her career, Trevino Keylock has served in state and regional leadership positions with ACDA. She holds an undergraduate degree from Wheaton College and an MM from Butler University, and directed the Butler University Women's Glee Club. She completed her Kodály studies at Capital University.

High School TB



Giselle Wyers is the Donald E. Petersen Endowed Professor of Choral Music at the University of Washington, as well as conducting the fifty-voice Concord within the Columbia Choirs consortium. As a guest conductor, Wyers has led honor choirs and all-state choirs in fourteen states and in Canada, as well as working with semi-professional ensembles across Europe. She serves as an editorial board member for *Choral Journal* as well as a member of ACDA's Standing Committee on International Activities. She has composed thirty choral works, often on texts situated around her ardent love and pervasive concern for protecting nature.

Middle School Mixed

High School SA



David Rayl recently retired as director of choral programs and senior associate dean for graduate studies and research and creative endeavors at the Michigan State University College of Music. In his twenty-one years at MSU, he mentored over 130 graduate students in choral conducting. Under his baton, MSU's University Chorale appeared at the 2007 ACDA National Conference. He also prepared the Chorale for eight sets of performances with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and regularly served as guest conductor with the Lansing Symphony Orchestra, leading large-scale choral-orchestral works. Rayl received MSU's University Distinguished Faculty Award (2013) and the Simmons-Chivukula Award for Academic Leadership (2019), and the College of Music's Withrow Award for Excellence in Teaching (2009).



Brandon A. Boyd is the director of choral activities and the graduate choral conducting program and associate professor of choral music education at the University of Missouri-Columbia. As an active composer and arranger, his music is sung regularly by ensembles throughout the United States and abroad. He is the curator and editor of the Brandon A. Boyd Choral Series, a choral series with Hinshaw Music Publications. His music also appears in the catalogs of Gentry Publications, Hinshaw Music Company, MorningStar, GIA, and Kjos Music Press. In addition, he is the executive choral editor of Gentry Publications. He holds two degrees from Florida State University (PhD and MM) and earned a BME (emphasis in piano) from Tennessee State University. Boyd also serves as a member of the National ACDA Composition Initiatives Committee.



"Tiboris' execution of the massive score... was alive with such sincerity as must transport any expression... polished fire... great performance" — Emerson Randolph, "Polished Fire of Verdi's Requiem Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center," Washington Times Washington D.C.

"Tiboris' performance was one of the most exciting and inspiring I've ever heard of this masterwork, whatever the edition." — Bill Zakariasen, "Beethoven Symphony No. 9 Op. 125 (with Gustav Mahler's orchestration, New York Premiere," The Daily News New York, NY

Peter Tiboris: A Musical Odyssey is a book length biography of internationally acclaimed conductor, music director and producer Peter Tiboris. The book follows Peter Tiboris' life chronologically and it is divided into six chapters. It details a life devoted to music and the ways Tiboris benefitted from the support of his father and other family members, how a number of close and trusted friends collaborators enabled his dreams to come true, how his company MidAmerica Productions became inextricably linked with Carnegie Hall, and how major composers and their works inspired and sustained his commitment to share his love of music with the world. The book includes photographs that illustrate Tiboris's life and career, and a number of appendices which include listings of all his domestic and professional engagements and the conductors and choirs that performed under the auspices of MidAmerica Productions and MidAmerica International at Carnegie Hall, and elsewhere around the world, as well as at the Festival of the Aegean at the Apollo Theater on the island of Syros in Greece.



For information on the purchase of this biography, please write:
Jkahn@midamerica-music.com

All proceeds from sales of this book will be donated to the
ACDA Endowment at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation.



PETER TIBORIS

A MUSICAL ODYSSEY

ON HIS 75TH YEAR
AND THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF MIDAMERICA PRODUCTIONS, INC.
AND MIDAM INTERNATIONAL, INC.
1984 TO 2024

FOREWORD BY JOHN RUTTER, CBE
BY ALEXANDER KITROEFF



ROSEVILLE, MINNESOTA

Saturday, January 13 • 7:00 p.m.
Roseville Lutheran Church

ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

Sunday, January 14 • 4:00 p.m.
Zumbro Lutheran Church

DAVENPORT, IOWA

Saturday, January 27 • 7:30 p.m.
St. Paul Lutheran Church

HUNTLEY, ILLINOIS

Sunday, January 28 • 4:00 p.m.
Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church

MARSHFIELD, WISCONSIN

Monday, January 29 • 7:00 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church

BRAINERD, MINNESOTA

Tuesday, January 30 • 7:00 p.m.
Gichi-ziibi Center for the Arts

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

Thursday, February 1 • 7:00 p.m.
Presbyterian Church of the Cross

DES MOINES, IOWA

Friday, February 2 • 7:00 p.m.
St. John's Lutheran Church

MASON CITY, IOWA

Saturday, February 3 • 7:00 p.m.
Trinity Lutheran Church

IOWA CITY, IOWA

Sunday, February 4 • 2:30 p.m.
St. Andrew Presbyterian Church

DECORAH, IOWA

Tuesday, February 6 • 7:30 p.m.
Luther College
(tour homecoming)



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**LUTHER
COLLEGE**

Headliners/Special Events

Headliners

Chanticleer



The Grammy Award-winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer has been hailed as “the world’s reigning male chorus” by *The New Yorker* and is known around the world for its wide-ranging repertoire and dazzling virtuosity. Founded in San Francisco in 1978 by singer and musicologist Louis Botto, Chanticleer quickly took its place as one of the most prolific recording and touring ensembles in the world, selling over one million recordings and performing thousands of live concerts. The ensemble has garnered Grammy Awards for its recording of Sir John Tavener’s “Lamentations & Praises,” and the ambitious collection of commissioned works titled “Colors of Love.” Chanticleer is the recipient of the Dale Warland/Chorus America Commissioning Award and the ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming.



Tim Keeler is music director of the San Francisco-based, Grammy Award-winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer. Prior to moving to San Francisco, he forged a career as an active conductor, singer, and educator in New York City. He has sung with New York Polyphony, The Clarion Choir, the Choir of Trinity Wall Street, the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and

Boys, TENET, and Ekmeles. As an educator, he has directed the University of Maryland Men’s Chorus, served as director of choirs at the Special Music School High School in Manhattan, and was also the choral conductor for Juilliard’s new Summer Performing Arts program.

The Soldiers’ Chorus of The U. S. Army Field Band



The Soldiers’ Chorus, founded in 1957, is the vocal complement of the United States Army Field Band of Washington, DC. The twenty-nine-member mixed choral ensemble travels throughout the nation and abroad, performing as a separate component and in joint concerts with the Concert Band of the “Musical Ambassadors of the Army.” The chorus has performed in all fifty states, Canada, Mexico, India, the Far East, and throughout Europe, entertaining audiences of all ages. In addition to presenting selections from the vast choral repertoire, Soldiers’ Chorus performances often include the music of Broadway, opera, barbershop quartet, and Americana. Most recently, the Soldiers’ Chorus co-commissioned *The Falling* and *The Rising: A New American Opera*, appeared on the CBS broadcast *Songs of Service*, and was featured on the Grammy Award-winning album *Soundtrack of the American Soldier*.

Headliners/Special Events



Captain **Curran Schenck** became the associate bandmaster of The United States Army Field Band in September 2022. He is director and officer-in-charge of the Soldiers' Chorus and Six String Soldiers.

Prior to this assignment, he served as the executive officer of The United States Army Europe and Africa Band and Chorus in Sembach, Germany. He began his military service in 2010 as an enlisted trumpet player and served with the 25th Infantry Division Band, 10th Mountain Division Band, Army Ground Forces Band, and 392nd Army Band. Prior to joining the Army, he was a band director in central Florida. He holds a BME from the Florida State University."



and music videos have won accolades and entertained fans worldwide. OneVoice has earned dozens of nominations and wins for the Contemporary A Cappella Awards.

Opening Night Concert

"One Night Only!" This opening night concert will feature the best of pop a cappella groups from the Southern Region: OneVoice from Briarcrest Christian School, Eads, TN; Spirit of Southern from The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS; and The Pitchmen from Belmont University, Nashville, TN. These award-winning groups sing with energy, musicality, and will present arrangements that appeal to a wide audience.

Briarcrest Christian School OneVoice

Under the direction of Dr. J.D. Frizzell, Sony Recording artist OneVoice has become a leader in the contemporary a cappella movement. OneVoice has collaborated with multiple Grammy winners, including Foreigner, The Swingles, and New York Voices. They have performed at the Emmy's 70th Annual Governors Ball, The Sing-Off Live! Tour, two regional ACDA conferences, The London A Cappella Festival, and the National A Cappella Convention. With over 100 million streams and downloads, their audio recordings

University of Southern Mississippi Spirit of Southern



Spirit of Southern is the premier pop a cappella ensemble at The University of Southern Mississippi. The group performs at a variety of university and community events in and around the Hattiesburg area and serves as one of the primary recruitment arms of choral activities. The students in this group range from all undergraduate levels of study and come from various academic fields. They have been honored with invitations to perform at Mississippi ACDA/Mississippi MEA conferences. Spirit of Southern is under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Kilgore.

Belmont University The Pitchmen



The Pitchmen are Belmont University's all-male-identifying a cappella group from Nashville, Tennessee. From their debut album, *Ultraviolet*, to becoming the 2023 ICCA Champions and taking home numerous awards for outstanding soloists, outstanding choreography, and outstanding vocal percussion throughout the competition season, the student-run group prides themselves on singing a broad range of music that offers something different for each and every audience member to enjoy. This year, every group member comes from a diverse background and brings with them an array of unique talents and perspectives. The group sets high standards for the character of their members and is known for the welcoming atmosphere they strive to create.

Worship Experience

Under the Firmament of Heaven: A Creation Service

In the resplendent Cathedral of the Assumption, our worship experience explores ancient stories and themes of creation, fallen humanity, and ultimate redemption through God's vision for a community connected by divine love. The worship design team, led by composer/creators Benedict and Talia Sheehan and lyricist/poet Tony Silvestri, has developed a transfor-

mative experience of ancient chant; festive hymns for voices, brass, and handbells; original compositions by Benedict Sheehan; congregational anthems written by Dan Forrest and Tony Silvestri; and music and texts from myriad traditions. Pianist/composer Dan Forrest, The Chancel Choir of Christ Church UMC, the Bronze Ringers of Floyd Central (IN) High School, and professional ensemble Artefact lead our worship.

Artefact Ensemble



Artefact Ensemble brings together leading vocal artists from around the country to craft immersive experiences of human connection through the transforming power of song. Partnering with schools, community organizations, and religious institutions, Artefact Ensemble—in collaboration with its sister organization, Artefact Institute—offers workshops, masterclasses, and co-operative music-making experiences to students, teachers of music, music ministers, and underprivileged audiences who might not otherwise have access to high-level ensemble music. In 2021, Artefact was featured at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, performing the world premiere of Arvo Pärt's *O Holy Father Nicholas*.



Benedict Sheehan is a two-time Grammy nominee and American Prize winner. He has been called “a choral conductor and composer to watch in the 21st century” (ConcertoNet). He is artistic director and founder of Artefact Ensemble and the Grammy-

Headliners/Special Events

nominated Saint Tikhon Choir, and artist-in-residence at St. Tikhon's Monastery in Pennsylvania. His works have been described as "brilliant" (*Choir & Organ*), "otherworldly" (*Boston Musical Intelligencer*), "evocative" (*Gramophone*), "extraordinary" (*Limelight*), and "simply beyond praise for excellence" (*Fanfare*). His music is published by Oxford University Press and Artefact Publications and has been performed by many of the world's leading vocal ensembles.

Blosser became the artistic director of the Louisville Chorus, one of Kentucky's oldest choral arts organizations. He is a former conducting fellow of the May Festival Chorus in Cincinnati, and he has held faculty positions at Butler University, the University of Indianapolis, and Covenant Christian High School. He holds degrees in choral conducting from CCM and Indiana University, and a BME from the University of Indianapolis.

Christ Church UMC Chancel Choir



The Chancel Choir of Christ Church United Methodist is renowned in Louisville for its musical excellence, commitment to service, and dedication to its community. In addition to their weekly musical offerings in Sunday morning worship, the Chancel Choir performs concerts throughout the year that raise tens of thousands of dollars annually for social agencies and non-profits both home and abroad. The choir is completely non-auditioned and fully volunteer, believing that by making music together, we grow in relationship with one another, learn to trust one another, see the value in one another, and share in adventures that build lifelong memories.



Daniel Blosser is the director of music and worship at Christ Church United Methodist, where he conducts five choirs and oversees their robust music program of over five hundred volunteers. In 2023,

Floyd Central High School Bronze Ringers



Floyd Central High School's two curricular handbell ensembles are a unique component of our music department. Floyd Central Bronze Ringers has sixteen ringers in grades 10-12. FCHS Handbell Ensembles are members of Handbell Musicians of America. The group performs on a 5-octave set of Schulmerich bells, a 3-1/2 octave set of Schulmerich bells, 5 octaves of Schulmerich chimes, lower 6th and 7th octave Malmark chimes, and 2 octaves of Schulmerich Silver Melody Bells. Members have been selected for the Indiana All-State Handbell Ensemble as well as the National Honors Handbell Ensemble.

Angela Vaughan Hampton is in her twenty-ninth year as director of choral music and handbells at Floyd Central High School, where she directs four choirs and two



handbell ensembles. In addition, she is the music director for Floyd Central's Theatre Arts Department. She is also the artistic director of Voces Novae, a semi-professional chorus in Louisville, and a freelance collaborative pianist. She holds degrees from the University of Louisville and is a National Board Certified Teacher.



Charles Anthony Silvestri has provided custom poetry, libretti, and other texts over a decades-long career to almost a hundred composers globally. He has written for and worked with world-class ensembles such as VOCES 8, the King's Singers, HGO, and the Tallis Scholars. Silvestri speaks to choirs, classes, and concert audiences about his works, the creative process, the marriage of words and music, and his collaborative relationships with composers. He is the author of three books, including *A Silver Thread* (GIA 2019), a retrospective of almost twenty years of his lyric poetry. He teaches at Washburn University.



Talia Sheehan is a fourth-generation female church musician, ensemble singer, and music educator. She has performed with Cappella Romana, the Grammy-nominated Saint Tikhon Choir, the Grammy-nominated PaTRAM Institute Singers, and Artefact Ensemble. She is the director of the St. Tikhon's Music Program, a one-year intensive music leadership residency for Orthodox Christian church musicians. She teaches voice, music theory, and liturgical music, and directs three children's choirs and a women's choir. She is also the co-founder and program director of Artefact Institute, a collective of "culture creators" who work to build living contexts for the arts and community.



Dan Forrest's music ranges from major works for chorus and orchestra to smaller choral works, and is commissioned and performed around the world (including broadcasts on the BBC Proms and NPR

and recordings on the Decca, Sony, and Naxos labels). Forrest serves as editor at Beckenhurst Press and self-publishes his concert music through The Music of Dan Forrest. He currently chairs the National ACDA Composition Committee, serves as adjunct composition faculty at Furman University, mentors composers through the annual John Ness Beck Foundation Choral Composers' Workshop, and serves as artist-in-residence at Mitchell Road Presbyterian Church (Greenville, SC).



Jim Rittenhouse has been director of worship and music at Second Presbyterian Church, Louisville, since 2017. Second's Sanctuary Choir was featured as part of the ecumenical service at Southern ACDA in 2018. He recently conducted Haydn's *Creation* with the choirs from Second Presbyterian and St. Francis in the Fields Episcopal. He holds the performer's certificate and master of church music degrees from Southern Seminary. Rittenhouse is a frequent soloist with regional choral and chamber/orchestral ensembles, including the Louisville Orchestra and the Blanche Moyse Chorale in Vermont.



Samuel Libra is organist and assistant director of worship and music at Second Presbyterian Church of Louisville. A native of Minnesota, he graduated from Luther College in Iowa and completed graduate studies at the University of Washington. Libra can regularly be heard in worship and concert accompanying and performing solo works on organ, harpsichord, and piano. His research has focused on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, specifically the intersection between the organ and symphony, through the music of Charles-Marie Widor.

Performing Choirs

Apopka High School Belles



Belles, the premier treble choir at Apopka High school, frequently performs at local and national colleges/universities. Belles performed for the 2021 FL ACDA Conference and has performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Orchestra Hall, and Steinmetz Hall. Belles comprises students in grades 10-12 who are heavily involved in campus activities, playing sports, as members and officers in the Student Government Association, and as members of National Honor Society.



Sandra Shafer is the director of choirs at her alma mater Apopka High School and has twice been named Teacher of the Year at Liberty Middle School (2014) and Apopka High School (2022). Student choirs under her direction have consistently received superior ratings at district music performance assessment. As a performer, Shafer sings with the Orlando Sings Symphonic Chorus and Solaria Singers. In Orlando Sings, Shafer also conducts the SSAA ensemble, Harmonia. She is an active conductor, clinician, and adjudicator throughout Florida, and has presented sessions at conferences of the Florida MEA and the Florida Vocal Association. She holds a bachelor's from Stetson University in DeLand, FL.

Bak Middle School of the Arts Chorale



Chorale, the premier mixed chorus at BAK Middle School of the Arts in West Palm Beach, FL, strives to challenge its seventh- and eighth-grade members with demanding and interesting repertoire. Chorale is kept busy throughout the year by performing at community events and competing in festivals around the country. They consistently earn the highest ratings at district assessments and have a tremendous legacy of performing at state, region, and national ACDA conferences.



Jorge Valls holds a BME from Palm Beach Atlantic University. He is currently in his tenth year of teaching and his seventh year teaching at Bak Middle School of the Arts. In addition to Bak, he conducts the Men's Chorus for the Young Singers of the Palm Beaches. Previously, Valls built the choral program at Eagles Landing Middle School in Boca Raton and was the associate director for the Girl Choir of South Florida. He serves as the Middle School R&R Chair for Florida ACDA.



Carrie Leahy has taught for twenty-four years at the middle and high school levels in South Florida. She is currently in her second year teaching at Bak MSOA. Leahy grew up in Palm Beach County

and is honored to continue the tradition of choral excellence with students in her community. Her choruses consistently receive the highest ratings at music performance assessments and competition festivals. A former district chairperson of the Florida Vocal Association, Leahy holds a BME from the University of Miami and an MME from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

East Carolina University Chamber Singers

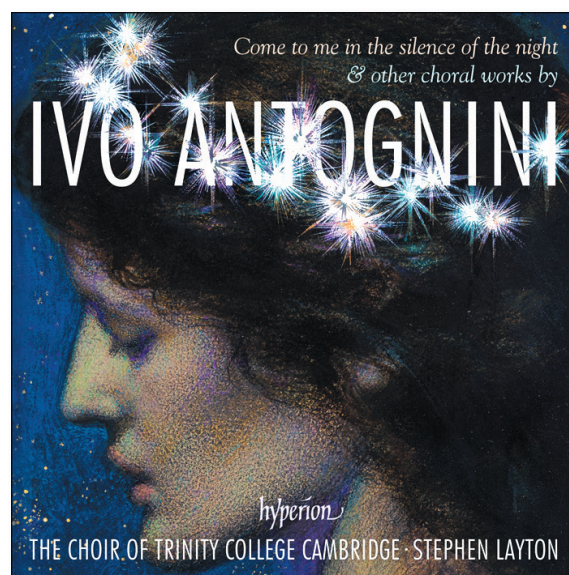


The ECU Chamber Singers is one of the premier choral ensembles in the United States. The ensemble maintains a vigorous performance and travel schedule and focuses predominantly on unaccompanied choral literature for advanced chamber choir. The group of 36-40 auditioned singers, primarily voice majors within the School of Music, has developed a national and international following due to a commitment to programming and performing quality choral music at the highest level. They have performed at various conferences, including National ACDA (2019), NCCO (2023), Southern ACDA (2020 and 2024), and North Carolina ACDA (2021).



James Franklin is the director of choral activities at East Carolina University, where he conducts the internationally renowned ECU Chamber Singers, conducts the University Chorale, directs the graduate program in choral conducting, and teaches

undergraduate conducting. In 2020, the ECU Chamber Singers won second place in The American Prize in Choral Performance in the college/university division. Franklin remains active as a guest conductor and clinician with invitations across the United States and abroad. In addition to his duties at ECU, he is a Grammy-nominated choral singer. Franklin holds degrees from Baylor University, Westminster Choir College, and the University of North Texas.



Includes six octavos published by
Alliance Music Publications

AMP 1150 **Come to Me**

AMP 0902 **O Magnum Mysterium**

AMP 1110 **Gloria in Excelsis**

AMP 1056 **Alleluia**

AMP 1074 **Those Tender Words**

AMP 1143 **The Angel**

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Performing Choirs

Florida State University Chamber Choir



The Florida State University Chamber Choir is an auditioned, SATB ensemble made up of graduate and undergraduate students, as well as FSU faculty and staff. The choir performs repertoire particularly suitable for a forty-voice ensemble and specializes in the performance of extended choral works. Recent performances include J. S. Bach's *St. John Passion*, Jocelyn Hagen's *The Notebooks of Leonardo DaVinci*, G. F. Handel's *Messiah*, Craig Hella Johnson's *Considering Matthew Shepard*, and Robert Ray's *Gospel Mass*.



Michael Hanawalt is the director of graduate choral studies at the Florida State University, where he conducts the Chamber Choir, teaches graduate courses in conducting and choral literature, and serves as artistic director for the Tallahassee Community Chorus. Hanawalt was executive director of the professional male vocal ensemble Cantus, recording twelve CDs, participating in 200 educational outreach events, and performing 500 concerts, including collaborations with the King's Singers, the Boston Pops, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the Minnesota Orchestra. Hanawalt is active as a tenor soloist, guest conductor, and arranger. Previous teaching appointments include St. Olaf College and Wichita State University, where he earned the College of Fine Arts Excellence in Teaching Award.

Hightower Trail Middle School Eighth-Grade Chorus



The Choral Department at HTMS has been under the direction of Kati Stewart since 2019. There are three non-auditioned ensembles: Sixth-Grade Chorus, Seventh-Grade Chorus, and Eighth-Grade Chorus. Students rehearse for fifty minutes daily in two separate classes per grade level. The program maintains a continuous membership of over 300 singers. HTMS Choirs consistently earn superior ratings at performance evaluations. Most recently, our eighth-grade chorus performed at Georgia MEA in 2023.



Kati Stewart has been teaching middle school chorus since 2014. In addition to teaching, she enjoys performing as a staff church vocalist, choral artist, wedding singer, and jazz vocalist. Stewart regularly performs around the Metro Atlanta area. She holds degrees from Kennesaw State University (BME) and the Florida State University (MME). She lives in Marietta with her husband, Chris Otts, and their dog, Archer.

Iron City Singers



Iron City Singers is a volunteer ensemble based in Birmingham, Alabama. Every ICS rehearsal and performance is paired with a scheduled social event, a chance for members to engage with each other away from rehearsal and to learn about each other as individuals. Old friendships are strengthened and new friendships are forged through a mutual passion for choral singing. Too often, ensemble singing is exclusive to schools or places of worship, but ICS offers the opportunity to sing with like-minded people simply as a member of the community.



Charles F. Henry is the founder and artistic director of Iron City Singers. He is serving his fifteenth year of public education in Alabama, currently at Thompson High School in Alabaster. Henry earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He has since led his choirs to earn superior ratings at state and regional performances and has thrice been invited to perform for the Alabama MEA Conference. He also holds an MM from the University of Georgia.



Taylor Stricklin is the choral director at Vestavia Hills High School. He earned his BME from Samford University and an MM from Louisiana State University. Prior to graduate study, Stricklin taught choral music at Dauphin Junior High School and Enterprise High School in Enterprise, AL. He currently sings in several professional ensembles: Red Shift, based in Baton Rouge, LA; and the Cahaba Chamber Chorale, based in Birmingham.

Southern Region Registration Information

Register at acda.org/region-conferences

Attendee \$295 Retired \$195 Student \$100

Registration after 11:59 PM CST January 31, 2024

Attendee \$315 Retired \$235 Student \$135

On-site registration

Attendee \$350 Retired \$250 Student \$150

One-Day Registration \$175 (only available on-site)

Performing Choirs

Lafayette High School Madrigal Singers



The Madrigal Singers are recognized for outstanding choral singing in a variety of styles and genres. The group has performed for the Kentucky MEA Conference (2009, 2015, 2020, 2024) and for the ACDA Southern Region Conference (2010, 2018, 2024) and was awarded two silver medals at the World Choir Games in Cincinnati in 2012. The choir won a gold diploma and the mixed youth choir category in the 2014 Sing 'N' Joy International competition in Louisville. The choir appeared as a featured choir at the Inaugural Music for All-National Choir Festival in 2018, and served as a demonstration choir for the conductors' masterclass with the late Dr. Joseph Flummerfelt.



Ryan Marsh holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Louisville. He holds National Board Certification in vocal music and has completed coursework at the doctoral level at the University of Kentucky. Marsh is in his twenty-first year as director of choirs, also teaching AP Music Theory and serving as the program coordinator for the School for Creative and Performing Arts magnet program at Lafayette. His choirs have appeared at KMEA and ACDA conferences and consistently receive distinguished ratings at assessment events. He is also a contributing author to the *Teaching With Heart* compendium series by Jason Max Ferdinand.

Marsh is in his twenty-first year as director of choirs, also teaching AP Music Theory and serving as the program coordinator for the School for Creative and Performing Arts magnet program at Lafayette. His choirs have appeared at KMEA and ACDA conferences and consistently receive distinguished ratings at assessment events. He is also a contributing author to the *Teaching With Heart* compendium series by Jason Max Ferdinand.

Miami Arts Studio 6-12 @Zelda Glazer BellArmonia



BellArmonia is the premier SSAA ensemble at Miami Arts Studio 6-12 @ Zelda Glazer, a performing arts magnet school located in Miami, Florida. This ensemble is made up of Hispanic students who are all first- or second-generation immigrants from Latin America. Each time we travel to a new place we try to bring a piece of Miami with us by preparing repertoire in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. The MAS Vocal family consists of a united group of students, parents, alumni, teachers and administrators working toward our goal of building musical skills into performances that inspire our community, country and world.



Cindy Ellis is a Cuban American music educator and vocalist. As a jazz vocal soloist and alto with the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers, Ellis frequently performs and teaches masterclasses to K-12 students throughout North America. Most recently, the JMAX Singers collaborated with Jacob Collier and Coldplay for NBC's *Saturday Night Live* and were the headlining ensemble at the 2023 ACDA National Conference. A native of Holguín, Cuba, Ellis immigrated to the United States in 2005. She earned her BME from Florida International University and her MME from the University of Missouri. Ellis is one of two full-time choral directors at Miami Arts Studio.

Most recently, the JMAX Singers collaborated with Jacob Collier and Coldplay for NBC's *Saturday Night Live* and were the headlining ensemble at the 2023 ACDA National Conference. A native of Holguín, Cuba, Ellis immigrated to the United States in 2005. She earned her BME from Florida International University and her MME from the University of Missouri. Ellis is one of two full-time choral directors at Miami Arts Studio.

Middle Tennessee State University SOAL Chorale



The MTSU SOAL Chorale is an unauditioned ensemble open to all university students who sing soprano or alto, regardless of gender identity or expression. One-third of the group are music majors; most students represent majors from across the campus, from law enforcement to horse science. The Chorale performs at least two concerts each semester, and their repertoire ranges from Baroque to Broadway. The SOAL Chorale has performed with the Nashville Symphony, for two governors at the state capitol, and twice for TMEA.



Angela Tipps conducts the MTSU SOAL (Soprano-Alto) and TEBA (Tenor-Bass) Chorales, teaches basic and choral conducting, coordinates the music appreciation courses at the MTSU School of Music, and musical directs in the Department of Theatre.

She is organist/director of music at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Murfreesboro and musical director of the Middle Tennessee Choral Society. Her choirs have sung for ACDA and TMEA conferences and at the Schermerhorn Symphony Center and the Ryman Auditorium. Tipps received the BM from MTSU and the master of church music degree from Scarritt Graduate School in Nashville. A past president of Tennessee ACDA, she now serves as the Women's/SSAA R&R coordinator.

Northwestern State University Northwestern Chamber Choir



The Northwestern Chamber Choir has recently worked with composers Michael John Trotta, Vytautas Miškinis, and Richard Burchard premiering new choral works and producing recordings. They were featured at the eighth NCCO National Conference in 2019, won second prize in the Laurea Mundi Choral Competition in Budapest, Hungary, and won third prize and Best Compulsory Performance in the fourth AVE VERUM International Choral Competition in Baden, Austria. Additionally, the Northwestern Chamber Choir was invited to perform in the St. Martin's Czech National Church as a headline choir in Prague, Czechia.



Nicholaus B. Cummins is associate professor of music and director of choral studies at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, LA. He also taught public school choral music in Alabama and Texas.

He has served as a clinician for honor choirs and secondary and university choirs throughout the United States. Cummins has also presented topics at regional and state conferences and was an ACDA International Conducting Fellow to South America. His wife, Whitney, is an elementary music educator in the Natchitoches Parish schools, and their daughters are Emma and Addison.

2024 ACDA Southern Region Conference

Performing Choirs

Pensacola Children's Chorus



The Pensacola Children's Chorus (PCC) has been serving the youth and community of Northwest Florida and Southwest Alabama since 1990. A nonprofit organization, PCC operates fifteen unique choral programs that serve 300 singers. Known for its unique blend of traditional choral training with the showmanship and performance quality of musical theatre, PCC's performances attract an annual audience of 25,000 patrons. Previous ACDA performances include the 2019 Florida Conference and as part of the Children's Festival Chorus at the 2020 Southern Region Conference. PCC's choirs have performed at White House (2002) and Carnegie Hall (2022).



Alex Gartner is the artistic and executive director of the Pensacola Children's Chorus (FL). An accomplished composer, conductor, and clinician, Gartner and his choirs have performed and presented at esteemed venues across the United States and the world. He is the co-author of *The Business of Choir* (GIA Publications). Gartner is a member of the ACDA National Standing Committee for Advocacy and Collaboration and was the former Southern Region R&R Chair for children's and youth choirs. He holds music education degrees from the University of Florida and the University of Cincinnati and a certificate in arts and culture strategy from the University of Pennsylvania.



Juliana Joy Child is the assistant artistic director of the Pensacola Children's Chorus (FL), where she serves as director and co-director of nine ensembles. Child has previously served as collaborative pianist for the FMEA elementary all-state chorus and for ACDA reading sessions. She also was the co-coordinator of the Children's Festival Chorus at the 2022 ACDA Southern Region Conference. Previously, Child worked with the Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers (Ithaca, NY) and the Ithaca Children & Youth Chorus, and the Act One Scene 1 musical theatre program (Brockton, MA). She holds bachelor's degrees from Ithaca College.



2024 ACDA Children & Community Youth Choir Conductors' Retreat January 13-14, 2024

Friday, Jan. 12, 2024 Pre-Conference session presented by Chorus America: "I'm running a business?" Boards, Marketing and Business Administration for Directors of Children & Youth Choirs.

Join us for a retreat like no other!



Register at <https://acda.org/conferences/childrens-community-youth-choir-conductors-retreat> or use the QR code

Rivertree Singers



Founded in 2010, Rivertree Singers members are alumni of collegiate choral organizations who desire to delight and inspire arts communities across the globe. By giving voice to the human experience through passionate choral artistry, the singers build connections with audiences, arts organizations, schools, and emerging and established composers. What began as a small group of singers desiring an artistic outlet has grown into an internationally recognized and award-winning community arts organization of musicians, teachers, and professionals. In addition to invited performances, Rivertree Singers offers four concerts each season and hosts the Rivertree Singers & Friends Choral Festival every summer.



Warren Cook is founder of Rivertree Singers and retired professor and DCA at Bob Jones University, where he oversaw a graded program of five choirs enrolling nearly three hundred students. His choirs

have been auditioned performers at international and national events. Each summer, Cook conducts the Rivertree Singers & Friends Choral Festival, which recently included Robert Shaw's late contribution to the choral repertory, an unpublished English edition of Brahms's German *Requiem*. Under Cook's leadership, Rivertree Singers won the Oxford University Press Avent Competition grand prize. In 2019, Cook was honored with South Carolina ACDA's first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award.

River Bluff High School Bel Canto



Bel Canto is one of six ensembles in the River Bluff High School choral program. The choir is composed of advanced treble voices in the ninth through twelfth grades and consistently earns superior with distinction ratings at the South Carolina Choral Performance Assessment and at choral festivals throughout the southeast. Bel Canto members routinely earn selection to district and state honor choirs and most recently performed in the Memorial Day Festival Chorus in the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. River Bluff High School's Bel Canto is highly honored to represent their school, district, and state in their first regional ACDA conference performance.



Heather Wilcox is director of choirs at River Bluff High School in Lexington, South Carolina. She is lead teacher for secondary choral music for the Lexington

One School District and Vocal Jazz and Contemporary Commercial Choir for the South Carolina Choral Directors Association. Wilcox has served as clinician for honor choirs and artistically gifted choral intensives across South Carolina. Her choirs have performed for the South Carolina ACDA and the South Carolina MEA and consistently earn superior ratings at state, regional, and national choral festivals. She holds a bachelor's degree in music education and a master's degree in conducting from Winthrop University.

Performing Choirs

University of Georgia Hodgson Singers



The UGA Hodgson Singers serves as the flagship ambassadorial choral ensemble of the Hugh Hodgson School of Music at the University of Georgia. Comprising many of UGA's most gifted and dedicated singers, this ensemble provides vibrant, pre-professional ensemble training for the next generation of professional singers, choral music educators, and talented choral enthusiasts. Membership in the UGA Hodgson Singers is open to all UGA students. The choir has performed at ACDA Southern Region (2014, 2018, and 2024), and for the GMEA In-Service Conference (2012, 2017, and 2023).



Daniel Bara is the John D. Boyd UGA Foundation Professor of Choral Music and the director of choral activities and professor of music at the Hugh Hodgson School of Music at the University of Georgia, where he oversees seven university choral ensembles as well as the graduate choral conducting program. Bara is in demand as a guest conductor and clinician, having conducted all-state and honor choirs in twenty states and Carnegie Hall, and has served as clinician for conferences sponsored by NAFME, ACDA, AGO, and other school and church musical organizations. He is a past president of NC-ACDA. Bara holds a DMA from the Eastman School of Music, degrees from the University of Michigan, and is a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy.

Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham



The Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham provides performance opportunities for outstanding singers in North Carolina's Triangle region (Durham, Chapel Hill, and Raleigh). Its thirty-two members are selected from among musicians who have sung in other choral groups under Dr. Wynkoop's direction. VAE's mostly a cappella repertoire ranges from the Renaissance to the present and has included such diverse and challenging works as Tallis's *Spem in alium*, Schoenberg's *Friede Auf Erden*, Penderecki's *Agnus Dei*, and MacMillan's *Cantos Sagrados*. VAE has performed at the 2005 ACDA National Conference and at five Southern Region conferences.



Rodney Wynkoop is the founding director of the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham and has served as artistic director of the Choral Society of Durham since 1986. He recently left his position as director of University Choral Music at Duke University, where he conducted the Duke Chapel Choir and the Duke University Chorale for almost forty years. He has brought three of his choirs to perform at previous ACDA Southern Region conferences and has conducted at Carnegie Hall on several occasions. He is a recipient of Duke's Meritorious Service Award for Executive Leadership and the Lara Hoggard Award for Distinguished Service in Choral Music in North Carolina.

Interest Sessions

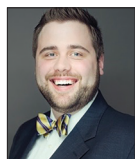
Beyond *The Wellerman*:

Engaging and Accessible Classical Repertoire for the Developing Tenor/Bass Choir

In this session, the clinicians will discuss the importance of historical repertoire that engages the emerging tenor/bass singer and demonstrate pedagogy that effectively develops voices through this literature. Teachers will hear engaging examples from the Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, and Romantic eras appropriate for each level of tenor/bass choirs. The clinicians will also focus on the techniques used to prepare these historical works and how this repertoire targets developing tone, navigating changing voices, and understanding the classical sound. This session will illustrate how historical repertoire specifically can help get your tenor/bass choir headed in the right direction.



Will Griswold is a DMA choral conducting student at Southern Mississippi and recently finished his sixth year teaching high school in Texas. Griswold grew his program from five students to 100 and led ensembles to superior ratings at performance festivals. His Concert Choir performed at the 2022 Texas MEA Conference. While at USM, Griswold conducted University Singers, Tenebrae, Gulf Coast Civic Chorale, Chamber Singers, and will direct the inaugural season of the Gulf Coast Youth Chorale.



Derek Meler is a versatile performer, conductor, and educator based in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. He specializes in collaboration through music, working with choirs and voice students to promote community and peace. Meler has performed with various artists and symphonies, including the Nashville Symphony and Opera Mississippi, and has conducted choirs across the southern United States. He directs the Stamps-Baxter School of Music and teaches both in the classroom and as a private voice teacher. He is pursuing his MM at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Bridging the Gap:

Fostering Productive and Collaborative Relationships Between Teachers and Administration

“My administration is out to get me.” “No one cares about my program.” “Our admin micromanages my program.” “My principals never heard a concert.” “They just don’t get it.” These are phrases we have all either heard or uttered during our careers, right? Because administrators are out to get us, right? **WRONG!** (Well, hopefully... ha!) This unique session is meant to work through the many challenges that we face as they relate to building/district administration and pinpoint effective strategies and solutions to overcoming said challenges. After all, both sides need each other. Better yet, our students need us...together!



Kristin M. Claiborne is in her second year as an assistant administrator and varsity boys basketball coach at Blythewood High School in South Carolina. Claiborne is a graduate of the University of South Carolina, having earned both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in music education and educational administration, respectively. Currently, she is pursuing a doctorate in teacher leadership. Prior to administration, Claiborne spent ten years as a choral director with four choirs and a pop/jazz a cappella group. She serves as a clinician, adjudicator, and lecturer around the Southern Region while also serving as a university supervisor and teacher mentor.

The Declaration of Independence: How to Foster Independent Musicianship in Large-Group Choral Rehearsals

Choral rehearsals can be structured to allow singers to develop their personal, independent musicianship while participating in large group learning situa-

Interest Sessions

tions. Techniques covered in this session will include rehearsal pedagogy that includes small group analysis, warm-up activities, and Dalcroze eurythmics. This session will allow for participation from all willing participants in music reading, music analyzing, response through movement, quick and strong sight-reading techniques, and how to structure mixed formation through scaffolding to ensure success for each singer. Students deserve to gain lifelong skills for singing. Come refresh your pedagogy and consider how to foster strong and independent musicians!



Jill Campbell serves as an assistant professor of vocal music at Eastern Kentucky University and teaches music education classes, directs the treble choir, and works with vocal jazz groups. She vocal coaches for musicals and also supervises student teachers. Campbell is the assistant director for the Kentucky Bach Choir. She is the past president for the KY ACDA chapter and is the state music research chair for Kentucky MEA. She taught elementary and secondary music and has worked in community and church music. A frequent clinician and adjudicator, she also presents workshops regularly around the country.

Discovering the Basque Country: Composers and Repertoire from Northern Spain

Presenting the rich choral traditions of the Basque Country in Northern Spain, this session will familiarize attendees with contemporary Basque composers, and show that the music of these men and women is accessible, varied, and a wonderful way to introduce a different culture to your choirs. Alongside an introduction to the region's history, repertoire will be presented that varies in language (Basque, Spanish, and Latin), theme, voicing, and difficulty, ensuring that directors of choirs of all ages, types, and abilities will find something they can share with their singers and communities. Join me for a journey into this exciting repertoire!



Beth Gibbs is director of choral studies at Florida Southern College in Lakeland, FL. In addition to choral direction, she teaches conducting, choral pedagogy, Caribbean music, and music and wellness.

She earned a DMA in choral conducting from the University of Miami, MM degrees in choral conducting and vocal performance from East Carolina University, and a BME from Stetson University. Gibbs taught six years at the high school level in Atlanta, GA. In 2022, she became a Fulbright Scholar, teaching and working with choirs throughout Spain.

Flexible Fach: Gender-Affirming Vocal Pedagogy through Science-Informed Practices

In this interactive session, attendees will be invited to sing and discuss vocal exercises from a new protocol developed by the presenter that focuses on helping transgender and gender-expansive (TGE) singers produce an aural aesthetic that better aligns with their gender identity. Created through an understanding of the gendered associations and vocal characteristics of common fach categories and voice classifications, this protocol synthesizes practices from gender-affirming speech-language pathology (SLP) with source-filter theory and science-informed vocal pedagogy to present a healthy, gender-affirming practice routine for TGE singers who are seeking to masculinize or feminize their voices.

Stevie J. Hirner will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 23.

Forgotten Gems: Little-Known Works in the Public Domain

As historical research advances, choruses are taking a greater interest in forgotten pieces of our choral history. This presentation explores the under-represented people and pieces of the Renaissance through Classical eras. Attendees will receive a resource database of compositions and public domain scores for various levels and voicings. A balance of sacred vs secular and accompanied vs unaccompanied works will be presented. This session provides the opportunity to engage with historical literature in a new way, and shares resources to program a variety of repertoire that adheres to state and national standards while championing under-performed works.



Angelica Dunsavage serves as assistant professor and director of choral activities at Tennessee State University, where she conducts two ensembles and teaches courses in conducting. She received her DMA in choral conducting and music education from University of Arizona, her MM in choral conducting from Bowling Green State University, and her BME from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Dunsavage serves as chief editor of publications for NCCO. She has presented posters and interest sessions for NCCO, ACDA, NAFME, and College Music Society conferences, and regularly serves as a clinician for area schools.

Grace Nash: *Today With Music* Using Music, Speech, and Movement for Children's Minds and Voices

This session stems from the presenter's own case study research into and use of Grace Nash's approaches to musical understandings and the singing voices of young children. The session will focus on lessons used in her book *Today with Music* and their implications and use in the choral setting. Grace Nash's frameworks are

something that should not be overlooked, as she incorporated the methods of Laban, Orff, and Kodaly in schools before it was "hip" to do so. Insights from Nash continue to spark the presenter's lifelong interest in music education and the young singer.



Thomas Blue conducts the Young Choral Artists of Michigan (YCAM) and teaches at Oakland Christian School following retirement. His 7/8 Choir was selected to sing at the 2014 ACDA-MI Conference. Choir collaborations include Detroit Opera, Detroit Chamber Winds, and Rochester (MI) Symphony. He serves ACDA-MI as president-elect and as MS/JH representative. He is published in *Choral Journal* and *Chor-Teach*, with presentations at ACDA Midwest Regional and ACDA-MI conferences. He is an MSVMA adjudicator/clinician with degrees from Roberts Wesleyan University, Michigan State University and (ABD) in Mus. Ed. (choral cognate) from MSU.

Let Your Numbers Soar! Recruitment Strategies for Choral Ensembles

As choral directors, we are always exploring ways to recruit singers into our programs. Focusing on identifying and developing recruitment efforts that appeal to the broader school community and at all musical levels, this session will include strategies to make meaningful connections to build and grow a choral program. In addition to sharing recruitment strategies, the clinician will share ways to establish a culture of singing and help new singers to discover their voice.



Jennifer Sengin is the visiting assistant professor of choral studies at UMKC, where she leads the graduate choral conducting program and conducts the flagship ensemble, Conservatory Singers and Choral Union. Sengin most recently served as the associate director of choral activities at Georgia State University. Under her direction, the Treble Choir won

Interest Sessions

The American Prize in performance and was invited to perform at NCCO and GMEA Conferences. While at GSU, Sengin received two university-wide awards for teaching and achievement. She recently participated as a Conducting Fellow with ACDA's International Conductor Exchange Program to Germany.

May the Circle Be Unbroken: Restorative Practices in Your Performing Ensemble

This session will introduce the idea of Restorative Practices and their uses within the rehearsal of a performing ensemble. Restorative Practices are based in empowering youth to have an equal voice and facilitating development of social emotional skill sets. Attendees will explore relationship creation and reparation, and learn strategies such as community circle, journaling, check-ins, and guided classroom discussions to facilitate a holistic approach that celebrates the student as an individual in the greater musical community. These practices are effective in unifying students with a diversity of experience, strengthening the sense of community in the ensemble.



Amanda Goldberg is a music educator passionate about using singing to develop the whole person. She holds a BME from St. Olaf College. Goldberg is presently the assistant director of Concert Choir for the Girl Choir of South Florida. She is also the choral director at Wellington Landings Middle School in Wellington, FL, where she is piloting a program for restorative practices in Palm Beach County. She is honored to be the recipient of Palm Beach County's 2022 Central Region Beginning Teacher of the Year.

Music Matters:

A Pedagogical Framework for Literature Selection

Literature selection has been a robust discussion in our field because we understand its numerous influences on the success of choral organizations, particularly the profound impact of repertoire choices on choral singers' musical growth. This interest session will provide a pedagogical framework for literature selection that addresses three central components: 1) the educational benefits of exposing singers to a broad range of musical styles; 2) sequencing repertoire to build on singers' competencies; and 3) the influence of diverse literature choices on choral pedagogy.



Jabarie Glass is the associate director of choral studies at the University of South Carolina, where he conducts University Chorus and Gamecock Chorale and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in conducting and choral pedagogy. Choral organizations under his leadership have been selected to perform at Southern ACDA Region, Mississippi ACDA, and the South Carolina MEA. Glass earned dual bachelor's degrees in business management and music education from the University of Mississippi, an MME from the Florida State University College of Music, and a doctoral degree in conducting from the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

"No Hidin' Place"

Music by Black Composers for the Secondary Choral Setting

In recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in choral music by Black composers. Unfortunately, much of this repertoire is beyond what most secondary school choral ensembles can successfully grasp. This session will survey pieces by Black composers of the

past and present that are appropriate for the forces, needs, and educational goals of most secondary choral settings. An array of voicings will be represented, from 2-part to SATB with minimal divisi. The pedagogical and technical content of each piece will be highlighted. Attendees can expect to view and sing excerpts of these pieces in the session.



Christopher Leysath is director of choirs at North Augusta High School in North Augusta, South Carolina, where he leads three choral ensembles and established the group piano program. He holds degrees in choral music education and piano from the University of South Carolina. Leysath has conducted honor choirs in South Carolina and Georgia, and served as director of “Bound to Sing,” a pre-adolescent boy choir based in Aiken, SC. He also serves as choirmaster and organist at Grace United Methodist Church in North Augusta. He has performed or presented at numerous ACDA conferences, SCMEA conferences, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and abroad.

Nashville Symphony Chorus, which has included chorus preparation for many of the repertoire’s most revered masterworks. He has conducted honor choirs in a dozen states and conducted residencies in the United Kingdom and China. Biddlecombe is a graduate of SUNY Potsdam and the Florida State University.



Lauren Ramey is the associate director of choral activities and director of music education at East Tennessee State University, where she conducts BucsWorth Tenor Bass Choir. She also teaches courses in choral conducting and music education. Additionally, Ramey serves as the director of music at First Presbyterian Church Johnson City. She was previously the director of choirs at Ravenwood High School, where the Ravenwood Choirs performed at the 2019 Music For All-National Concert Festival and the 2017 and 2019 Tennessee MEA Conferences. Ramey was a recipient of the CMA Music Teacher of Excellence Award and was a quarterfinalist for the Grammy Music Educator Award.

Nobody Sits on the Bench: Cultivating Singer Agency in Community Choirs

Every singer has a role—some color the tone of the section, some lead musically, and others help blend certain voices together that otherwise might never agree. In this session, we will present a voice identification system that can be used to verify to singers that they are playing an important role no matter the size of their voice. This session will also address pedagogical strategies for adult singers of all ages, explore promoting self-dignity through a fair and personal audition process, and share ideas for keeping people singing longer.



Tucker Biddlecombe is associate professor and director of choral activities at Vanderbilt University’s Blair School of Music, where he conducts the Vanderbilt Chorale and coordinates the music education program. He also serves as director of the

“Other Duties as Assigned” Beating Teacher Burnout

Beating teacher burnout is vital to our professions and our personal health. We will present findings from top researchers in music education, share lived experiences, and engage in open discussion and collaboration. This session will offer practical, active ideas to help beat teacher burnout both inside and outside of the classroom. Attendees will gain a toolkit of ideas to combat the feeling of burnout and an ongoing community to share future ideas and resources as we move forward in action!



Christina R. Vehar is a music educator and advocate based in metro-Atlanta, where she teaches at Cheatham Hill Elementary. She received her MME from the Florida State University and her BME from Kennesaw State University. Vehar is pas-

Interest Sessions

sionate about celebrating diversity, work in accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and restoration, cross-curricular connections, and using music as a means for humanity and bringing people together. She regularly advocates for people and music and is an active presenter, adjudicator, clinician, and conductor.



Sierra R. Manson is the director of choral activities at Hillgrove High School in Cobb County, GA. Previously, she served as a choral director in both Fulton County and Henry County. She received her MME from the Florida State University and her BME from Kennesaw State University. She is passionate about advocacy in the classroom, as well as mental health in both students and educators, and the power of music in bringing people together.

Reverse the Decline: Amplifying and Sustaining Women's Voices in Conducting

Our choral community has work to do to create more equitable musical spaces that celebrate, support, and cultivate women's leadership on the podium. Join us as we share our findings from our podcast conduct(her), lift the successes of women conductors across the globe, and provide resources. Together we will develop a musical ecosystem that is more inclusive of women scholars, composers, conductors, and teachers who are contributing to the field. Participants will walk away from this session with ideas to build more inclusive space within our choral landscape and celebrate the impact of women choral directors.



Kyra Stahr is a DMA candidate in choral conducting at University of Miami Frost School of Music and the associate director of the Master Chorale of South Florida. She completed her MM in choral music from University of Southern California and

earned her BM from Miami (OH) University. At USC, Stahr was associate conductor of Oriana, served on the USC Thornton Student Council, and was director of the South Bay Children's Choir. She has participated in the ACDA Eastern Conducting Masterclass and presented at the World Symposium on Choral Music.

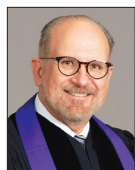


McKenna Stenson has built a career inspiring students to sing with confidence and motivating communities to create lasting change through song. Stenson is an assistant professor on faculty at the University of Kansas (KU), where she serves as associate director of choral activities and conducts the KU Glee Club and Oread Singers. In addition to leading ensembles, Stenson teaches classes in choral methods and undergraduate and graduate conducting. She enjoys serving as a guest conductor, clinician, presenter, and adjudicator for choirs throughout the United States and abroad.

The Song of the Church and Congregational Identity

Church musicians and pastors who are responsible for selecting the hymns and songs sung by a congregation in worship settings are not simply enabling shared liturgical expressions, they are shaping the congregation's sense of identity through those sung expressions. This interest session will explore some of the theological, philosophical, and practical foundations of the relationships between congregational singing and identity. Using video/audio excerpts of worshiping congregations from differing traditions, the ways in which core congregational identity is expressed through singing will be seen and heard. We will highlight challenges related to selecting the sung expressions of the congregation.

Andrew Roby serves as a leader in the areas of music and worship arts with The Memorial Baptist Church



in Greenville, NC. He is also the artistic director and concert choir conductor for the Greenville Choral Society. Previously, Roby served as a professor of music in the areas of church music, choral music, and vocal studies at Asbury College, Shorter College, and Union University. For fifteen years, he taught courses in the foundations and practice of Christian worship in the Schools of Divinity of Gardner-Webb University and Campbell University. He is a past president of North Carolina ACDA.

Towards a Holistic Approach for Neurodivergent Learners in the Choral Classroom

There is a wealth of literature in the fields of music education, music therapy, and psychology regarding neurodivergent people, but next to no pedagogical material relating to large-group practices, particularly within the choral rehearsal. Many, if not most, choir directors will encounter neurodivergent students in their programs at some point and will likely not know which strategies effectively include their neurodivergent learners in their classrooms. This session presents existing research and offers rehearsal techniques, classroom management strategies, and repertoire recommendations for high school choir directors to feel prepared to give all students a holistic and equitable learning experience.



Peter Allen Haley recently completed his DMA in conducting at the University of South Carolina. He previously spent seven years teaching high school chorus in North Carolina. He has held leadership roles on the executive board of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians and the 2020 and 2022 ACDA Southern Region Conferences. He holds degrees in music and church music from Wingate University and Samford University. He has the honor of being the second-best teacher in his house, behind his wife, Ashley, and is a proud parent to Patrick and Libby Kay.

The Transcendent Experience: Creating Culture and Meaning in Performance and Worship

Uplifting, meaningful choral performances come from groups with strong ensemble culture that are also deeply connected to the culture around them. This interest session will describe the Technique of Culture Creation as developed by Artefact Institute. Our panel of acclaimed choral artists will then discuss how to enrich aspects of choral performances in worship: lyricist Tony Silvestri on storytelling and text, Chanticleer Artistic Director Tim Keeler on ensemble and audience building, and composer and conductor Benedict Sheehan on ritual. Our panel will share valuable tools for creating meaningful performances that attendees can use in their own work.

Tim Keeler will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 63.

Benedict Sheehan will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 65.

Talia Sheehan will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 67.

Charles Anthony Silvestri will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 67.

Turning Choral Warm-Ups Upside Down

Choral conductors often bemoan warm-ups, longing for new material to enhance old tricks. In this interactive session, learn how to design choral warm-ups that increase retention and connection with the music. By exploring modes, intervals, rhythms, and styles, an ensemble can maximize the first notes of a rehearsal and seamlessly transition into reading and making music. Learn to sing smarter by reinforcing concepts in the

Interest Sessions

repertoire, honoring diversified pedagogies and techniques. Participants will have a chance to workshop and design the perfect warm-ups for their needs. Suitable for all ages and abilities.



Jami Lercher (she/her) is assistant professor of choral music education at Baldwin Wallace University, where she conducts the BW Treble Choir and teaches courses in choral methods, conducting, and vocal technique. She holds a BME from Iowa State University, an MM from the University of Wales, and a DMA in choral conducting from the University of Miami, Frost School of Music. Having spent fourteen years in public schools, she is an advocate for music

education for all and has presented regionally and internationally on inclusive choral classrooms.

Who is in Charge Here? Personal Leadership Development for the Conductor

Conductors are leaders. They are responsible for directing the collective musical will of an ensemble using whatever tactics are necessary to achieve success. But where does a conductor learn the “tactics” that would make them into a great leader? And did the ends justify the means? This session will immerse participants in a study of their own individual leadership style. We will contextualize the conductor’s role using contemporary leadership theories, engage with self-reflective leadership development exercises to identify personal values and skills, and use the results of these exercises to discover how we can contend with leadership challenges.



Matthew Abernathy is the artistic director of the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay-Principal Chorus of The Florida Orchestra. Previously he was on staff at Minnesota Opera, most recently serving as interim chorus director for the Opera’s professional chorus and music director of Project Opera (the company’s youth opera ensemble). Prior engagements include chorus master for the Lakes Area Music Festival and assistant conductor for Minnesota Chorale. He holds degrees from SUNY Potsdam-Crane School of Music, the University of Michigan, and the University of Minnesota.

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Honor Choir Conductors

Advanced SATB Honor Choir (Grades 10-12)



Sydney Guillaume's compositions are known to be intricate, challenging, and yet highly spirited. His compositions have been performed around the world and featured at numerous conferences and international festivals for ACDA, the World Choir Games and Ireland's Cork International Choral Festival. Originally from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Guillaume is currently residing in Portland, Oregon, working as a full-time composer, conductor, and frequently doing workshops on his music with university and high school choirs throughout North America. Since 2013 he has been the conductor of Imbroglia Sextet, a group of musicians from Haiti, Spain, Bolivia, and the United States.

Youth SATB (Grades 7-9)



Derrick Fox is the associate dean of graduate studies and creative endeavors and a professor of choral conducting at Michigan State University. Prior to MSU, he was the director of choral activities and distinguished professor of music at the University of Nebraska-Omaha and assistant professor of choral music at Ithaca College. Fox has taught at the middle school, high school, and collegiate levels. His conducting experiences have included singers from upper elementary choirs through collegiate and community choirs. He was awarded the 2021 Bryan R. Johnson Service Award by the Nebraska Music Educators Association and the 2022 University of Nebraska Omaha Award for Distinguished Research/Creative Activity.

Advanced Treble Honor Choir (Grades 10-12)



Kristina Caswell MacMullen serves as the Mary Gibbs Jones Chair of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Baylor University. She conducts the Baylor A Cappella Choir, Chamber Singers, and leads the graduate program in choral conducting. Prior to her appointment at BU, MacMullen earned the Sir William Osler Award at Ohio State University and the President's Special Recognition Award at the University of North Texas. As an active adjudicator and clinician, MacMullen has conducted all-state and honors choirs throughout the United States. MacMullen earned both her BME and MM degrees from Michigan State University and a DMA at Texas Tech University. She sings with the professional ensemble Mirabai.

Youth Treble (Grades 4-6)



Andrea Ramsey enjoys an international presence as a composer, conductor, scholar, and music educator. Before leaping into full-time composing and guest conducting, Ramsey held positions at The Ohio State University and the University of Colorado Boulder, respectively. An award-winning composer with over 150 works to date, she believes strongly in the creation of new music. A native of Arkansas, she has experienced in her own life the power of music to provide a sense of community, better understanding of our humanity, and rich opportunities for self-discovery.

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Headliners/Special Events

The Southwestern ACDA Conference in Denver is right around the corner, and our team is excited to host you for a jam-packed week of choral performance, networking, and professional development. Our conference theme, #Limitless, embodies the creative and boundless potential of choral music, and we aim to inspire our attendees to push the boundaries of their own musical limits. With a program comprising nine honor choirs, including contemporary a cappella and Gospel, dozens of interest sessions, and nine separate immersion days tailored to different segments of our community, there's something for everyone at this conference. You'll have the opportunity to engage with renowned conductors and composers, share ideas and experiences with fellow musicians from across the region, and discover new tools and techniques that you can bring back to your own choir. All of this will take place in the vibrant and dynamic city of Denver, which boasts a thriving music scene, rich cultural heritage, and plenty of exciting restaurants, bars, and landmarks to explore.

Headliners

Kantorei



Kantorei is a Denver-based choral ensemble comprising volunteer singers under the direction of artistic director Joel M. Rinsema. Formed in 1997 under the leadership of six friends and artistic director Richard Larson, Kantorei has established itself as one of the nation's premier choral ensembles. Kantorei has performed for major choral con-

ventions across the United States and the Aspen Music Festival, toured the world, and has commissioned and premiered new choral works from such renowned composers as Kim André Arnesen, Ola Gjeilo, Jocelyn Hagen, Sarah Quartel, Jake Runestad, and Eric Whitacre. In the fall of 2021, Kantorei began its three-year collaboration with M. Roger Holland II as artist-in-residence. Kantorei has released two recordings on the Naxos label. Santa Barbara Music Publishing Inc. publishes the Kantorei Choral series.



Joel M. Rinsema, managing artistic director, joined Kantorei in 2014, becoming the second conductor in its history. A frequent collaborator and champion of new works for chorus, Rinsema has commissioned and premiered work of many of today's leading composers, including the world premiere of the string orchestra version of Eric Whitacre's *The Sacred Veil*, led by the composer. He received the Louis Botto Award for "Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal" from Chorus America. Rinsema is music director at First Plymouth Congregational Church in Cherry Hills Village, CO, and served as the North American Choral Promotion Manager for Oxford University Press based in Oxford, England (2017-2020). He holds music degrees from Arizona State and Whitworth Universities.



Ola Gjeilo is one of the most frequently performed composers in the choral world. An accomplished pianist, improvisations over his own published choral pieces have become a trademark of his collaborations. Although Norwegian by birth, it is perhaps his adopted country of America that has influenced the composer's distinctive soundworld the most, evolving a style that is often described as cinematic and evocative, with a lush, harmonious sound. Gjeilo took classical composition studies at The Juilliard School, the Royal College of Music in London, and is currently a New York City-based freelance composer. He is composer-in-residence with DCINY. His music is published by

Headliners/Special Events

Walton Music (choral), Boosey & Hawkes (wind band), and Chester Music (piano).

University of Denver Lamont Chorale



The Lamont Chorale is the premier choral ensemble at the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music. Members include undergraduate and graduate music majors and students from across the DU campus. A winner of a number of national and international awards under the direction of Catherine Sailer, the ensemble won first place in the American Prize in Choral Performance and earned a second-place award in the prestigious Barenreiter Mårten Jansson competition. The chorale is stylistically flexible, performing diverse repertoire from the Renaissance through the present day and often in collaboration with other ensembles and composers. The Lamont Chorale has performed at conferences for ACDA and CMEA. This is their third appearance at SWACDA.



Catherine Sailer serves as director of choral studies at the University of Denver Lamont School of Music, associate conductor of the Colorado Ballet Orchestra, conductor of The Evans Choir, and music director of the Littleton Symphony Orchestra.

Choirs under her direction have performed at multiple ACDA and CMEA conferences. She has presented interest sessions for ACDA, CMEA, AGO, and universities and conservatories worldwide. She has served as state president and college and university chair for Colorado ACDA. Awards include the Dale Warland Award for Excellence in Choral Conducting, First Place in the American Prize for Choral Performance, and Chorus America's Robert Shaw Fellowship. Sailer received her DMA from Northwestern University and MM and BM from the University of Denver.

University of West Indies Mona University Singers



The University Singers has distinguished itself as one of the leading choral groups in the Caribbean, noted for its versatility, spanning a varied number of musical genres including classical, American negro spirituals, jazz, folk, gospel and local and international popular music. A special feature of the choir's repertoire is the original music of Caribbean composers. Many of these composers have emerged from and are current members of the group. The choir is the premier performing arts ensemble on the Mona Campus of The University of the West Indies (UWI) and stands as the cultural ambassadors for the UWI. Presently, the choir has a full complement of over forty members, comprising undergraduate and graduate students of the UWI. The University Singers has been invited to perform at numerous state and official events, and in the presence of notable world figures including the late Nelson Mandela.



Franklin E. Haliburton is currently the musical director of two of Jamaica's leading musical groups, The University Singers, from The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus; and The Philharmonic Orchestra of Jamaica (POJ), the country's premier orchestra. His body of work with both groups has established him as one of Jamaica's principal choral/orchestral conductors. In his early years, he studied the piano and the cello with two of Jamaica's most esteemed music educators. Haliburton's maiden opera *1865*, an opera based on the Morant Bay Rebellion, was recognized by the guild of Jamaican actors with nine prestigious Actor Boy Awards, including Best Production, Best Score and Best Original Song. Haliburton co-founded and launched the Philharmonic Orchestra of Jamaica in 2013, a charitable organization devoted to Jamaican orchestral excellence.

Plenary Sessions

The Choral Music of Ola Gjeilo in His Own Words

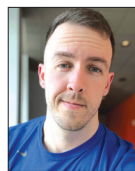
Join us for an inspiring plenary session with headliner Ola Gjeilo as he takes us on a journey through his distinctive choral music. An acclaimed pianist and composer, Gjeilo is known for his stunning choral arrangements that blend contemporary and classical styles. During this session, attendees will have the opportunity to learn more about the compositional techniques and artistic inspirations behind his music. The session will feature a choral music reading session and a Q&A, where attendees can directly engage with the composer and explore his creative process. Joining us for this demonstration will be the Arvada West High School "Vocal Showcase," under the direction of Taylor Rodgers.

Ola Gjeilo will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 87.

Arvada West High School Vocal Showcase



The Arvada West Choral Music program has one of the premier programs in the United States, with an invitation to perform at the 2017 National ACDA Conference in Minneapolis. Numerous choirs have also been selected to perform at CMEA conferences in the past several years, including ten appearances since 2009. The choirs also consistently receive straight "Superior" ratings at festivals and competitions. AWest choirs have performed in numerous cities and prestigious venues across the United States, and have traveled internationally, performing *High Mass* at the Basilicas of St. Peter's Rome and St. Mark's Venice.



Taylor Rodgers, a native of Oklahoma, is in his ninth year of educating young people through choral music. He currently serves as the director of choral activities at Arvada West High School in Arvada, Colorado. Alongside his co-director, Jesse Vanlandingham, he teaches six ensemble classes and facilitates two student-led, extracurricular vocal groups. Prior to his time at Arvada West, Rodgers was the director of choral activities at Dunwoody High School in Dunwoody, GA. In addition to his work at the school level, he has been highly involved in the Georgia MEA, serving as the District IV Choral Chair. He holds a BME from the University of Central Oklahoma. He is certified by the AP CollegeBoard to teach AP Music Theory, and he regularly collaborates as a pianist.

Headliners/Special Events

Gospel Music Matters: A Masterclass with Trey McLaughlin

Join us for an enlightening plenary session with headliner Trey McLaughlin as he shares his deep knowledge and experience of Gospel music. A renowned Gospel singer, arranger, and performer, McLaughlin has gained international recognition for his innovative and soulful approach to the genre. During this session, attendees will learn about the rich history and cultural significance of Gospel music, and explore the performance practice and techniques essential for a compelling and authentic performance. He will lead an interactive masterclass, providing practical guidance on singing, arranging, and directing Gospel music. Attendees will discover the power and beauty of Gospel music in this unique opportunity to learn from one of the leading Gospel artists of our time.



Trey M. McLaughlin is a 2002 graduate of John S. Davidson Magnet School in Augusta, GA. McLaughlin earned a BM performance degree emphasis in vocal pedagogy from Columbus State University (Columbus, Georgia). He has traveled the world conducting master classes, workshops, and performing, including the Aarhus Vocal Festival in Copenhagen, Denmark, and the L'Opéra de Massy in Massy, France. Currently, he serves as the director of Creative Impressions and is also the founder and director of the gospel ensemble Trey McLaughlin and the Sounds of Zamar. He is the director of music at The Historic Tabernacle Baptist Church and serves as an adjunct professor of choral studies at Paine College in Augusta, GA.

Tone and Style: Using Pop Music to Build Better Singers

Why should we perform popular music with our choirs? How can we use contemporary music to build stronger singers and diverse programs while expanding traditional technique and challenging choral norms?

This session will reveal the benefits of popular and contemporary music to choral singers and their communities while also addressing the most common roadblocks directors face while teaching it. Participants will leave with a better understanding of the importance of culturally native pop music in the choral program, strategies to successfully and authentically teach this music to their singers, and practical ways to incorporate it into their programs.



Rob Dietz is a multiple CARA-winning producer who has been arranging, performing, and teaching contemporary a cappella music for over twenty years. Based in Los Angeles, Dietz is best known for his work as an arranger and group coach for NBC's *The Sing-Off*. His arrangements have been showcased on several TV shows, including *America's Got Talent* (NBC), *To All The Boys: PS I Still Love You* (Netflix), and *Pitch Slapped* (Lifetime). As a performer he is an award-winning vocal percussionist. He is the author of *A Cappella 101: A Beginner's Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing* published by Hal Leonard. Dietz serves as the ACDA National R&R co-chair for contemporary/commercial.



J. D. Frizzell is the director of fine arts and director of vocal music at Briarcrest Christian School in Memphis, Tennessee. His ensembles have performed at regional, national, and international conventions. Winner of the Integrales Composition Contest, Frizzell has had many best-selling compositions and arrangements. He also co-authored *A Cappella Warm Ups with Deke Sharon* and *Teaching Music Through Performance in A Cappella* with Deke Sharon and Marc Silverberg. He is the president of the A Cappella Education Association and the founder of The National A Cappella Convention. OneVoice, his a cappella group, is a Sony Recording Artist with over 100 million downloads and streams. They have performed at the Emmys and on *America's Got Talent*.

What Took Me so Long?

In over four decades of directing choirs consisting of singers of all shapes and sizes, everything from elementary singers, middle school singers, high school singers, a whole lot of college singers, symphony chorus singers, and professional singers—I have figured out a few things. And, as it turns out, these are all supported in research. Perhaps I can save you a few decades by sharing what I have learned over the years. Come hear what it took me far too long to figure out!



Betsy Cook Weber is the Madison Endowed Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at the University of Houston Moores School of Music and is also active internationally as a conductor, clinician, adjudicator, and lecturer. Choirs under Weber's direction, including the University of Houston Concert Chorale, have been featured at multiple state and national conventions including the ACDA National Conferences in 2007 and 2017. Weber also served for eight seasons as director of the Houston Symphony Chorus, preparing programs for some of the world's leading orchestral conductors. In 2013, Weber became the first woman to receive the Texas Choral Directors Association's Texas Choirmaster Award. She serves as editor of the *Betsy Cook Weber Choral Series* with Alliance Music Publishing.

Conducting Masterclasses

Undergraduate



Shohei Kobayashi is a versatile musician with a distinguished career spanning various musical realms. He is the director of the choral program at Reed College and an associate conductor/co-artistic advisor for Resonance Ensemble. He has left a mark as a guest conductor, collaborating with prestigious ensembles on a global stage. Shohei's commitment to nurturing emerging conductors led to the creation of a tuition-

free apprenticeship program at Interlochen, promoting connections within the choral community. With a DMA and MM in conducting from the University of Michigan, Kobayashi is an active contributor to leading choral organizations and the National Board of NCCO.

Cherry Creek High School Meistersingers



Meistersingers is an inclusive auditioned mixed choir from Cherry Creek High School dedicated to finding the fun in being serious about excellence. CCHS is a rigorous public school near Denver, Colorado, recognized as a Grammy Signature School of Excellence. The choir stresses the aesthetics of music but also an understanding of music literacy, theory, and history through the performance of choral literature. Their legacy includes performances at numerous state, regional, and national conventions. Annual performance tours include the United States, Europe, Iceland, Australia, and Asia.



Sarah Branton is director of choirs at Cherry Creek High School, where choirs under her direction have performed at numerous state and regional conventions, and toured around the world. She is assistant director and section leader with Kantorei, an adult chorus in Denver. Additionally, she has taught at the summer Sitka Fine Arts Camp in Sitka, Alaska, sings with ad hoc ensembles, and is a string bassist.

Headliners/Special Events

She serves as chair-elect for Colorado all-state choir and previously served on the Colorado ACDA board. Branton holds music degrees from St. Olaf College and Colorado State University.

Graduate

Kristina Caswell MacMullen will be the clinician for this masterclass. Her photo and bio are on page 85.

University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Vesper Choir



The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Vesper Choir is internationally recognized among Historically Black Colleges and Universities for its diverse repertoire and excellent performances. This ensemble was founded in the 1946 by Professor Ariel Lovelace and conducted for more than forty years by Professor Shelton J. McGee. It has a rich choral tradition that includes numerous performances on radio and television, as well as performances across the United States and over the internet. The Vesper Choir presents entertaining and varied programs of classical choral literature, spirituals, choral jazz and commercial music, and gospel selections. In December 2022, the Choir presented

its 69th annual performance of Handel's *Messiah*, a longstanding University tradition.



Jerron A. Liddell is the director of choral activities at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. He holds degrees from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, University of Central Arkansas, and is currently pursuing a PhD at University of Memphis. Liddell has taught at levels from elementary to college, including Dollarway High and Robert F. Morehead Middle Schools in Pine Bluff, and North Little Rock Middle School in North Little Rock, Arkansas. He has assisted with the Voices of Central Arkansas (VOCA) Children's Choir and served as assistant director of the University Chorus at University of Central Arkansas. Liddell has an extensive background in gospel music and currently serves as minister of worship at St. Luke Baptist Church in North Little Rock, AR.

Southwestern Region Registration Information

Register at acda.org/region-conferences

Attendee \$375 Retired \$270 Student \$135

Registration after 11:59 PM CST January 15, 2024

Attendee \$400 Retired \$300 Student \$135

Guest Registration \$375

One-Day Registration \$185 (only available on-site)

Immersion Days

Immersion Day Sessions - Wednesday, February 28
Embassy Suites

7:30 AM - 8:50 AM: Breakfast @ Embassy Atrium

Retiree

Mark Lawley and A. Jan Taylor, Coordinators



Mark Lawley is a retired choral conductor with four decades of success. He has held leadership roles that included president of the Southwestern ACDA Region, Missouri Choral Directors Association, and South Central Missouri MEA. He is High School R&R Chair at MCDA and serves on National ACDA's Education and Communication Committee. Lawley holds a bachelor's in piano from Evangel University and a master's in conducting from Missouri State University. Lawley founded renowned choral ensembles and received multiple awards for his dedication to music education, culminating in a 2018 National Federation of State Schools Associations Music Educator of the Year Award.



A. Jan Taylor, an accomplished educator, pianist, singer, and choral conductor, recently retired as the director of choral music activities at Prairie View A&M University. She holds a BM from the University of Houston, an MA from Prairie View A&M University, and a DMA from the University of Houston. Taylor's impressive career includes teaching music, adjudicating choral competitions, and performing as a singer with esteemed professional choral ensembles. She is a recognized authority on African American spirituals and has conducted internationally acclaimed choral groups.

Bridging Choral Generations: Embracing Perspectives from Multiple Career Stages

Featuring Francis Cathlina and Galen Darrough, this session brings together perspectives on topics like inclusion, choral music and gender, and balanced choral programming. The session will address finding a balance between social justice works, contemporary choral literature, and all that is to glean from the historical choral canon.



Francis Cathlina (he/him) is a distinguished Vietnamese American conductor and educator known for innovative programming that seamlessly weaves choral music with narrative. As the director of choral activities at the University of Memphis Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music, he provides visionary leadership for the Choral Area, conducts flagship choirs, and oversees choral conducting programs. Cathlina's Eastern heritage deeply influences his teaching philosophy, emphasizing collaboration and rigor. He was named a National Finalist for The American Prize in Choral Conducting. He holds a DMA from the University of North Texas, an MM from Michigan State University, and a BME from Baylor University.



Galen Darrough is a distinguished professor emeritus with a wealth of experience spanning twenty-four states, several Canadian provinces, and Latin America. He has directed, adjudicated, and offered his expertise to choirs from junior and senior high schools to universities. His leadership led the University of Northern Colorado Concert Choir to be among the few choirs chosen NCCO's national conference. He received the Douglas R. McEwen Award for Choral Excellence from Arizona State University. Darrough's passion for choral music continues as a lecturer in choral music at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Immersion Days

I'm Retired, Now What?

Join Eph Ehly as he shares strategies to find fulfillment and happiness within the choral music profession post-retirement. This interest session will explore opportunities for retired choral directors to continue their passion through conducting engagements, mentoring younger directors, and much more! Participants will discover new ways to stay connected to the choral community while reigniting their love for the art form.



Eph Ehly has conducted over eighty all-state choirs and more than 600 festival ensembles. As a conductor, author, lecturer, and clinician he has appeared in forty-eight states, Canada, Brazil, Japan,

Mexico, and various countries throughout Europe. Ehly retired from the Conservatory of Music, University of Missouri-Kansas City, after twenty-seven years of service. He has additionally served at the University of Oklahoma and University of New Mexico, having supervised nearly 200 graduate students. Ehly is the recipient of numerous teaching and performance excellence awards and grants, including the Missouri Choral Directors Association Luther Spade Choral Director of the Year Award and the AMOCO Foundation Outstanding Teaching Award.



Voices of Colorado. With thirty years of public school experience, she served the Cherry Creek School District as Campus Middle School's choir director and the district music coordinator. She also shared her expertise at the Metropolitan State University of Denver teaching music education classes. Camp has served SWACDA as a past president, treasurer, and program chair for many SWACDA Conferences. She has earned degrees from Trinity University and The University of Texas at San Antonio. She also has a music specialist degree from the University of Colorado at Denver. Camp was inducted into the Colorado Music Educators Hall of Fame and received ACDA's Volunteer of the Year award.



Jonathan Owen retired as choral director in 2018 after thirty years as a Missouri public school music teacher. During his teaching tenure, his choirs performed eight times at the Missouri MEA Conference (1992, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2011, 2013 and 2016) and for the 2002 Music Educators National Conference (NAfME). In his retirement, Owen serves as organist/accompanist at Trinity Lutheran Church in Chesterfield, MO. He has an MM in choral conducting from Missouri State University, a BME voice emphasis (Certificate Recital) from Evangel University and an AA from Neosho County Community College (KS). Owen is currently the president-elect for SWACDA.

How Do You Spell Retirement?

R-E-B-I-R-T-H! That's How!

A Panel Discussion

Join Margie Camp, Jonathan Owen, and Mark Lawley for a panel discussion on retirement. Your rebirth is an opportunity to continue contributing to the profession with vigor. Audience participation is encouraged and welcomed!

Margie Camp has a rich background in music education. She recently retired from her role as administrative director and training choir director for Young

Mark Lawley will be a presenter for this session. His photo and bio are on page 93.

Music and Worship

Jonathan Palant and Robert T. Gibson, Coordinators



Jonathan Palant is associate dean of the arts and director of choral activities at the University of Texas at Dallas and is founder and conductor of both Credo, a 140-member community choir, and the Dallas Street Choir, a musical outlet for those affected by homelessness. In addition, Palant is director of music at Kessler Park United Methodist Church. His book, *Brothers, Sing On! Conducting the Tenor-Bass Choir*, and *The Jonathan Palant Choral Series* are published by the Hal Leonard Corporation. Palant holds degrees from Michigan State University, Temple University, and the University of Michigan.



Robert T. Gibson is a Houston native, dynamic conductor, clinician, composer/arranger, lecturer, and educator with a passion for developing future music educators. Armed with a BME from the University of North Texas and an MM from Missouri State University, he has held diverse roles in middle schools, high schools, colleges, and churches. Gibson's choral works and arrangements can be found through Walton Music and Alfred Publications. He is the recipient of the 2020 Missouri Choral Director Association Opus Award for his arrangement of "We Shall Overcome." Gibson's work has also been performed by the Texas All-State Tenor Bass Choir and the Missouri Summer All-State Choir.

Repertoire for Any Sized Worship Choir

This reading session, presented by Jonathan Palant (R&R Chair of Community Choirs), will include a mix of old and new ecumenical octavos for any size worship choir. Texts to include English, Latin, Hebrew, and Spanish.

Jonathan Palant will be the presenter for this session.

Rise, Shine, and Give Him the Glory:
Gospel Music Workshop

Attendees will rehearse various styles of gospel music under the guidance of Robert Gibson (R&R Chair of Music in Worship). Gibson will share his insights and provide teaching strategies for successful performance.

Robert T. Gibson will be the presenter for this session.

Limitless: A Time for Us

Attendees will benefit from and enjoy this informal time to share ideas, strategies, and perhaps concerns. Moderated by Jonathan Palant and Robert Gibson.

Jonathan Palant and **Robert T. Gibson** will be the presenters for this session.

New Teachers and College Students

Micah Horton, O'Neil Jones, and Elizabeth Swanson, Coordinators



Micah Horton is the director of choirs at Olathe North High School, in Olathe, Kansas. He holds an MME from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music in Kansas City, Missouri, and bachelor's degrees in music composition and psychology from Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, Massachusetts. Horton currently serves as the Youth and Student Services R&R Chair for the Southwest ACDA Region. Horton was selected as the 2022-2023 Olathe School District Teacher of the Year. He is an active adjudicator, clinician, and vocalist. He has performed with the Te Deum Chamber Choir and the Tallgrass Chamber Choir, appearing in numerous recordings.

Immersion Days



O'Neil Jones is a native of Montego Bay, Jamaica. He is highly interested in Jamaican Choral Theatre and its amalgamation with the recital style of choral production practiced in the Americas. His current research centers on the nationalistic search for a post-colonial identity expressed in Jamaican choral music. Jones holds degrees in vocal performance from Alcorn State University and an MM with emphases in choral conducting and vocal performance from the University of Southern Mississippi. He is currently pursuing a DMA in choral conducting and literature at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

level courses, and serves on master's and doctoral committees. Swanson is an active conductor, clinician, and adjudicator throughout the United States with recent guest conducting appearances at Carnegie Hall and the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa. She is also vice president of NCCO Executive Board, leading initiatives for equity and diversity. She holds degrees from Northwestern University, Ithaca College, and St. Olaf College.

Things They Didn't Teach You in College!

Moderated by Dr. Leila Heil, this session explores those topics that are critical to the success of the teacher. Topics may include tips for finding work-life balance, ways to create healthy boundaries, setting career goals, and choosing the right time to get a master's degree.



Elizabeth Swanson is the associate director of choral studies at the University of Colorado Boulder. She conducts the CU Treble Chorus and the University Choir, teaches undergraduate- and graduate-



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BRANDON BOYD
Adult
Choir Director



JEFFEREY REDDING
Senior High
Choir Director



EMILY FLOYD
Davis Flohr Middler
Choir Director

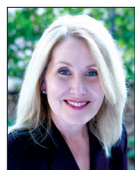


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Leila Heil is associate professor at the University of Colorado Boulder, where she teaches courses in music education. A former K-12 music teacher, she has presented sessions at numerous national and international conferences including the Midwest Clinic, the Society for Music Teacher Education Conference, NAFME Conference, ACDA National Conference, and the Research in Music Education Conference. She has authored and co-authored articles for the *Music Educators Journal*, the *Choral Journal*, *Visions in Music Education Research*, *Contributions to Music Education*, and the *Journal of Music, Technology and Education*.

Programming for the Ensemble You Have, Not the One You Want

There are a plethora of resources available to new teachers as they program for their ensembles. Together we will explore the limitless possibilities available to conductors, regardless of the ensemble complement, providing access to curated repertoire resources for all levels. Led by O'Neil Jones and Franco Basili.



Franco Basili is a DMA student in choral conducting at the University of Houston. Originally from Tandil, Argentina, Basili is a choral director, pianist, and choral singer. He completed his MM in choral pedagogy at Carthage College, and his bachelor's degrees in choral conducting and piano pedagogy at the Conservatorio de Música "Isaías Orbe" (Tandil, Argentina). He is the director of the university chorus at the University of Houston, director of the chancel choir at Grace Presbyterian Church in Houston, choral intern at the Grammy-awarded Houston Chamber Choir, and member of the multi-award-winning University of Houston Concert Chorale.

O'Neil Jones will be a presenter for this session.

Teaching Workshop

Rehearsal flow and processes are demystified as participants actively explore strategies for increased student engagement and success. This session serves to empower the conductor to develop a rehearsal toolbox from which to draw within the choral classroom. Led by O'Neil Jones and Elizabeth Swanson.

O'Neil Jones and **Elizabeth Swanson** will be the presenters for this session.

Literacy

This session engages ideas of literacy as critical to the developing young musician. How, why, and when to teach literacy are explored as participants are equipped with tools for immediate success in the classroom. Led by O'Neil Jones and Micah Horton.

O'Neil Jones and **Micah Horton** will be the presenters for this session.

Why Can't I Just Teach the Music?

This session explores setting expectations within the classroom, concert logistics, and management. Participants are invited to evaluate the many extra-musical tasks that a teacher must oversee as they build the program they envision. Led by O'Neil Jones, Micah Horton, and Franco Basili.

O'Neil Jones, Micah Horton, and Franco Basili will be the presenters for this session.

Immersion Days

Guiding Social-Emotional Learning in the Classroom

Join Dr. Elizabeth Swanson as she facilitates a conversation that centers on nurturing community through music making and programming. Strategies for promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging within the choral classroom take center stage.

Elizabeth Swanson will be the presenter for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 96.

Contemporary A Cappella

Leia Browning, Coordinator



Leia Browning has a BME from the University of North Texas. She also attended Louisiana State University, where she studied musical theatre. Browning has been teaching high school choir for eighteen years. She spent seven years at South Garland High School and is in her tenth year at Rockwall High.

Sound 101 with Tony Huerta

Are you lost when it comes to working with sound equipment? Do you know how to troubleshoot when no sound comes out? Do you know how to EQ different groups? What about purchasing a sound system for your classroom or a cappella group? Tony Huerta will answer all these questions and more!



Tony Huerta is a versatile professional in the music industry, excelling as a singer, beatboxer, recording studio engineer/producer, and live audio engineer. He is renowned as one of the world's top acappella live sound engineers, having mixed performances for major acts like Pentatonix, Take 6, and Home Free. For over a decade, he served as the Front of House

Engineer and Production Manager for the ten-time Grammy-winning group, Take 6, traveling to forty-one countries. Huerta is also the founder of Urban Method, a finalist on NBC's *The Sing Off*. His Denver-based studio, Sonic Audio, has produced, engineered, and mastered a variety of a cappella projects. Huerta is in high demand, often incorporating his beatboxing skills into live performances.

Using Pop Music to Build Better Singers

Why should we perform popular music with our choirs? How can we use contemporary music to build stronger singers and diverse programs while expanding traditional techniques and challenging choral norms? What exactly is happening in the vocal mechanism when we sing popular music authentically? Join contemporary a cappella clinicians Rob Dietz, J.D. Frizzell, and Christopher M. Diaz as they reveal the benefits of popular and contemporary music to choral singers and their communities while also addressing the most common roadblocks directors face while teaching it. Participants will leave with a better understanding of the importance of culturally native pop music in the choral program, strategies to successfully and authentically teach this music to their singers, and practical ways to incorporate it into their programs.

Rob Dietz will be a presenter for this session. His photo and bio are on page 90.

J. D. Frizzell will be a presenter for this session. His photo and bio are on page 90.



Christopher M. Diaz is a vocalist, arranger, songwriter, producer, coach and teacher from Newport News, VA. Diaz co-founded the international touring group, The Exchange, which performed hundreds of shows for audiences in over fifty countries on six continents, notably opening for The Backstreet

Boys in their thirty-two-city “In A World Like This” stadium tour and participated in three American Music Abroad tours. As a coach, Diaz has adjudicated, performed, and instructed at vocal festivals around the country and the world, and served on the vocal coaching and arranging staff of NBC’s *The Sing-Off*. Diaz is currently based in Maryland, USA.

**More Than This:
A Talk on Expanding Our Horizons
through A Cappella**

Do you feel particularly “intense” about a cappella? Are you in a group you love but feel like you’re stagnating? Do you wish you had more ideas about how to take your music further? Come have a chat with Christopher Diaz about coaching, arranging, listening, producing, performing, traveling, teaching, organizing, improving, promoting, choreographing, creating, connecting and any other -ing!

Christopher M. Diaz will be the presenter for this session.

Commercial and Jazz

Jim Graves, Coordinator



Jim Graves is a multifaceted vocal artist, arranger, and educator. He serves as director of choral activities at Southern Nazarene University since 2008. He directs the University Singers, SNU Chorale, and Concert Choir. He also teaches courses in music theory, music education, and private and group voice. Graves has led groups at the National ACDA Convention, at the Jazz Education Network National Convention, has presented interest sessions at the national and regional level of ACDA, and was formerly the Southwest ACDA Jazz R&R Chair. Graves’s ar-

rangements have been performed by The University of North Texas Jazz Singers, UNT Jazz Singers II, University of Oklahoma Singing Sooners, and performing groups from around the United States.

Sound 101 with Tony Huerta

Are you lost when it comes to working with sound equipment? Do you know how to troubleshoot when no sound comes out? Do you know how to EQ different groups? What about purchasing a sound system for your classroom or a cappella group? Tony Huerta will answer all these questions and more!

Tony Huerta will be the presenter for this session.

Jazz Timbre, Style, and Tuning

Led by Dr. Jim Graves, this session explores those topics that are critical to the success of the vocal jazz ensemble. We will identify timbral choices idiomatic to vocal jazz. You will learn tips and tricks for teaching swing, bossa nova, and other jazz styles. We will establish techniques for balancing and tuning tight harmonies.

Jim Graves will be the presenter for this session.

Improvisation

Led by Dr. Jim Graves, this session explores vocal jazz improvisations. You will be presented with listening aids, and tips and tricks for beginning jazz singers to approach vocal improvisation. We will explore motivic development through rhythm, breaking down melodies, goal tones, etudes, and ways of creating assessment in your ensemble.

Jim Graves will be the presenter for this session.

Immersion Days

Secondary and Late High School

Pamela Dawson, William George-Twyman, and Jim Henry, coordinators



Pamela Dawson, born in Detroit, Michigan, began studying music at the age of seven on the piano taught by her father. She continued in music throughout her education and was greatly influenced by

her god-sister, Dorothy Ashby, a well-renowned jazz harpist. She graduated from Cass Technical High School as a vocational music major and holds a bachelor of arts in communications and theater with an emphasis in music and business from Eastern Michigan University. She studied harp with Ruth Myers and master classes with the late Lucille Lawrence. She is the director of choral activities at Desoto High School and the 2023 GRAMMY Music Educator of the Year.



William George-Twyman is a dedicated educator and seasoned choral conductor, currently serving as the head of choral studies at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual

Arts. He has recently taken on the role of assistant director of the Music Conservatory for Curriculum/Instruction. Renowned for his innovative programming and multimedia collaborations, he has wielded the baton for musical theater productions and international performances. He is a trained countertenor, showcasing his vocal talents in a wide array of classical works. He earned his DMA in choral conducting from the University of Oklahoma, a master of sacred music, master of music in choral conducting, and a BME.



Jim Henry, serves as the director of choral studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. With a PhD in music composition from Washington University, he conducts University Singers and Vocal

Point and teaches courses in choral methods, choral conducting, and choral arranging. Henry's commit-

ment to education earned him the Missouri Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. As a celebrated composer, he received awards for his songs and piano pieces. Furthermore, he boasts a rich performance career as a two-time Barbershop Harmony Society International quartet champion bass with Crossroads. He will make his Carnegie Hall conducting debut in June.

"So... what is it you say you do here?"

Defining the Role of the Modern Secondary Teacher

As secondary choir directors, we wear a bunch of different hats. We're so used to "making it work" that we sometimes forget what we were hired to do. During this session, attendees will work on narrowing and defining exactly what it is we do in the classroom/rehearsal space. By the end of the session, attendees will have written a full job description so that they can have more honest and productive conversations with their administrators regarding time commitment, compensation, etc.

Pamela Dawson, William George-Twyman and Jim Henry will be the presenters for this session.

Developing Professionals... Artistically!

How many times have you sat in a PD session that doesn't address your teaching circumstances? How often have you been frustrated by yet another STEM presentation that forgets you exist? Don't you wish it was different? During this session, attendees will design an outline for a professional development workshop that they would like to present in their home districts. By showing the other disciplines what's really going on in the choir room, we can help our colleagues understand and develop better teaching methodology that takes the arts-minded student into account.

Pamela Dawson, William George-Twyman and Jim Henry will be the presenters for this session.

Harmonizing Diversity: Best Practices in Choral Music Education

Join us for a dynamic session exploring best practices in choral music education, with a focus on diversity. William George-Twyman will guide discussions on the importance of diversity in selecting honor choir clinicians and exemplar choirs. We will delve into innovative teaching methods such as Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), and Trauma-Informed Practice. Learn how to foster an inclusive environment that resonates with all students, enhancing their musical journey. This session promises to equip educators with practical strategies to create a more inclusive, equitable, and effective choral music education program.

William George-Twyman will be the presenter for this session.

Higher Education and Collegiate Directors

Yoojin Muhn, Joshua Oppenheim, and Catherine Sailer, Coordinators



Yoojin Muhn is the director of choral activities at the University of Texas at San Antonio, where she conducts the UTSA Chamber Singers and teaches choral conducting. She also serves as the

Music Director for the San Antonio Mastersingers, a 120-voice volunteer chorus. Muhn is in high demand as a clinician, guest conductor, and adjudicator. She received a DMA from the University of Southern California, an MM in choral conducting from the University of Cincinnati, an MM in sacred music from Westminster Choir College, and a BA in composition from Sook Myung Women's University in Seoul, Korea.



Joshua Oppenheim is director of choral studies at Kansas State University. Prior to that, he was on faculty at the Crane School of Music in New York. He re-

ceived his BM from Western Michigan University, his MM at the University of Mississippi, and his DMA in choral conducting at the University of North Texas. He directs Concert Choir, Collegiate Chorale, Men's Choir, and In-A-Chord. He teaches undergraduate and graduate conducting and choral rehearsal techniques. His choirs have performed by invitation at the New York State School Music Association Conference (2007), the Kansas MEA Conference (2009, 2012), the Southwestern ACDA Region Conference (2012), and NCCO (2013).

Catherine Sailer is a coordinator for this immersion day. Her photo and bio are on page 88.

Bridging Choral Generations: Embracing Perspectives from Multiple Career Stages

Featuring Francis Cathlina and Galen Darrough, this session brings together perspectives on topics like inclusion, choral music and gender, and balanced choral programming. The session will address finding a balance between social justice works, contemporary choral literature, and all that is to glean from the historical choral canon.

Francis Cathlina will be a presenter for this session. His photo and bio are on page 93.

Galen Darrough will be a presenter for this session. His photo and bio are on page 93.

Enhancing Choral Excellence through Roundtable Discussions

Join Yoojin Muhn, Joshua Oppenheim, and Catherine Sailer to share experiences, exchange ideas, and collectively elevate the standards of choral excellence in higher education. Immerse yourself in insightful

Immersion Days

conversations on choral music education, including curriculum development, strategic repertoire selection, and the art of cultivating a vibrant sense of community within college choirs.

Yoojin Muhn, Joshua Oppenheim, and Catherine Sailer will be the presenters for this session.

Nurturing Growth through Mentorship

Experience our enriching mentorship program designed to provide additional support during the immersion day. Connect with experienced choral directors who will guide those newer to the profession (under five years) through individualized interactions in small groups of three to five. Gain invaluable advice and personalized professional development, fostering both individual growth and a choral director's community. Led by Yoojin Muhn, Joshua Oppenheim, and Catherine Sailer.

Yoojin Muhn, Joshua Oppenheim, and Catherine Sailer will be the presenters for this session.

Middle School and Early High School

Gretchen Watt and Larry Dunn, Coordinators



Gretchen Watt is a dedicated music educator with twenty-six years of experience at Central Jr. High School in Springdale, Arkansas. Her students excel in all-region choir, choral performance assessments, and national and regional honor choirs, having been featured three times at the Arkansas all-state music conference. She collaborates with the University of Arkansas Choral Music Department and maintains a private piano and voice studio. With a BME from the University of Arkansas, Watt is active in professional

organizations like ArkCDA and ACDA, serving as the Jr. High R&R Chair for Arkansas and the SWACDA Middle School/Jr. High Repertoire & Resource Chair.



Larry Dunn, coordinator, is a seasoned music educator with over seventeen years of experience in the Magnolia Public School District. He leads the Magnolia High School Chamber Choir, Bel Canto, and V (GENTS), while also serving as the director of performing arts and chair of the district's strategic planning committee. Dunn holds a BME, a Master of Education, and has completed additional coursework for certification in Educational Administration & Supervision from Southern Arkansas University—Magnolia. His choral ensembles have performed at prestigious venues like Carnegie Hall. Dunn serves as the president of the Arkansas ACDA.

Recruiting and Retaining 101

Whether building a new choral program or maintaining enrollment, this session will give you new ideas for recruitment and competing to keep singers in your program. Led by Larry Dunn and Gretchen Watt.

Larry Dunn and Gretchen Watt will be the presenters for this session.

The Boy's Changing Voice

This session will demonstrate essential strategies and resources for teaching the developing boys voice, including warm-ups, customizing vocal lines, and tried-and-true literature that works! Led by Larry Dunn and Gretchen Watt.

Larry Dunn and Gretchen Watt will be the presenters for this session.

The Female Adolescent Voice

In a world of young singers “belting it” in their low register, this session will share vocal strategies for bringing the head voice down and supporting a healthy and beautiful sound through literature suited for the developing female voice. Led by Larry Dunn and Gretchen Watt.

Larry Dunn and **Gretchen Watt** will be the presenters for this session.

Elementary and Children's Choir

Nick Farr and Rachel Cornett, Coordinators



Nick Farr is the artistic director of Una Vice at Wildwood in Little Rock, AR. He holds an education doctorate in higher education and a doctorate of music education. Farr is the Maumelle High School Principal in Maumelle, AR. He has been a music educator for eleven years and enjoys impacting the arts as an administrator. Farr is the president-elect for Arkansas ACDA and has served in various other roles. He has two daughters and enjoys running and working with community theatre.



Rachel Cornett is an accomplished music educator with a BME and an MME from the University of Arkansas. Her career includes a decade as a middle school choir director in Bentonville, Arkansas, and leadership roles at TEP Charter School in Manhattan. Currently teachchoir for grades 8-9 at Lakeside Junior High, she also directs the University of Arkansas Children's Choir. Cornett holds a National Board Certification and an ESL Certification. She serves on the Arkansas ACDA Board and is known for her choral clinics and guest conductor roles. She also has a professional singing career.

Meet & Greet & Door Prizes!!

This session will help us connect to other elementary music teachers and children's chorus directors who are attending the conference. Make new friends and keep the old as we interact through fun, fellowship, and door prizes!

Nick Farr and **Rachel Cornett** will be the presenters for this session.

"Unconference"

This session will cover topics that are a challenge for teachers new and seasoned. What areas of your teaching do you feel need the most support? What areas of teaching are your strengths? Great minds think alike. Join us with your thoughts and concerns for us all to workshop in real-time together!

Nick Farr and **Rachel Cornett** will be the presenters for this session.

"Kids' Songs True and New"

Tried-and-true (as well as new to you) songs for young kids that your students and audiences will love. Join us as we explore favorite children's classics and songs that are trending.

Nick Farr and **Rachel Cornett** will be the presenters for this session.

Performing Choirs

A.C. Jones High School Varsity Mixed Choir



The A.C. Jones High School Varsity Mixed Choir started in 2016 when Cesar Galaviz was given the opportunity to bring the program back to life. Since its rebirth, the high school choral program has brought a total of sixteen Texas University Interscholastic League Sweepstakes. Travel and performance experiences in the last five years include Carnegie Hall in New York City, Universal Studios in Orlando Florida, the Pearl Harbor Remembrance event in Hawaii, and the opportunity to perform at the 2023 Texas MEA Convention. Since 2018, the choral program has had twenty-nine Texas All-State Choir Representations.



Cesar Galaviz completed a BM from Texas A&M University Corpus Christi and began his teaching career at Tuloso Midway Middle School in Corpus Christi. Since 2018, twenty-nine students from A. C. Jones High School have been awarded places in TMEA Large School and Small School All-State Choirs. Travel and performance experiences have included Carnegie Hall, Universal Studios in Orlando Florida, and at the Pearl Harbor Remembrance event in Hawaii. Galaviz is active as a section leader for the TMEA All-State Small School Choir, as Camp Coordinator for the Del Mar College Choir Camp, has served as a Region 14 Vocal Division officer, and UIL Concert & Sight-Reading adjudicator.

Allen High School Varsity Treble Choir



The Allen High School Varsity Treble Choir is the premier treble ensemble at Allen HS and is beautifully and complexly diverse. The choir comprises sophomores, juniors, and seniors who all possess an incredible work ethic, a commitment to academic integrity and eligibility, and enormous hearts for making and sharing beautiful music. The students in this choir are members of Allen High School's Varsity Mixed Chorus as well as the varsity treble chorus Eagle Select. They have consistently received Sweepstakes awards at UIL Concert and Sightreading evaluations and performed at the 2023 Texas MEA Convention.



Kathryn Zetterstrom began her teaching career in the Lubbock Independent School District and has taught for twenty-three years—twelve of which have been as one of four directors (and friends) who teach approximately 450 choir students at Allen High School. She currently serves as TMEA Region 25 Vice-President, and her Varsity Treble Choir performed as an invited choir at the 2023 TMEA convention in San Antonio. She received both her BME and her MM (performance) degree in conducting from Texas Tech University (under Dr. Ken Davis) and her Educational Administration certification from Lubbock Christian University.

Colorado Children's Chorale Tour Choir



Over the past fifty years, the Colorado Children's Chorale has brought its artistry and charm to audiences throughout the world. With a diverse repertoire ranging from fully-staged opera and musical theater to standard choral compositions in classical, folk, and popular traditions, the Chorale performs with an innovative stage presentation and a unique theatrical spirit. The Chorale has received the Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, the Mayor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, and the prestigious El Pomar Award for Excellence in Arts and Humanities. The Colorado Children's Chorale annually trains 400 members between the ages of 7 and 14 from all ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds, representing more than 180 schools in the Denver metro area and beyond.



Emily Crile, artistic director, exhibits her passion for choral music through developing and conducting singers of all ages. She currently directs Tour Choir, a premier treble ensemble. During the past twenty-two years with the Chorale, she has directed prep, apprentice, and transitions choirs; worked with concert and tour choirs; prepared children for appearances with the Colorado Symphony, Central City Opera, Opera Colorado, and Colorado Ballet; and toured throughout Australia, China, Europe, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United States. Crile is the past president of Colorado ACDA and is an active choral clinician and presenter throughout the United States.

Elus Vocal Ensemble



Founded in 2012, Elus Vocal Ensemble comprises musicians based in the Denver Metropolitan area. Under the direction of Taylor Martin, Elus specializes in singing diverse a cappella choral repertoire including contemporary works from around the world. In their eighth season, Elus has collaborated previously with The Colorado Symphony, The Colorado Chorale, El Sistema, Church of the Ascension, St. Martin's Chamber Choir, and the Choirs of Metropolitan State University.



Taylor Martin is associate director and conductor for the Colorado Symphony Chorus, and artistic director for Elus Vocal Ensemble. Entering his seventh season with Elus Vocal Ensemble, Martin has led performances of great a cappella repertoire through imaginative programming, and led major works such as David Lang's *the little match girl passion* and Fauré's *Requiem* to great acclaim. Elus collaborated with international EDM artist, OPIUO, to perform a sold-out show at Red Rocks in 2021. Martin lives in Arvada with his wife and pets, where he loves to spend time outside, enjoying Colorado's beautiful nature.

Performing Choirs

Fort Settlement Middle School Varsity Treble Choir



Fort Settlement Varsity Treble Choir is a select ensemble of thirty-eight singers in grades 7-8. Singers consistently receive 1st Division Superior ratings at UIL Solo/Ensemble, place in the TMEA Region 13 MS Choir, and earn straight 1st Division Superior ratings during UIL Concert and Sightreading contest. In 2022, Varsity Treble won their first national award for the Mark of Excellence 2022 as a Commended Winner. Many choir members are NJHS members, enrolled in Pre-AP and GT curriculum, and uphold traditions of music excellence existing at Fort Settlement.



Kirsten Jordon received her BA in vocal performance and music education from Virginia Tech in 1993, moved to Houston, and began over thirty years of teaching music, directing choirs, and singing.

After coordinating Fort Bend ISD's district honor choir program in 2014 and 2015, Jordon had the honor of conducting the 2016 FBISD Elementary Honor Choir at the TMEA annual convention. Jordon spent seven years directing the Fort Bend Boy Choir of Texas's Town Choir; created Cantate, a Sugar Land community children's choir; and started a Chamber Choir including singers in local high schools as well as adults from the area.

Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy Treble Singers



GPFAA Treble Singers consists of advanced vocalists in grades 9-12. Joel Duarte, high school director, and Alexis Galindo, middle school director, join to lead the Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy Vocal Music strand. The program not only nurtures the students' lives but has consistently ranked among the top choirs across the nation. This ensemble has won numerous best-in-class, overall outstanding, and grand champion awards nationwide. The program has been recognized as Mark of Excellence National Winners (2019, 2020, 2022, 2023), American Choral Prize Winners (2020, 2021, 2022), and Grammy Museum Signature School Award Recipient (2021).



Joel Duarte has taught public school for thirteen years and has been named teacher of the year twice, most recently by The National Art-School Network as one of the 2023-2024 Teachers of

the Year. He obtained degrees from Wayland Baptist University (BME) and Southern Methodist University (MM). Duarte loves performing with the Dallas Symphony Chorus, as he feels it keeps him in the mindset and appreciation of his singers. Duarte has traveled the world through the opportunities provided by performing, teaching, and empowering his fellow educators.

Liberty North High School Chamber Choir



The Liberty North High School Chamber Choir is an auditioned, non-curricular ensemble that meets two hours per week. Each student must first audition for the Concert Choir and then complete the rigorous audition process to be accepted into the Chamber Choir. There are strict guidelines that hold each member accountable for attendance and active participation. These students represent the best and brightest, most well-rounded, and most involved students that Liberty North has to offer. More importantly, these students express their humanity through music and explore the depths of emotions that music helps to define.



Brian Hartman has served as a choral music educator for twenty-three years, currently enjoying his fourteenth at Liberty North High School in Liberty, Missouri. Throughout his tenure, Hartman has enjoyed performances as a singer, conductor, and adjudicator across the United States and abroad. Hartman is active in music education organizations, having served in numerous roles with the Kansas City Metro District, MCDA, SWACDA, and Missouri MEA, serving as president for the 2022-2024 term. He holds degrees from Wichita State University (BME), University of Missouri-Columbia (MM), and Northwest Missouri State University (EdS).

MacArthur High School A Cappella Treble Choir



Established in 2019 and consisting of twenty singers in grades 9-12, the A Cappella Treble Choir is a select varsity treble group comprising members from MacArthur High School's A Cappella Choir, the varsity mixed ensemble. The ensemble's first year in existence was during hybrid instruction at Irving ISD. In addition to their mixed ensemble rehearsals, members attended virtual and outdoor rehearsals throughout the year and ended the contest season by receiving their first of four sweepstakes, the highest accolade from Texas's University Interscholastic League (UIL) contest.



Lauren Davis has worked in music education for fourteen years. She began her career in Del Rio Middle School before moving to Huntsville High School and returning to Dallas six years ago to direct at MacArthur High School in Irving ISD. Choirs under her direction regularly receive sweepstakes at University Interscholastic League (UIL) competitions, have singers perform in Texas All-State choirs, excel at regional and state level solo and ensemble contest, boast members in the ACDA National Honor Choir, and are active performers in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area. Davis earned her BME from Texas A&M University-Commerce. She performs with various community choirs, opera groups, and churches across the Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex.

Performing Choirs

Nixa High School Chamber Singers



The Chamber Singers, comprising forty auditioned singers, is the premier choral ensemble at Nixa High School. Under the leadership of Daniel Gutierrez, the Chamber Singers have received exemplary ratings at district and state contests, and were named the Grand Champions of the Worlds of Fun Choral Festival in the spring of 2022 and 2023. In 2023 they also performed for the Missouri MEA Conference.



Daniel Gutierrez is the head choir director at Nixa secondary schools. Gutierrez is an active conductor, clinician, and presenter throughout the country. He was named Teacher of the Year for Springfield Public Schools and Southwest Missouri (also a finalist for the state TOTY award), Springfield Rotary Award for Outstanding Community Service, honoree for *Springfield Business Journal's* 40 Under 40, quarter-finalist for the Grammy National Music Educator Award, and the recipient of the Missouri Choral Directors Association Podium Award. Gutierrez's speaking engagements include presenting for TEDx, presenting for regional and National ACDA conference, and other choral workshops nationally.

Springfield Chamber Chorus



Founded in 2008, Springfield Chamber Chorus is dedicated to acting as ambassadors, artists, and educators, integrating choral music into the life of our community through meaningful experiences for both singer and audience. The chorus, an entirely volunteer ensemble of forty members, exists to pursue artistic excellence while commissioning new works, supporting emerging talent, and promoting artistic collaboration throughout our region. Springfield Chamber Chorus has been featured at both the Missouri Choral Directors Association and Missouri MEA annual conferences on multiple occasions. Performances highlight a wide range of classic and contemporary choral pieces.



Christopher Brammer is an accomplished conductor, clinician, and educator. He spent twelve years teaching music in public schools before leaving to serve as the music minister at University Heights Baptist Church in Springfield, MO. Brammer received music degrees from Lawrence University in Appleton, WI, and from Missouri State University in Springfield. He resides in Springfield with his wife, Amy, and three amazing children, Wyatt, Will, and Izzy, where he maintains an active schedule as a clinician, and is the artistic director of Springfield Chamber Chorus.

Stephen F. Austin State University A Cappella Choir



The A Cappella Choir, under the direction of Dr. Michael Murphy, is the premier choral ensemble at Stephen F. Austin State University. The select mixed chorus has a distinguished tradition of performing distinctive and diverse repertoire at the highest level of artistry. Throughout its rich and successful history, the choir has had many guest appearances at state and national conventions including, Texas MEA, NafME, the ACDA, and many international concert venues.



Michael Murphy is the director of choral activities and associate professor of music at Stephen F. Austin State University, where he teaches choral conducting, ensembles, repertoire, and methods courses and oversees the graduate conducting program. Murphy is an active clinician, adjudicator, and author. His research interests include training and developing the holistic conductor, rehearsal techniques, new choral compositions, and investing and creating impactful connections in our global community through music. His choirs have been invited to perform for several international, state, and regional ACDA and NafME conferences, and he has held several international, national, and state leadership positions.

Timber Creek High School Chamber Choir



The Timber Creek HS choir program has been active in the competitive arena of choir for the last five years and has grown to be a consistent presence in the online choral community. The chamber choir was founded the year Adrian Kirtley started as the head director, and since then they've been awarded first place at the 2019 and 2021 Madrigal Festivals, first place at the 2022 Festival di Voce competition, and most recently performed as an invited choir of the 2023 National ACDA Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio.



Adrian Kirtley has served as director of choral music at Timber Creek High School in Ft. Worth since 2019. He was assistant director at Timber Creek during 2016 and 2017. All his choirs since 2019 have received UIL Sweepstakes ratings. Since 2016, thirty-eight of his students have been named all-state choir members. His groups have garnered honor choir recognitions (2020 and 2022) and were named Grand Champions (2019 and 2021) at the Madrigal and Chamber Festival. A Grand Champion award was given at the Festival di Voce in 2022, and his ensemble was selected as a 2023 Honor Choir. In the summer of 2024 he has been invited to be a guest conductor at Carnegie Hall by MidAmerica Productions.

Performing Choirs

Wichita State University Concert Chorale



The Wichita State University Concert Chorale is the premier choral ensemble at Wichita State University. Chorale is a highly-selective, auditioned choir open to all WSU students, regardless of major, who desire a rigorous, quality choral experience. They cultivate an atmosphere of collegiality where lasting memories and musical experiences can be gained through high artistic standards and the pursuit of excellence. Chorale performs of a wide variety of repertoire from the Renaissance through the twenty-first century.



Ryan Beeken serves as director of choral activities at Wichita State University, where he conducts the Concert Chorale and Madrigal Singers and teaches graduate and undergraduate choral conducting and literature. He received bachelor's degrees in music education and vocal performance from Drake University and graduate degrees from Michigan State University. Beeken's choirs have performed at state, regional, and national ACDA conferences and for state and regional NAfME. Prior to his appointment at WSU, Beeken served as director of choral studies at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, taught at Michigan State University, and taught vocal music for sixteen years in Iowa.

The Woodlands High School Chamber Choir



TWHS Choir enjoys a rich tradition of choral excellence. The Chamber Choir is a small, highly selective ensemble comprising dedicated choir students. This choir's main objective is to prepare and perform music from all musical time periods that are suitable for a Chamber Choir. In addition to their membership in the Chamber Choir, these students are also members of our Varsity Choirs. They have won top awards at festivals throughout Texas and performed at TMEA in 2020.



Patrick Newcomb has been a high school choir director since 2005. In 2010 he came to The Woodlands High School as the assistant choir director and became the head choir director in 2015. Newcomb is also a proud alumnus of The Woodlands High School and is humbled to be at the helm of the choir program that had such a positive impact on his life as a high school student. He earned a BME and an MM in choral conducting from Sam Houston State University. Choirs at TWHS under Newcomb's direction have earned consistent superior ratings at UIL Concert and Sightreading along with best in class/overall outstanding awards at various choral festivals. In 2022 he received the TCDA Choral Director of Distinction Award.

Wylie East High School Varsity Tenor-Bass Choir



The Wylie East Varsity Tenor-Bass Chorus is a diverse group of ninety-five singers in grades 9-12 and represents two of the three tenor-bass choirs on campus: A Cappella Tenor-Bass Choir and Select Tenor-Bass Choir. The tenor-bass choir program has experienced rapid growth from approximately twenty-five singers seven years ago to over 130 this school year. The performance of the Varsity Tenor-Bass Choir at Southwestern ACDA not only marks the inaugural conference performance for the choral program, but is also the first choral ensemble from Wylie ISD to be selected for performance at a music convention.



Nathan Dame is proud to serve as director of choral activities and coordinator of fine arts at Wylie East High School. Dame has conducted choral ensembles of elementary through collegiate singers as a faculty member in the Texas public schools and at the University of Kansas. At Wylie East, he conducts the A Cappella Choir, Varsity Tenor-Bass Choir, Select Tenor-Bass Choir, Out of the Blue, the school's popular music ensemble, and oversees a thriving choral program of 375 singers in eleven performing ensembles. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, he acts as vertical team lead for the Raider Area Choral Department. He was a national finalist for the Dale Warland American Prize in Choral Conducting.

Young Junior High School Young Men



Young Junior High, located in Southwest Arlington, is a two-year school with an enrollment of approximately 800 students. The band, choir, and orchestra programs at Young all consistently earn Sweepstakes Awards at UIL Contest, and members of each organization garner numerous individual awards at city, region, and solo contests. The choirs at Young have performed at the Middle School/Junior High National Convention, Southwest ACDA, TMEA, National ACDA, and for the Texas State Board of Education.



Christi Jones has been teaching choir for twenty-four years, all but one have been at Young Junior High in Arlington, Texas. Choirs under her direction have performed at TMEA (2015 and 2022), SWACDA (2014), National ACDA (2019), the MS/JH National Convention (2012), and for the State Board of Education (2015). Jones has pieces published by Carl Fischer, BriLee Music, RBC, and Excelsia (UIL Sight-reading pieces), with many inclusions on the Texas UIL Prescribed Music List. She was named Teacher of the Year at Young in 2011. She and her husband, Scott, reside in Arlington with their sons, Neal (14) and Carson (12). Neal will be singing bass and Carson will be singing tenor 1 with the Young Men at Southwest ACDA.

Interest Sessions

The 4x4 Approach: Creative Programming for Secondary Choral Ensembles

Many struggle to find engaging choral repertoire that suits the needs of a developing ensemble. Join the clinicians as they explore literature appropriate for middle, high school, and collegiate programs that will incorporate and encompass arts standards and invigorate singers. Teacher-conductors will walk away from this session with repertoire to meet the specific needs of students, creative programming suggestions, and scaffolding techniques to support growing choral programs. In this session, we will share our philosophy of programming centered on inclusivity, variety, and engagement through the 4 x 4 approach.

McKenna Stenson will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 82.

Kyra Stahr will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 82.

A Place for All: Diverse Perspectives in Johann Sebastian Bach's Cantatas

In order to honor a work's original context, conductors encourage participants to engage deeply with a work's text and meaning. When a student or audience member comes from a religious perspective different from the selected repertoire, achieving this goal becomes complex. The sacred cantatas of J. S. Bach offer countless opportunities for participants to engage deeply with his works while discovering themes that resonate beyond its original theological purpose. This lecture examines four cantatas (172, 56, 158, and 25) through various non-musical, diverse perspectives, and demonstrates how Bach's cantatas engage musicians/audiences with a plurality of beliefs and experiences.

C. Michael Porter will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 10.

Anton Bruckner Unknown

In 1824, Anton Bruckner was born in a little Austrian village. Two hundred years later we celebrate the birthday of a composer whose symphonies inspired a century and whose choral works are still amongst the best of what Western canonic choral music. In this workshop we'll take a closer look at Bruckner's lesser-known choral pieces for both mixed and male choir.



Florian Maierl is a German-based Austrian conductor and composer. He studied church music and singing in Vienna and taught at the University Mozarteum Salzburg and the Vienna Music University. With his choir, *coro siamo*, he won several national and international choir competitions. In 2022 he was appointed professor of choral conducting at the University for Music and Theater in Leipzig, Germany.

Best Practices in Program Administration for New Choral Directors

This session is for new choral directors who are engaging with the non-musical realities of music education in the twenty-first century. It will inform new professionals by providing practical guidance and information regarding the professional environment. The session covers program philosophy, program development, professional development, relevant technology, and recommends other professionals with whom one should have a healthy working relationship to benefit a growing choral program.

Joshua Cheney, a native of Fayetteville, North Carolina, is assistant professor of music and director of choral activities at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling



Springs, North Carolina. At Gardner-Webb he directs Concert Choir, Max Gardner Singers, Handbell Ensemble, and Worship Ensemble. Cheney is also responsible for teaching music survey and courses in conducting, voice, and guitar. He holds a BME from Campbell University, an MM in choral conducting and church music from Mercer University, and a DMA in choral conducting from Louisiana State University. Cheney and his wife, Rebekah, reside in Asheville, North Carolina.

“Brain Smart” Rehearsals

This session will explore the benefits of being “brain-smart” in rehearsals. Participants will be up and moving for nearly the entire session and will leave with resources to keep the director and the singers fired up for the entire year. Participants will experience brain-break activities and creative teaching strategies that can be used to increase focus, energy, and creativity in choral rehearsals. Participants will leave with a toolkit of more than eighty brain-break, team, and learning activities that they can use to enhance their choral rehearsals and improve the overall experience for their singers.



Stephen Rew holds his BME and MME from the Conservatory of Music and Dance at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. He has received his district’s Teacher of the Year Award two times (Drexel, 2005, and Ray-Pec, 2013). Rew just completed his sixth year as director at his alma mater, RPHS. Under his direction, the Chamber Singers performed at the 2022 MMEA Conference. Rew is also a motivational speaker, published composer, and lyricist. He and his wife, Cindy, and their children, Mason and Chloe, live in their dream home in Raymore.

Choral Music and Storytelling: Building Engagement through Program Flow

Through creative concert programming, choral conductors can cultivate concert experiences that lead both performers and audience members from one selection to the next with engagement and aesthetic connection. Outcomes: Consider overarching themes and connections for a concert program, explore sources of engaging repertoire from a diverse group of composers, connect music making to social/emotional learning, consider themes based on local stories or history to engage with other local organizations, consider options for flow from one choral piece to the next, explore assignments, projects, and guest lecture opportunities to engage in the music’s context.

Raul Dominguez will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 25.

Matthew Myers will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 20.

The Choral Music of Jamaica

Through this session, including the exploration of newly published works, participants will become equipped with the tools necessary to engage with Jamaican choral music with musical and sociocultural integrity.

O’Neil Jones will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 96.

The **University of West Indies Mona University Singers** will be the demonstration choir for this session. Their photo and bio are on page 88.

Interest Sessions

Choral Singing in America Documentary Screening

Choral Singing in America is a visual representation of the breadth and depth of choral singing today. The film beautifully tells the myriad stories and sounds of American choral singers and leaders—stories that inspire, build community, foster hope, and showcase the tremendous social capital and community building of singing together. America sings in schools, in communities, in concert halls, on the streets, in churches and synagogues, in prisons, in hospice centers, and wherever hearts are moved to join in song.



Brian Gaukel excels in creating documentary style, short- and long-form films. An advanced training in the performing arts as a singer and instrumentalist serve him well as an emotional storyteller. He attended the Interlochen Arts Academy and the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Gaukel is the filmmaker of the feature documentary *We Are the Music Makers* (2020),

is a biopic on the topic of choral music and the profound career of Dr. Jerry Blackstone. He has recently produced creative content for National Concerts, The Georgia Institute of Technology, Georgia State University, The University of Michigan, Yale University, Amherst College, The Kaleidoscope Vocal Ensemble, Dallas Street Choir, VOCES8, and Chanticleer.

Creating a Culture of Inclusion: Welcoming Singers with Disabilities

Even though choral music should be available to everyone, students with disabilities are often denied substantive, appropriate ensemble experiences in school. This session will lead participants through three philosophical and educational models (cultural model of disability, Universal Design for Learning, and culturally responsive teaching), and put the models in conversa-

tion with each other in order to help choir teachers create classrooms that are more welcoming to students with disabilities. We will then explore examples of these ideas being applied in educational settings and discuss practical ways to implement them.



Andrew Voth is currently in his first year as assistant professor of music at McPherson College in McPherson, Kansas. Voth completed his DMA and MM at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. During this time, he worked as a TA for both the choral and music education departments, teaching choirs and supervising student teaching experiences, as well as being selected as a Lorna Wendt Choral Conducting Fellow. Prior to his graduate studies, Voth taught singers in grades 6-12 in Goessel, Kansas, for five years following his graduation from Bethel College (KS).

Creating the Optimal Sound: Voice Matching for the Large Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Voice match a Vocal Jazz Ensemble during the clinic to demonstrate how to improve the tone/blend using methods derived from the American Choral Tradition, mostly using the St. Olaf method.



John Stafford II is director of choral activities at Kansas City Kansas Community College. Stafford was a 2015 recipient of the John and Suanne Roueche Excellence Award and the 2020 Henry Louis Award for Teaching Excellence at KCKCC. He serves as the R&R Vocal Jazz Chair for ACDA and has music published by the Lorenz Corporation, Anchor Music Publications, and the Jazz Education Network. He wrote a chapter for “Rehearsing The Vocal Jazz Ensemble,” published by GIA Publications. Stafford has been a clinician for the choral music across the country, and he has conducted multiple all-state jazz choirs.

Cultural Bridges: Developing International Exchanges

Building cultural competencies for our singers is an essential and exciting part of being a choral director. When performing music from cultures outside our own, it's important that we learn about the history, culture, and performance practices. How can we as directors explore opportunities to engage in international collaborations through travel and non-travel based exchanges? Featuring the participants from the 2023 ACDA International Conductor Exchange Program to Germany, this session explores connections in the international choral community and finding ways to create meaningful experiences for our singers. What elements of American music can we be prepared to share and teach responsibly to our colleagues abroad?

Jennifer Sengin will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 79.



Jeffrey Allen Murdock is internationally known as a conductor and clinician. He currently serves as director of choral activities, professor of music, and founding director of the Arkansas Center for Black Music at the University of Arkansas. He is the 2016 Connor Endowed Faculty Fellow in the J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Science, and 2019 Most Outstanding Faculty at the University of Arkansas. He is the 2021 Grammy Music Educator of the Year. Murdock has conducted regional and state honor choirs, and headlined conferences in twenty-six states and eight countries. He serves ACDA as president of the Southwestern Region, past president of Arkansas ACDA, and serves on the national diversity subcom-



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Interest Sessions

mittee. Murdock holds a BME and an MM from the University of Southern Mississippi, and a PhD in music education from the University of Memphis.



Ryan Sullivan is the director of choral activities at Arkansas State University, where he conducts the Concert Choir, Jonesboro Chorale, and Singing Statesmen, and teaches coursework in conducting and music education. Sullivan previously served as associate conductor for the Dallas Symphony Chorus and the conductor of Collegium Singers and Baroque Orchestra at the University of North Texas. As a fellow for the 2023 ICEP in Germany, he was an instructor and lecturer at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart and the Hochschule für Kirchenmusik in Rottenburg. Sullivan serves as current past president for the Southwestern ACDA Region.



Erin Plisco is the associate director of choral studies at Missouri State University, where she conducts multiple choirs and teaches undergraduate and graduate choral conducting and literature. She is a frequent guest clinician across the United States and abroad. She serves as the ACDA National Women's/SSAA Choirs R&R Chair and is a conducting fellow for ACDA's International Conductor Exchange Program. Choirs under her direction performed at the 2022 ACDA Southwestern Region Conference, the 2022 Missouri MEA Conference, the 2023 National ACDA Conference and Carnegie Hall. Plisco completed a DMA in choral conducting from the University of Arizona.



John McDonald is director of vocal studies and director of choir at Washington University in St. Louis and director of the tenor-bass ensemble, Cantus, for the St. Louis Children's Choirs. He serves on the

ACDA National Standing Committee for Education and Communication. In 2023, McDonald was selected for the ACDA International Conductors Exchange

Program in Germany. He received degrees from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, East Carolina University, and Middle Tennessee State University.

Meg Stohlmann will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 31.

Developing Black-Belt Choral Musicians: Transferable Lessons and Methods from Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

Brazilian Jiu-jitsu is a grappling martial art that is often used as a vehicle to impact practitioners positively, building resilience, patience, confidence, and discipline through terraced skill-building in a community of individuals from all walks of life. The benefits of this art form deserve our attention in the choral music world. We will explore the transferable lessons and methods from the jiu-jitsu mats and how they can be effectively applied in rehearsals. Not only are these skills musically and practically applicable, but they are also valuable to combat mental stress, hyper-anxiety, and other mind-body barriers in ourselves and our singing musicians.



Jeffery Wall serves as professor of music and director of choral activities at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. He is the co-founder and artistic director of Vox Solaris, a chamber

choir in Tulsa. He holds a BM in vocal music education from Texas Tech University, an MM in choral conducting from the University of Tennessee, and DMA in choral conducting from the University of South Carolina. Relevant to this session, Wall is a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu black belt with over thirty years of martial arts experience.

First-Generation and First-Time Music Students: Tips for a Successful Transition

The transition from high school to college is a daunting time for many students, and this transition is even more extreme for students who choose to study music. This can be especially difficult for our first-generation and first-time music students who have possibly never done private lessons, do not read music, and are often working many hours at an off-campus job while commuting to school, and sometimes supporting a family. Through a qualitative research study, I have identified helpful tips that music educators can use to help these students build a more successful transition to the college classroom.



Joseph DeSota, DMA, is an assistant professor of applied voice, vocal division coordinator, faculty advisor, and Washburn Opera studio director at Washburn University. He received his BM from Pepperdine University, and both his MM and DMA in vocal performance from University of Missouri, Kansas City's Conservatory of Music and Dance. In addition to his teaching position, DeSota is also director of vocal arts for the Bar Harbor Music Festival, artistic administrator for Lawrence Opera Theatre, and co-chair of the executive board for the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Kansas.

Flexible Fach: Gender-Affirming Vocal Pedagogy through Science-Informed Practices

In this interactive session, attendees will be invited to sing and discuss vocal exercises from a new protocol developed by the presenter that focuses on helping transgender and gender-expansive (TGE) singers produce an aural aesthetic that better aligns with their gender identity. Created through an understanding of

the gendered associations and vocal characteristics of common fach categories and voice classifications, this protocol synthesizes practices from gender-affirming speech-language pathology (SLP) with source-filter theory and science-informed vocal pedagogy to present a healthy, gender-affirming practice routine for TGE singers who are seeking to masculinize or feminize their voices.

Stevie J. Hirner will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 23.

Forget Sight Reading, My Kids Can't Match Pitch! What'll I Do?

Finding solutions for students to match pitch is a struggle for every teacher. Whether it is the changing voice, the inexperienced singer, or the underdeveloped ear, every teacher must spend time to help their students develop this necessary skill. We will present and challenge pedagogical approaches to help students through the voice change and match pitch. We will also present some ideas to help these specific students become successful on day one of your class. This will include vocalization exercises, repertoire choices, musicianship training, and ensemble awareness training.

Brian Hartman will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 107.



Sam Anderson is the associate choral director at Liberty North High School, and the music director at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, KCMO, along with organist, Kurt Knecht. As a singer, he has performed and recorded with the Kansas City Chorale, the St. Tikhon Choir, and the PaTRAM Institute Male Choir.

Interest Sessions

Gaming the System: Play-Based Approaches to Teaching Music Literacy

Teaching music literacy can feel like a high-pressure exercise that creates anxiety in students. Yet, music literacy is fundamental to the efficiency of a choral rehearsal. This interactive session breaks down music literacy into three discrete elements: visual literacy, aural literacy, and performance literacy, suggesting sequential methods for instruction. For each category, activities will be demonstrated through games with assessment criteria in the domains of rhythm, melody, and harmony. The session will also outline how students can monitor their progress and set goals. This session

will suggest ideas for applying these skills through play-based projects.



Saleel Menon is working on his PhD in music education at Michigan State University, where he was awarded his Masters degree in choral conducting. Menon co-authored an article published in 2019 in the *Music Educator Journal* on popular music, which was recently awarded one of the journal's "most read" articles. In 2020 he received the Texas Choral Directors Association "Young Director of Distinction" Award.

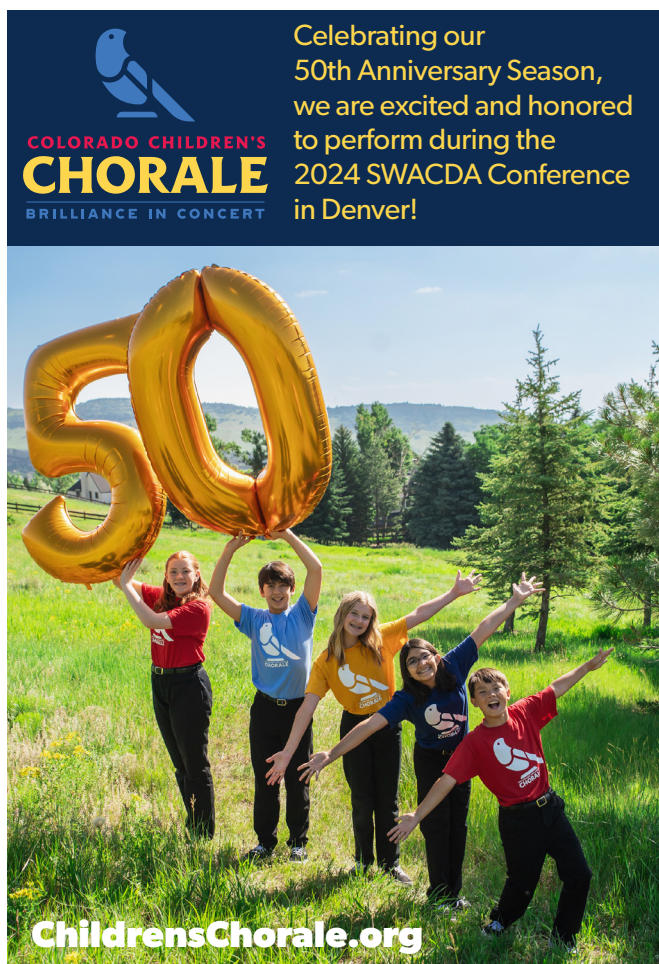
Grades are Dumb: Growth Mindset in the Choral Classroom

Many students struggle with conventional classroom management and motivation techniques. In our program we tell all students that you don't have to be good, you just have to try! It takes the focus off the product and places importance on the act of practice. Change your rules and change the culture of your room. Culture and leadership will be addressed through officer structure and student structured talk. We will also focus on how you start class and provide warm-up practices and strategies for interdisciplinary connections.

Har-Ber High School Choir will be the demonstration choir for this session.



Clint Pianto is in his twenty-third year of teaching young people the art of choral music. Pianto has taught at all levels of secondary music education and is currently the choir director at Har-Ber High School in Springdale AR. He has served in a number of different leadership positions in state and regional levels of ACDA and ArkCDA. Pianto is a sought-after clinician and presenter and has worked with directors and choirs in six states. He lives in Fayetteville, AR, with his wife, Sarah, and two sons, Connor and Cason.



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Michael Baker Brown is in his thirteenth year of teaching choral music. Brown has taught at all levels of secondary music education. He holds an MME from the University of Florida, a BME from the University of Arkansas, and an associates of arts from the Northwest Arkansas Community College. He currently teaches at Springdale Har-Ber High School as the assistant choir director and AP Music Theory teacher. He lives in Springdale, AR, with his wife, Ember, and his son, Christopher.

If I Don't Scat Sing, How Can I Teach It? Strategies to Help Choir Directors Who are New to the Jazz Idiom Demystify Vocal Improvisation

For many choir directors, the art of wordless vocal improvisation, or “scat singing,” is one of the scariest parts of teaching jazz. Few music education programs prepare choral educators in jazz pedagogy, leaving directors to ask students to “make something up.” However, proficient jazz singers call upon a variety of patterns and melodic ideas “tools” to create seemingly spur-of-the-moment solos. There are several key “tools” that we can help our students learn to use that are quick to internalize and sound really good. The handout for this session includes solo transcriptions, warmup exercises, classroom strategies, and recommendations for additional resources.



Justin Binek is an internationally recognized jazz and classical singer, pianist, clinician, and composer/arranger. A co-author of the upcoming third edition of Richard Lawn's “Experiencing Jazz” history textbook, Binek's compositions and arrangements are available from Kerry Marsh and Anchor Music; and his original jazz-inspired mass, *Missa Lucis*, made its Carnegie Hall debut in June 2022. He serves as an associate professor of music theory/jazz studies at Kansas City Kansas Community College, where his students annually receive numerous *DownBeat* Student

Music Awards. He also teaches on the faculties of The Jazz Harmony Retreat and the Halewynstichting Jazz Workshop (Belgium).

Like and Subscribe: Fostering Well-Being through the Choral Rehearsal

Today, more than ever, young people are paralyzed by anxiety, and this anxiety is driven by a social-media-induced vulnerability, characterized by hypersensitivity to criticism and a constant need for reassurance. For the choral pedagogue, understanding the context for this anxiety is critical for planning effective rehearsals. Outline: (1) Setting the scene: A presentation of recent psychological studies that reveal a rise in self-fixation or non-clinical narcissism in teens and young adults. (2) The Intersection of Social Media and the Choral Program. (3) The way forward: Striking a balance for mental health. More is caught than taught.



David Howard is the associate director of choral activities at the University of Oklahoma, where he conducts the Men's Glee Club and Women's Chorus, and teaches graduate and undergraduate choral literature and conducting. He also coordinates the annual Young Men's Vocal Workshop and Women's Choral Leadership Workshop for secondary school singers. He is the founder and artistic director of the professional early music ensemble, Schola Cantorum Oklahoma, and is also the conductor of Voce Fortis, a new choir for secondary school young men. His scholarly writing and musical editions have been published in both the US and the UK.

Interest Sessions

Limitless Connections: How Neuroscience and Everyday Actions Can Transform a Choir's Expressiveness

Many directors would like the singers in their choirs to be more facially and emotionally expressive, but their attempts to guide them are sometimes not as successful as they hoped. This interest session provides a set of tools that can immediately transform expressiveness, leading to a limitless connection with self, text, music, other singers, and the audience. Participants will learn how to apply everyday human behaviors to singing, empowering them to transform the choral experience for all. After learning the simple skills, volunteers will take turns as the “demo choir,” applying their newfound techniques to songs they all know.

Tom Carter will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 49.

Limitless Ladies: Take the Limits Off: Women in Choral Music Education

This discussion is geared toward women in choral music education. Topics will be discussed like women in leadership and work/life balance. Experiences in choral music education will be shared, along with how to navigate difficulties. This session will give a safe and brave space for women to discuss topics that are necessary and healing. Attendees will leave encouraged, inspired, and empowered.



Frances Fonza is the director of choral activities at Southeastern Louisiana University. Fonza earned a BME at the University of Missouri-Columbia, an MME, and a doctorate in music education/choral conducting at the Florida State University. Most recently, Fonza served on faculty at the University of

Central Arkansas and Stephen F. Austin State University. She taught choral music at the middle school and high school levels in Kentucky and was the choir director and sight-singing teacher at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington DC.

Limitless Learning Opportunities for Lifelong Singers

This session presents opportunities to support learning needs of a diverse community choir and offers a systematic approach to providing limitless learning for singers, regardless of age or ability. Key learning outcomes: Proven steps to implement into your rehearsal that facilitate improved musical skills at all ages. Ideas for implementing a culture of limitless learning into your community choir. Participants will experience creative learning opportunities embedded into the rehearsal process and will explore techniques that encourage choir members' participation in choosing repertoire, collaboration during rehearsals, self-directed learning, and rehearsal accommodations.



Sheri Cook-Cunningham earned her PhD in choral pedagogy at The University of Kansas and holds degrees from the University of Missouri-Kansas City (BM and MM, piano performance). She is an associate professor and the director of music education at Washburn University. She conducts three community choirs: the Johnson County Community Chorus, Enharmonics, and Carmen Sororum, a treble chorus. An active researcher, Cook-Cunningham has presented her work locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. Her research interests include adult learning practices, choral error detection, choral warm-ups, musician hearing health, and historical choral diction practices.

The Limitless Tour of Global Choral Music

This session will provide attendees with a list of diverse choral repertoire that allows their singers and audiences to explore the entire globe. Attendees will listen to recordings, explore over sixty pieces of music by underrepresented composers, and will receive paragraph summations of each piece to ascertain if a piece fits their ensemble. A list of repertoire will be distributed to all in attendance.



John Martin Petzet is associate professor of music and director of choral activities at the University of Nebraska-Kearney. He has conducted honor choirs across Louisiana and in Colorado, was invited

to teach at the West Texas Choral Workshop, and to teach, present, and conduct at La Universidad Autónoma De Ciudad Juárez and to work with the Anaíma Ensamble Vocal in Juárez, Mexico. Petzet has also presented in ten states. He resides in Kearney, Nebraska, with his wife, Jennifer, and his three children.

Frank F. Eychaner will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 57.

Look at Me! Strategies to Enhance Artistry in Your Conducting Gesture

The conducting gesture is one of the most important skills of a choral music educator. Many teachers/conductors do not continue to develop their craft after completing their degrees. We will explore various techniques to help teachers and conductors engage their singers in the rehearsal process and also in performance. Some of the topics discussed will include: a musicianship hierarchy, Laban techniques, sample excerpts to conduct, and other engaging activities to continue development after the session. By implementing

these strategies, conductors will create a greater artistry of the ensemble that will create a positive effect for the singers and audience.



Phillip Stockton, associate director of choral studies at Mississippi State University, received a BME from Auburn University, MME from the Florida State University, and PhD in music education from the University of Mississippi. Before arriving at Mississippi State, Stockton was DCA at MUW in Columbus, MS, and Mandarin High School in Jacksonville, Florida. He remains an active clinician and judge for choirs throughout Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Florida. Stockton is the R&R Chair for Student Activities for Mississippi ACDA.

Maestro and Muse: A Balancing Act

Traditional ensemble management aspires to the image of the maestro: powerful, authoritative, and efficient. Yet authoritative leadership often limits creativity and musicianship and stunts student motivation. In this interactive session, directors of all levels can learn how to scaffold in freedom, exploration, and student-driven contributions to choral artistry. Directors will walk away with structures for student analysis, rehearsal activities, and a pedagogical understanding of when to instruct vs. when to inspire.



Clelyn Chapin serves as the associate director of choirs at University of Northern Colorado and conducts the Denver Women's Chorus, a 140-voice choir founded for members and allies of the LGBTQ+ community with a focus on social justice. As a clinician and presenter throughout the country, she focuses on a combination of rehearsal practices and leadership strategies that promote artistic singing and community building within ensembles. Chapin spent fourteen years teaching and conducting secondary, col-

Interest Sessions

legiate, and community ensembles in Texas, Colorado, and Michigan and completed her doctorate at Michigan State University.

Many Gifts: Educating Community and Church Choirs through Rehearsals

Church choirs and non-auditioned community choruses bring together a broad, diverse spectrum of musicians, ranging from those who cannot read music and have limited training to professional musicians. Conductors can satisfy the musical spirit of all choir members by incorporating literacy skills into church and community choir rehearsals. In addition to vocal technique, we can teach our singers score marking techniques, rudimentary music theory, performance practices, and music history, for example. The key to success is making the information taught practical, relevant, and immediately applicable. Everyone benefits from teaching these same concepts in our church and community choirs.



Matt Caine is director of traditional music at St. John's United Methodist Church, Aiken, SC. In addition to being an active conductor of orchestras and church, community, professional, and

symphonic choruses, Caine has served as interim director of choral activities for St. Petersburg College and Allen University. Both a Fulbright Scholar and a FLAS Fellow in Bulgarian Language of the US Department of Education, his published research in Bulgarian music is frequently cited by scholars in both Bulgaria and the United States. He has presented interest sessions at two ACDA national conferences as well as regional and state conferences.



Jennifer Adam is in her twenty-second year of teaching and is currently the director of choirs at Christian County High School in Hopkinsville, KY, hav-

ing previously taught in elementary through college classrooms in Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Adam possesses degrees and certifications in music education, violin and vocal performance, Kodály methodology, and choral conducting. She greatly enjoys working with a variety of musicians every day.

Middle School Choral Students: How Do You Motivate Them?

When middle school students are motivated, they are unstoppable. How do you channel their energy so that you can guide them on a musical journey? Explore tips and ideas of various master choral music educators who teach young adolescents. Be ready to sing and move!



Lynn Brinckmeyer recently retired as professor of music, associate dean of the college of fine arts and communication, and director of choral music education at Texas State University. During 2006-2008 she served as president for The National Association for Music Education. She published *Wander the USA with Warm-Ups!*, *The Wonder of Music* with John Jacobson, *Rhythm Rescue!*, *Wander the World with Warm-ups* with Hal Leonard Publishing and *Advocate for Music* with Oxford University Press. Brinckmeyer's degrees include a BME and MME from Eastern New Mexico University, and a PhD in music education from the University of Kansas.

Real Ensemble Culture Building (Ice Breakers Not Included)

Icebreakers and team builders are great, but research indicates they actually have little impact on

organizational culture. Without an intentional plan in place, the culture of an ensemble can take on a life of its own, leaving the conductor-leader feeling helpless. Using knowledge from organizational psychology and practical experience, conductors can thoughtfully design and effectively enact their desired culture. In this interactive session, attendees will be guided through a simple, research-based and experience-tested process to define their desired culture and identify concrete actions that are unique to their individual goals, personalities, and contexts.



Kari Adams is assistant professor of choral music education, conductor of Concert Chorale, and coordinator of the master's in music education at the University of Missouri. Prior to her appointment at Mizzou, Adams taught secondary choir in Mis-

souri, completed her PhD in music education at the University of North Texas, and served on the faculty of the Florida State University. She is an active clinician and has conducted all-state and regional honor choirs across the US. Her research on topics such as aesthetic response, choral configuration, and music teacher identity construction has been featured in several leading journals in the field.

Rediscovering Joy: Limitless Possibilities Begin with You

For many of us, our choral village is suffering. We are overworked, tired, and are approaching burnout. This session will explore root sources of this suffering; and

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Interest Sessions

attendees will receive specific, measurable strategies to create freedom from this anxiety, which can be implemented easily and immediately. Combining modern-day psychological concepts with the ancient eastern philosophies of Buddhism, session attendees will gain tools necessary to navigate a world of ever-increasing expectations and identify ways to shine their individual light in the classroom, thereby creating authentic, real-time teaching moments that have radical authenticity and create life-altering change.



Ryan Board, professor of music at Pepperdine University, has garnered international attention as a conductor, choral artist, teacher, and clinician. As director of choral activities at Pepperdine, Board directs the Pepperdine Concert Choir and the Pepperdine Chamber Choir and teaches courses in conducting and music history. He maintains an active schedule as a professional singer, presenter, and conductor, and choirs under Board's direction have performed at prestigious venues for state, regional, national, and international events including regional and national conferences of ACDA, the Prague Choral Festival, and the Piccolo Spoleto Festival's Spotlight Series.



Jaclyn Normandie is a professional conductor and founder of the Modern Conducting Academy, an online learning platform that provides workshops and courses with some of the most sought-after conducting professionals. Her study of yoga, meditation, and eastern philosophy led her to author *The Mindful Musician: Finding a Healthy Balance*, offering strategies in balance and stress management to performers. She is a prolific guest conductor, has presented lectures at over twenty conferences, and led ensembles at ACDA National, Western, and Central Region conferences. She resides in Costa Rica studying Pachamama Earth Music and leads community ensembles for youth and adults.

Rehearsal by Design

Many of us have encountered a season in which we find ourselves bored with our rehearsals. In this session, my hope is to breathe life into your rehearsals as you consider the limitless possibilities that await your singers! Reflecting on Wiggins and McTighe's theory of Backward Design, you will be introduced to a method of literature selection that encourages diversity and energy in your rehearsals. All attendees will learn a variety of activities and strategies that pair well with our approach to literature selection and leave inspired with a plan that will help you meet your goals in the upcoming concert season!



Jordan Cox is the associate dean for the School of Performing Arts at Missouri Baptist University in St. Louis, MO. As director of choral activities and music education, he teaches choral, music education, and worship courses. His choirs regularly travel regionally and abroad. Under Cox's direction, the MBU Chamber Singers have served as a demonstration choir for Dan Forrest's session at the Getty's SING! Conference in Nashville and have recorded a Christmas worship album titled, "Let it Shine Bright!" His choirs enjoy frequent collaborations with area arts organizations like Kirkwood Children's Choirs and Bach Society of St. Louis.

Supporting Teachers: Success Strategies for America's Title I Musicians

Nearly half of public schools in the United States qualify for Title I funding. Title I support is offered when at least 40% of the student population within a school comes from low-income families. A growing epidemic, 1 in 9 Americans live in poverty today. Children affected by poverty are at a higher risk for emotional and social challenges, cognitive lags, and health

and safety stressors, all of which impact their ability to learn, comprehend, and retain information in our classrooms. Choral educators nurture student success with meaningful repertoire and an environment that helps improve cognitive function, social and life skills, and quality of life. Understanding the effects of and practicing success strategies for our Title I musicians are vital to their success.

Katy Green will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 26.

A Tesla Upgrade for Your Choir: Creating a “Self-Driving” Ensemble

In this user-friendly session, Gary Seighman will demonstrate a variety of techniques that enhance musical autonomy and sense of belonging for our singers. Emerging brain research has uncovered many processes occurring in collaborative settings, both (1) between the conductor and the singers and (2) among the singers themselves. This information helps us to better understand our role within the ensemble, leading to greater artistic freedom and improved student musicianship. As conductors, we have always felt that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts when it comes to choir. Science has finally caught up to us!



Gary Seighman is professor of music and director of choral activities at Trinity University, where he oversees a comprehensive choral program and teaches courses in conducting and music education.

Under his direction, Trinity’s choral ensembles have garnered invited performances at conferences including TMEA, the College Music Society, NCCO, frequent international touring, and third place for the 2022 American Prize (small college division). Recent engagements include Nashville, New York City, Taipei, Vienna, London, and Dublin. Seighman holds degrees from Westminster Choir College, the University of Oklahoma, and the University of Maryland.

Think, Listen, Sing!

A Skills-Based Approach to Sight-Singing

Sight-singing takes more than a great voice—it also takes solid analysis skills and a knowledgeable ear. In this clinic, you will discover strategies to help your singers decode melodic material and anticipate the sounds before they sing. By isolating skills embedded in the music and encouraging them to recall the sound of each skill in their ears, singers will build a repertoire of sight-singing skills that expands as they master each skill. When they can see it and hear it, they will be ready to sing it with confidence!



Michele Henry is division director and professor of music education at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, where she has been the choral music education specialist since 2001. Henry specializes

in vocal sight-reading instruction and assessment, and has committed her career to understanding the sight-singing process to enable better teaching and learning of sight-singing skills. She is the co-author of the *Level Up! Sightreading Series*, which focuses on a systematic approach to individualized sight-reading instruction and assessment.



Keitha Lucas Hamann is associate professor of music education at the University of Minnesota, where she teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in music education, including choral methods,

arts assessment, foundations of music education, and music in adolescence. Her research interests include the development of musical skills by adolescents and middle-level music education. Since 2009, Hamann has served as chair of the Community Engagement Leadership Team for the School of Music. This team is responsible for developing mechanisms to institutionalize engagement in the research, teaching, and service missions of the School of Music.

Interest Sessions

You Are the Voice Teacher: Teaching Technique and Authenticity of Vocal Production in Choral Singing

“Blend. Drop your jaw. Straight tone. Darker.” Most people have likely heard one of these phrases before in a choir, but do these ideas really help inexperienced singers? What terminology can we use to give clarity to singers that connects them in a relatable way and takes away some of the mystery? Choral directors are the primary voice teachers for our singers. Are we teaching them the pedagogy behind their instrument in terms that are clear and concrete? Additionally, how can we bridge what can be a disconnect between singing

in a choral ensemble and singing in applied lessons? This session will provide practical applications of how to teach singers to find and use their authentic voices by sharing suggestions from various vocal pedagogy approaches, including Estill Voice. It is applicable to directors working with high school, college, and older community singers.

Amy Johnston Blosser will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 58.

C. Andrew Blosser will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 58.

Honor Choir Conductors

4-6 Treble Choir



Mary Biddlecombe is director of the Vanderbilt Blair Academy, and the artistic director of Vanderbilt Youth Choirs, where she oversees six graded youth choirs. In addition to her work with the

Blair Academy, she teaches collegiate courses in music education and choral literature and conducts the Vanderbilt University Singers. Biddlecombe is a specialist in children's voices, particularly middle school and secondary choral settings. She has conducted all-state choruses for Alabama, Florida, and Georgia as well as regional honor choirs in ten states. In 2022 she served as co-conductor of the UCTB Honor Choir for the Southern ACDA Region Conference as well as the Children's Choir Clinician for the Montreat Music's Worship Conference. Biddlecombe holds an MM in choral conducting from the Florida State University

and a BME from the Crane School Music at SUNY Potsdam.

7-9 TB Choir



Amon Eady serves as the director of choral activities at Central Michigan University, where he conducts four ensembles and teaches undergraduate and graduate choral conducting, and choral literature. Before arriving at CMU, Eady taught at both the middle school and high school levels for nine years in the White Station community of Memphis, Tennessee, where he was named the 2014 Tennessee Music Educator of the year. Eady has conducted performances and given presentations at state, region, and national conferences of ACDA and NAfME. Eady serves as the

president of Michigan ACDA. He holds a BME and an MM from the University of Southern Mississippi, as well as PhD in choral conducting and music education from the Florida State University.

7-9 Treble Choir



Tammy Carney holds a BME from the University of Mississippi and an MME from the University of Southern Mississippi. She is the director of choral activities at Long Beach High School in Long Beach, Mississippi. Over the past twenty-nine years, her choirs and ensembles have been recognized with numerous awards and have performed at the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Grand Ole Opry. In 2018, Petal Middle School awarded Carney Teacher of the Year. She was selected as Clinton Junior High Teacher of the Year in 2012. In 2016 she was honored with the ACDA Ernestine Ferrell Award for Choral Excellence and the Mississippi Music Educator of the Year Award. She is an active church musician and clinician conducting honor choirs in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi.

10-12 Mixed Choir



Jabarie Glass is the associate director of choral studies at the University of South Carolina, where he conducts University Chorus and Gamecock Chorale and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in conducting and choral pedagogy. Choral organizations under his leadership have been selected to perform at Southern ACDA Region, Mississippi ACDA, and the South Carolina MEA. Glass earned dual bachelor's degrees in business management and music education from the University of Mississippi, an MME from the Florida State University College of Music, and a doctoral degree in conducting from the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

Collegiate



Betsy Cook Weber is the Madison Endowed Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at the University of Houston Moores School of Music and is also active internationally as a conductor, clinician, adjudicator, and lecturer. Choirs under Weber's direction, including the University of Houston Concert Chorale, have been featured at multiple state and national conventions including the ACDA National Conferences in 2007 and 2017. Weber also served for eight seasons as director of the Houston Symphony Chorus, preparing programs for some of the world's leading orchestral conductors. In 2013, Weber became the first woman to receive the Texas Choral Directors Association's Texas Choirmaster Award. She serves as editor of the *Betsy Cook Weber Choral Series* with Alliance Music Publishing.

Contemporary A Cappella - Collegiate



J. D. Frizzell is the director of fine arts and director of vocal music at Briarcrest Christian School in Memphis, Tennessee. His ensembles have performed at regional, national, and international conventions. Winner of the Integrales Composition Contest, Frizzell has had many best-selling compositions and arrangements. He also co-authored *A Cappella Warm Ups with Deke Sharon* and *Teaching Music Through Performance in A Cappella* with Deke Sharon and Marc Silverberg. He is the president of the A Cappella Education Association and the founder of The National A Cappella Convention. OneVoice, his a cappella group, is a Sony Recording Artist with over 100 million downloads and streams. They have performed at the Emmys and on *America's Got Talent*.

Honor Choir Conductors

Contemporary A Cappella - High School



Rob Dietz is a multiple CARA-winning producer who has been arranging, performing, and teaching contemporary a cappella music for over twenty years.

Based in Los Angeles, Dietz is best known for his work as an arranger and group coach for NBC's *The Sing-Off*. His arrangements have been showcased on several TV shows, including *America's Got Talent* (NBC), *To All The Boys: PS I Still Love You* (Netflix), and *Pitch Slapped* (Lifetime). As a performer he is an award-winning vocal percussionist, and his distinctive sound has been featured on Fox's *Glee* and *The Late Late Show with James Corden*. He is the author of *A Cappella 101: A Beginner's Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing* published by Hal Leonard. Dietz currently serves as the ACDA National R&R co-chair for contemporary/commercial.

Contemporary A Cappella - High School



Christopher M. Diaz is the co-founder of the international touring group, The Exchange, which performed hundreds of shows for audiences in over fifty countries on six continents, notably opening for

The Backstreet Boys in their "In A World Like This" stadium tour. Diaz's a cappella journey began at the Florida State University, where they graduated with a bachelor's degree in vocal performance. While there, Diaz led the co-ed All-Night Yahtzee to three consecutive ICCA Finals appearances and was a two-time winner of the Outstanding Soloist Award at Finals. They have been nominated for and won numerous Contemporary A Cappella Recording Awards.

Gospel



Trey M. McLaughlin is a 2002 graduate of John S. Davidson Magnet School in Augusta, GA. McLaughlin earned a BM performance degree emphasis in vocal pedagogy from Columbus State University (Columbus, Georgia). He has traveled the world conducting masterclasses, workshops, and performing, including the Aarhus Vocal Festival in Copenhagen, Denmark, and the L'Opéra de Massy in Massy, France. Currently, he serves as the director of Creative Impressions and is also the founder and director of the gospel ensemble Trey McLaughlin and the Sounds of Zamar. He is the director of music at The Historic Tabernacle Baptist Church and serves as an adjunct professor of choral studies at Paine College in Augusta, GA.



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2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Headliners/Special Events

The 2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference in Providence, Rhode Island, will celebrate the power of both our individual and collective voice. The conference will include 8 Invited Choirs, 15 adjudicated Performing Choirs, 3 adjudicated Insight Choirs, 4 Honor Choirs, 8 Deep Dive Repertoire Sessions, 4 Immersion Choirs, 4 Student Conducting Masterclasses, and 30 adjudicated Interest Sessions.

Deep Dive Repertoire Sessions will focus on 3-5 pieces discussing context and sharing successful pedagogical tools.

Immersion Choirs will take the form of two open rehearsals focusing on performance practice issues. Attendees will select a choir to participate in during the online registration process.

All conference performances will take place in Grace Episcopal Church in downtown Providence, with the Honor Choirs performing in Veterans Memorial Auditorium. All other conference sessions will be in the Rhode Island Convention Center. The two conference hotels are the Omni Providence and the Graduate Providence.

Wednesday Night Opening Concert

Boston Children's Chorus



Boston Children's Chorus (BCC) harnesses the power of music to connect Boston's diverse communities, cultivate empathy, and inspire social inquiry. BCC

is a dynamic and acclaimed group of young artists known for their vibrant performances and innovative programming. Named "Ambassadors of Harmony," BCC presents 50+ annual performances in diverse venues from Symphony Hall to the White House. They've graced TED talks, local media, and shared stages with luminaries like Idina Menzel and Hugh Jackman. Notably, their collaboration on "Fantastic Mr. Fox" won a Grammy in 2020. BCC's excellence was acknowledged with the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award in 2013, celebrated at the White House with Michelle Obama.



Kenneth Griffith serves as the music director and principal conductor of Boston Children's Chorus (BCC), leading the Premier Choir and guiding the artistic programs. His warm, demanding approach resonates with young performers, fostering connections from elementary to collegiate levels. Noteworthy performances under his leadership include venues like Boston's Symphony Hall, collaborations with acclaimed artists like Idina Menzel and Lawrence Brownlee, and a recent tour to Canada. Griffith is passionate about the role of singing in bringing together diverse communities and leading to social change. Apart from BCC, he recently prepared a chorus for Anthony Davis's Pulitzer-winning opera, *X: The Life & Times of Malcolm X*, earning a Grammy nomination in 2023. Griffith holds degrees from Capital University and Bard College.

2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Headliners/Special Events

Coro Allegro



Coro Allegro is Boston's award-winning LGBTQ+ and allied classical chorus. Under the leadership of Artistic Director David Hodgkins, Coro Allegro builds bridges between disparate communities and offers a diverse three-concert series plus numerous collaborations in Greater Boston. Coro Allegro reaches national and international audiences through digital programming, radio broadcasts, festival performances, and four commercial recordings, including a new release of *We Are Here* in January 2024. In 2008, Coro Allegro established the Daniel Pinkham Award in recognition of outstanding contributions to classical music and to the LGBTQ+ community.



David Hodgkins is artistic director of Coro Allegro in Boston and The New England Classical Singers in Andover; director of music at The Commonwealth School in Boston, and advanced conducting instructor at the Kodály Music Institute. Hodgkins has served as guest conductor and collaborator with many ensembles and made numerous festival appearances as guest conductor and clinician. With Coro Allegro, Hodgkins has performed at Chorus America, ACDA, and GALA music festivals, received the 2012 Chorus America Alice Parker/ASCAP Award and the 2019 ASCAP Adventurous Programming Award, and released four critically acclaimed CDs. Their January 2024 Coro Allegro release, *We Are Here*, features "Rage Against the tyrant(s)" by Kareem Roustom and "Aluta Continua" by Eric Banks, on the Navona label.

Rhode Island Children's Chorus



The Rhode Island Children's Chorus (RICC) was co-founded in 2003 by Christine Noel and Joyce Wolfe. Currently serving over 200 students across seven choral ensembles, RICC is led by a devoted staff, many of whom were once members of the chorus themselves. Our rehearsals focus equally on the advancement of

musical and vocal skills and an emphasis on self-esteem and leadership development. We value and celebrate diversity, and we appreciate learning from others who come from different backgrounds. The Rhode Island Children's Chorus has collaborated with the Rhode Island Philharmonic and other professional ensembles. RICC performed at the 2009 convention of NAFME, three ACDA conferences, and at Carnegie Hall.



Christine Noel co-founded the RI Children's Chorus in August 2003 with Joyce Wolfe. She conducted RICC at ACDA conferences in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Providence. She is also the artistic director of the Providence Singers, which she conducts each year in Handel's *Messiah* with the RI Philharmonic. Noel is an active guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. She has served on the music faculty and as director of choral activities at Clark University. She received an MM and DMA in conducting from Boston University. Fluent in Italian, she completed Italian studies at the University of Florence. She is also a graduate of Rhode Island College and the Kodály Institute of Music in Keszthely, Hungary.

Thursday Night Concert

VOCES8



The 2023 Grammy-nominated British vocal ensemble VOCES8 is proud to inspire people through music and share the joy of singing. The group performs an extensive repertory both in its cappella concerts and in collaborations with leading musicians, orchestras, and conductors. VOCES8 is the flagship ensemble of the VOCES8 Foundation, which actively promotes “Music Education For All,” reaching up to 40,000 people annually. VOCES8 has performed at many notable venues from Wigmore Hall to Sydney Opera House. This season they perform over 100 concerts globally. Online, the VOCES8 Digital Academy and the LIVE From London digital festival continue. They publish music and educational material with VOCES8 Publishing and Edition Peters, including *The VOCES8 Method* written by Paul Smith.

Friday Afternoon Concert

The Soldiers' Chorus of
The U. S. Army Field Band

The Soldiers' Chorus, founded in 1957, is the vocal complement of The United States Army Field Band of Washington, DC. The chorus has performed in all fifty states, Mexico, India, and throughout Europe; and its personnel have backgrounds in opera, musical theatre, music education, and international touring productions. The chorus has performed with the Boston Pops, the Cincinnati Pops, and the Detroit, Nashville, and National symphony orchestras, and at ACDA conferences. Most recently, the Soldiers' Chorus co-commissioned *The Falling* and *The Rising: A New American Opera*, appeared on the CBS broadcast *Songs of Service*, and was featured on the Grammy Award-winning album *Soundtrack of the American Soldier*.

Captain **Curran Schenck** is the conductor of this choir. His photo and bio are on page 64.

2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Headliners/Special Events

West Point Glee Club



West Point Glee Club is one of the U.S. Military Academy's most visible cadet organizations. Since 1903, it has touched audiences around the world with a model depiction of the Corps of Cadets through live performance, national network and feature film appearances, and recordings. Recent collaborations include an historic concert with the West Point Band in the United Nations General Assembly Hall in honor of Black History Month. The Glee Club regularly commissions works from leading composers in addition to performing standard repertoire and the traditional military, patriotic, and West Point songs for which it is renowned.



Constance Chase is the director of West Point Glee Club, where she conducts the renowned college choir in America's finest venues and smallest towns. Under her direction, the Cadets have recorded for Paramount, Capitol, Curtain Call, PBS, ABC, NBC, and at Skywalker Studio. She conducts More Music Summer Festival Chorus in Connecticut, where she previously served as artistic director of Connecticut Chamber Choir and adjunct voice instructor at Western Connecticut State University. Chase is co-author of *Prescriptions for Choral Excellence* (Oxford University Press). She holds degrees from University of North Carolina Greensboro, Hunter College-City University of New York, and Zertifikat from Goethe Institut, Germany.

West Point Band



The West Point Band is the Army's oldest active-duty band, founded on the beautiful and historic grounds of the United States Military Academy in 1817. The band traces its lineage to fifers and drummers who were part of Continental Army units at West Point during the time of the American Revolution. Officially established on June 8, 1817, the West Point Band recently celebrated its bicentennial. Although many changes have occurred over the years, music continues to be an essential aspect of daily life for the cadets and soldiers at the academy. Today, the band continues to inspire and motivate the next generation of the Army's leaders, as well as serving as musical ambassadors for the Army to the nation.



Lt. Colonel Daniel Toven serves as the commander and conductor of the West Point Band at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY. Previous posts have included directorships of The U.S. Army Soldiers' Chorus and The U.S. Army Chorus in Washington, D.C. Lt. Col. Toven studied conducting with Grammy Award-winning conductor Robert Page and holds degrees from Eastman School of Music, The Command and General Staff College, and Indiana University of PA, where he was recently recognized as a Distinguished Alumni. Lt. Col. Toven is also an active guest conductor, working with honor choruses and bands all along the East Coast. His military decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Parachutist Badge, and the Instructor Badge.

Friday Night Concert

Morgan State University Choir



The Morgan State University Choir (MSUC) has performed around the world to critical acclaim. Named “Best College Choir” in 2004 by *Reader’s Digest* magazine, the Choir has performed with many symphony orchestras, including The Philadelphia, Chicago, New York, National, and Baltimore Symphony Orchestras. Eric Conway, Director, has had many significant choir performances during his tenure, including singing for the Rosa Parks Memorial Service in 2004 and performing for President Barack Obama during his Live at the White House Series in 2015. Last summer, the choir toured Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria.



Eric Conway is the director of the Morgan State University Choir and the chairperson of Morgan’s Fine and Performing Arts Department. As director, he has travelled all over the world, including performances in Austria, South Africa, Cuba, and Australia. Conway is a doctoral graduate of The Peabody Conservatory, where he majored in piano and conducting and received the prestigious Liberace scholarship. As a pianist, he has appeared in the U.S. and abroad as a soloist and chamber musician. He served as orchestral pianist for the Baltimore Symphony for over ten years. Conway’s choral accomplishments include working closely with some of the greatest conductors of the

twentieth century, including Robert Shaw, Sir Nevelle Mariner, and Donald Neuen.

A Cappella and Vocal Jazz Showcase

Berklee College of Music
Advanced Vocal Jazz Ensemble

The Berklee College of Music Advanced Vocal Jazz Ensemble has performed at the 2016 ACDA Eastern Region Conference and the Jazz Education Network (JEN) Conferences in 2014, 2020, and 2023. The ensemble is a frequent winner of the DownBeat Student Music Awards Small and Large Vocal Jazz Ensemble divisions.



Ned J. Rosenblatt currently holds the position of professor in the voice department at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. Rosenblatt earned a BME from the University of Connecticut, Storrs, and a master’s degree in jazz pedagogy from the Berklee College of Music and The Boston Conservatory. Rosenblatt currently directs four Vocal Jazz Ensembles, traditional Concert Choir, and has been recently serving as music director on various Boston Conservatory Musical Theater department productions. Rosenblatt frequently serves as a conductor, adjudicator, and clinician for classical, jazz, and show choir festivals.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Headliners/Special Events

Ramsey High School Ram Jams



The Ram Jams are the principal competitive A Cappella group within the Ramsey High School Chorus Program. The group represents the top auditioned students from within the school and performs works from a wide variety of genres, including contemporary a cappella, traditional choral repertoire, and new works. The ensemble is a frequent competitor in the ICHSA competition, run by Varsity Vocals, where they have been named the Mid-Atlantic Champion and represented the region at National Finals for the last three years. Their first EP album is titled *Home Where I Belong*, and they recently finished recording their next EP to be released later this year.



Matthew Wolf is the director of vocal music at Ramsey High School, where he directs the Ramsey High School Chorus, both competitive A Cappella groups, The Ram Jams & Ramsey Blues, and teaches AP music theory and digital music production. Wolf has been a high school choral director for the last eleven years, and his ensembles have been featured in a wide variety of settings, including performances for state governors and U.S. senators. He received a BME and BM in vocal performance from West Chester University and an M.S. Ed. in Educational Leadership from The University of Pennsylvania. Wolf is an active

adjudicator for marching bands within the US Bands circuit and volunteers as an EMT.

Immersion Choirs

Immersion Choirs will provide attendees with opportunities for learning through singing. A hybrid of the traditional interest sessions and repertoire reading sessions, attendees will sing in two fifty-minute sessions led by experienced practitioners who will help share a deeper understanding of performance practice, and cultural, social, and historical perspectives relating to specific genres, time periods, and geographic regions. Attendees will have the option to choose from four Immersion Choirs at the time of registration. The Immersion Choirs are scheduled at the same time, so there is no need to miss any other conference activity.

Black Spirituals and Gospel Music

Bring a new perspective to your choir, community, or solo singing by exploring and sharing how the essence of Black Spirituals and Gospel singing change when sung through the lens of “singer as researcher.” Let’s be curious by engaging the lens of an ethnographer and phenomenologist. We will co-create profound contexts by embodying the tapestry of the five senses. What does a sustained tone sound like when evoked from the belly of the slave ship? How is a spiritual transformed when sung from the weeds versus the concert stage? What are the gospel roots of rock and soul music? The merging of message, music, and movement will be involved. All are welcome to participate as they are able.



J. Donald Dumpson, PhD, of Diverse Arts Solutions and Arch Street Presbyterian Church, is the founding conductor of the Westminster Choir College Jubilee Singers, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO) Community Chorus, and Philadelphia

Heritage Chorale. Collaborations include the PEW Foundation, Bucks County Choral Society, “Christmas in a Time of Isolation” 2020 PBS broadcast, Chorus America and WXPB’s “Gospel Roots of Rock and Soul.” He debuted at Carnegie Hall (2001) with N.Y. Pops and maestro Skitch Henderson, and prepared choruses for Kathleen Battle’s *The Underground Railroad*; Denyce Graves’s *Breaking the Rules*; Philadelphia Orchestra with Andrea Bocelli, Aretha Franklin, Julius Rudel, Florence Quivar, Hannibal Lokumbe premieres Yannick Nézet-Séguin, conductor; *Can You Hear God Crying* on Naxos ArkivMusic.

Latin American Music

Explore choral literature inspired by the folk music and rhythms of Latin America. While singing and rehearsing together, participants will learn about performance practice, rehearsal techniques, cultural understanding, and the context in which the pieces were created.



Diana V. Sáez is the director of choral activities at Towson University. A leading specialist in Latin American music, Sáez is a frequent guest conductor, adjudicator, and lecturer in the United States and abroad. In the past five years, she has presented at national and regional ACDA conferences, American universities, and various other engagements in North and South America. Prior to that, she served for twenty-five years as artistic director of Cantigas, the award-winning chamber choir of Latin American and Spanish music. Her compositions are published by Hal Leonard, Boosey and Hawkes, La Voz Music Publishing, and the Roger Dean Publishing Company.

Renaissance and Baroque Choral Music

The repertoire of Renaissance and Baroque music is the wellspring of our choral art. Using selected examples from the late-fifteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, participants will have the opportunity to directly experience ideas and methods for bringing this music to life for both singers and listeners. Issues of interpretation, notation, pitch and intonation, text declamation and diction, rhythm and phrasing, performance practice, editorial practices, and vocal pedagogy will be addressed through specific rehearsal techniques and group vocal techniques. Examples of both a cappella and concerted music will be used as well as examples from both secular and sacred repertoires. Programming suggestions and resources for further study will be included.



Edward Maclary is professor emeritus of music at the University of Maryland. During his tenure he led the UMD Chamber Singers to international acclaim, and the UMD Concert Choir became the chorus of choice for the National Symphony Orchestra and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Alumni of UMD’s graduate conducting program hold professional and academic conducting positions around the country, and UMD choral alumni populate many top professional ensembles and all our nation’s military choirs. Known for his advocacy and performance of early music, from 2014 through 2017 he was the director of the conducting masterclass for the Oregon Bach Festival. He has prepared choral ensembles for Robert Shaw and Helmuth Rilling and dozens of other internationally renowned conductors.

Vocal Jazz

Vocal jazz ensemble/jazz choir literature is often intimidating and avoided due to its use of dissonance, multiple styles within the idiom, scat singing, and how standard notation transforms into a different interpretation. Through group rehearsal and strategic examples,



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Headliners/Special Events

we will cover how to approach/rehearse various styles, how to rehearse complicated dissonance and work toward producing the typical vocal jazz sound through straight tone and “jazz vowel” usage. The addition of a rhythm section, use of microphones, reference recordings, and where to find well-written arrangements will also be discussed.

Ned J. Rosenblatt is the conductor of this choir. His photo and bio are on page 135.

Student Conducting Masterclasses

Four public masterclasses for outstanding undergraduate and graduate students will focus on both gesture and rehearsal strategies. Students will conduct an intact choir.

Arianne Abela will be a masterclass teacher. Her photo and bio are on page 35.



Caron Daley is director of choral activities, associate professor of music, and area coordinator of ensembles at the Mary Pappert School of Music at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA.

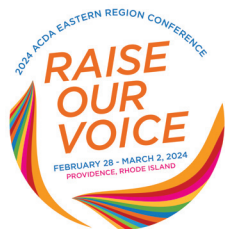
Under her direction, the Duquesne Voices of Spirit have performed across the Northeast and in Canada, including invited performances at the 2019 NCCO Conference and 2023 NAFME Eastern Region Conference. A native of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Daley has held past conducting appointments with the National Youth Choir of Canada, Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, University of Toronto, St. Michael's Choir School, and Salem Academy. Her research investigates the applications of Dalcroze Eurhythmics to conducting and injury prevention in conductors. She serves ACDA as National R&R Chair for College and University Choirs.



Jeffrey Douma is the Marshall Bartholomew Professor in the Practice of Choral Music at the Yale School of Music, where he heads the graduate program in choral conducting and conducts the Yale Glee Club, hailed under his direction by the *New York Times* as “one of the best collegiate singing ensembles, and one of the most adventurous.” He is also founding director of the Yale Choral Artists, a professional, project-based ensemble. He has appeared as guest conductor with choruses and orchestras on six continents and makes frequent domestic and international appearances as clinician and master teacher. He has prepared choruses for such conductors as William Christie, Sir David Willcocks, Helmuth Rilling, and Marin Alsop and has premiered many new works by leading and emerging composers.



Jason Max Ferdinand currently serves as the director of choral activities at the University of Maryland in College Park. He is the founding artistic director of The Jason Max Ferdinand Singers: An Ensemble of Exceptional Talents, and was the director of choral activities, chair of the music department, and a full professor at Oakwood University, where he conducted the Aeolians of Oakwood University. He is a published author and composer with GIA Publications, featuring the book, *Teaching with Heart: Tools for Addressing Societal Challenges Through Music*, and *The Jason Max Ferdinand Choral Series* (Walton & Gentry). He maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor and lecturer, both domestic and international.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Performing Choirs

Boston Arts Academy The Spirituals of Boston Arts Academy



Founded in 2009, The Spirituals of Boston Arts Academy explores the evolution of the African American sacred choral music tradition. This auditioned group of sophomores, juniors, and seniors at Boston Arts Academy, the city's only public arts high school, is directed by Michael W. Bradley. In addition to their 2015 victory on "Sing That Thing!," Spirituals won a Gold Medal at the Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Association Festival. The Spirituals have been one of the premier performance ensembles for BAA for over ten years, performing for political dignitaries and the greater performance community of Greater Boston and Massachusetts.



Michael W. Bradley has been an active educator in the arts community and K-12 education for over ten years. Bradley graduated from Berklee College of Music with a BME. He currently serves on the Voice faculty of Boston Arts Academy, where he chairs the music department. Bradley's choirs have competed and placed in national competitions and have performed for Yo-Yo Ma, Damien Woetzel, and at the White House for First Lady Michelle Obama. Bradley maintains an active schedule as a clinician through the consulting firm Motif Creative Services.

Central Bucks East High School Select Choir



The Central Bucks East High School Select Choir is an auditioned choir of forty members from grades ten through twelve. The choir has performed at the PMEA state conference, the NafME Eastern conference, and the ACDA Eastern Region conference. In addition to performances in its community, the choir has also performed in notable venues such as the Philadelphia Basilica, the Cathédrale Marie-Reine-du-Monde in Montreal, Washington National Cathedral, and Carnegie Hall. The choir has also commissioned works from Ēriks Ešenvalds and Blake Morgan of VOCES8 and frequently works with notable collegiate clinicians from throughout the East Coast.



Christopher Villante is a graduate of Temple University with a BME and an MM in vocal performance. He has been a long-time professional choir member, musical theater actor, accompanist, and organist. He has been the choir director at Central Bucks East High School and the vocal director of the school's drama club for the past eleven years. Under his direction, the choirs have performed at PMEA, NafME, and the ACDA Eastern Region conference. Villante is also a happy husband and father to his six-year-old son.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Performing Choirs

Central Dauphin High School CD Singers



The CD Singers, comprising students in grades 10-12, qualify for membership by audition. CD Singers have gained recognition by performing at eight PMEA Conventions, the 1995 NAFME All-Eastern Convention in Providence, and the Roxbury Choral Invitational, where the CD Singers several times have received “Best Concert Choir.” They have had performances around the northeast, including performances at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City and Heinz Memorial Chapel in Pittsburgh. The Singers frequently collaborate with local organizations in the Harrisburg area to provide music in the community for special events and functions, including several state government events at the Pennsylvania Capitol building.



John Harchak-Madas is in his fourteenth year as a music educator and his eighth year at CDHS, where he teaches four curricular choirs. He holds a BME from Mansfield University, where he sang under the direction of Peggy Dettwiler. Harchak-Madas also taught choir at a middle school in East Stroudsburg for six years, where he led a choir program of more than 400 students. He also holds his MME from East Stroudsburg University. He is pursuing a Ed.Doc. degree in Instructional Technology from the American College of Education.

Consonare Choral Community Voices of Concinnity



Described by audience members as “silky smooth butter in musical form” and “voices like I imagine angels sound,” Voices of Concinnity is Connecticut’s versatile vocal chamber ensemble illuminating the breadth and variety of choral music through innovative and artfully sung programming. As a twelve-voice professional ensemble of seasoned choral artists from diverse backgrounds, Concinnity performs choral music from the Renaissance to the contemporary. Envisioned in 2018 by founding artistic director, Sarah Kaufold, Concinnity exemplifies an inclusive atmosphere for all voices while cultivating a unique ensemble sound identity and offering affordable choral performances for all in the community.



Sarah Kaufold is a conductor, soprano, and music educator who advocates for inclusion on the podium, within the choral ensemble, and in the choir folder. As founding artistic director of Consonare Choral Community, she conducts Voices of Concinnity, Choir Matrix, and Consonare Community Choir while managing the nonprofit arts organization. Kaufold has an MM in choral conducting from UConn with extensive graduate study in choral conducting from Cal State L.A. She has directed choirs for singers of all ages, range of abilities, and in several settings. For fun, she conducts operas, sings professionally, writes grants, and travels with her family.

Lebanon Valley College Concert Choir



The Lebanon Valley College Concert Choir maintains a long-standing tradition of choral excellence with forty-eight voices representing majors from across the institution. With the annual occurrences of a large-scale “Christmas at the Valley” production, a regional spring tour, and singing at many campus events, the ensemble remains one of the most treasured ambassadors of LVC. In recent years, under the direction of Kyle Zeuch, the choir has performed at Carnegie Hall, ACDA Pennsylvania in 2021 (virtual), and the Pennsylvania MEA Annual In-Service Conference in 2022.



Kyle Zeuch is the director of choral activities and co-chair of the music department at Lebanon Valley College. He holds a BME from Capital University, an MM in choral conducting from Michigan State University (MSU), and a DMA in choral conducting degree from MSU. Zeuch’s teaching experience includes director of children and youth choirs at Michigan State University and the head director at Rivera High School in Brownsville, Texas. He is the president-elect designate and R&R chair for Community Choirs for ACDA Pennsylvania.

Longmeadow High School Lyrics



Lyrics is the honor’s SATB choir at Longmeadow High School in Massachusetts. Lyrics meets as a class three to four hours weekly, and student leaders run weekly sectionals outside of school. Lyrics earns gold medals at state festivals and earned The American Prize for Choral Performance. Lyrics has toured regionally and internationally, including Italy, Germany, Austria, England, Sweden, and Denmark. Their repertoire comprises everything from masterpieces of the Renaissance era to brand-new works and a cappella pop arrangements. Members of Lyrics play active roles in student government, clubs, instrumental ensembles, and sports teams at Longmeadow High School.



Kayla Werlin holds degrees from the Universities of Michigan and Massachusetts. Although she has spent over forty years teaching music at every level, kindergarten through college, her passion lies at the high school level. Werlin has taught at Longmeadow High School since 1999. Under her direction, LHS choirs have earned festival awards, and the American Prize for Choral Performance. They have received invitations to perform at state and regional music education conferences, and have performed throughout the US and Europe. In 2020, the Country Music Association recognized Werlin as one of its Music Teachers of Excellence.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Performing Choirs

Lux



Lux is an award-winning chamber choir dedicated to accessibility of professional-quality choral music performance and education based in Washington, D.C. Since its founding in 2014, the group has earned praise from famed choral musicians around the world, and collaborated with the likes of Paul Mealor and Lynn Trapp. They've earned awards on both regional and national levels, including a Featured Choral Album on Classical MPR. Ever passionate for contemporary music, Lux has given over twenty premieres since 2019, including their first composition contest in 2021.



Robby Napoli was a founding member of Lux at seventeen years old and has enjoyed working with the group since 2014. He studied music education and composition at the Sunderman Conservatory at

Gettysburg College, and is now the choral director at Chesapeake High School, where he directs the Concert Choir, Chamber Singers, and a cappella group, Evolve. Napoli's ensembles have premiered over thirty pieces in the past four years, released hours of recordings, and won both local and national awards. Napoli enjoys performing contemporary choral music, and is particularly passionate about inspiring and creating opportunity for the upcoming generations of choral musicians.

Nazareth Area High School Nightingales



Nightingales began in 2006 as an after-school, auditioned choir. It became a non-auditioned curricular course in 2008 and then an auditioned curricular course in 2014. We meet three days out of a six-day cycle for seventy-two minutes. The choir consists of students in grades 9-12 with singers of varying levels of vocal experience and music reading. The Nightingales performed in several ACDA-PA conferences; at the PMEA State Conference in 2014, 2017, 2022; and the PMEA/NAfME Eastern Region Conference in 2019. The group can also be heard at community events and nursing homes around Nazareth.



Kelly Rocchi has been the choral director at Nazareth Area High since 2006. She is the director of two curricular choirs, one extra-curricular choir, oversees two student directed a cappella groups, and teaches piano and music theory. Rocchi has served as a guest conductor around the state and was selected as the Penn State School of Music Outstanding Music Education Alumni Award winner in 2021 and was named as a semi-finalist in the Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year Program in 2021. Choirs under her direction have been invited to sing at several ACDA-PA and PMEA state and Eastern Region conferences.

Roxbury High School Melodies



Melodies is a select treble ensemble under the direction of Krista Sweer from Roxbury High School in Succasunna, New Jersey. The ensemble is composed of approximately forty voices from all grade levels and rehearses once a week from January through May. Many students are members of the New Jersey All-State Choir, and the school regularly places students in the ACDA All-Eastern and National Honors Choirs. Last year Melodies was awarded first place in their category and a Gold rating at the WorldStrides Heritage Festival in Williamsburg, VA. Melodies focuses on showcasing the strength and diversity of treble voices.



Krista Sweer is in her sixth year as the associate choir director at Roxbury High School, where she directs Melodies, the Roxbury Chorale, and Vocal Jazz. She received her BME from Messiah University, where she earned the Presser Foundation Undergraduate Scholar Award. She earned her MM in collaborative piano at the Florida State University. While studying at the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria, she was awarded the Harold Heiberg Award for Excellence in Collaborative Piano.

Rutgers University Rutgers Voorhees Choir



The Rutgers Voorhees Choir is an auditioned soprano-alto ensemble that champions text and music composed by women and historically excluded poets and composers. The choir continues a long tradition of representing Rutgers University—from its beginnings as the choir for the New Jersey College for Women in 1924 to its years as the official choir for Douglass Residential College. The Rutgers Voorhees Choir made its Carnegie Hall debut in April 2019 as part of the inaugural National Concerts performance series. They were also selected to perform at the 2020 ACDA Eastern Region Conference in Rochester, NY.



Brandon Williams is an associate professor and interim director of choral activities at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, where he was the recipient of the 2021-22 Rutgers Presidential Fellowship for Teaching Excellence Award. Williams has published articles in the *Choral Journal* and the *Music Educators Journal*, and he is editor of the book *Choral Reflections: Insights from American Choral Conductor-Teachers*. He earned degrees from Western Illinois University, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Michigan State University, and he holds an artist teacher diploma from the Choral Music Experience-Institute for Choral Teacher Education.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Performing Choirs

Thomas W. Pyle Middle School Pyle Voices



The Pyle Voices is a highly selective group of students in grades 7-8. Voices has repeatedly received superior ratings at county, state, and regional adjudications. In 2022, Voices traveled to The Aaron Copland School of Music at Queen's College in NYC to participate in "Nationals for Top Choirs." In 2023, Voices was selected as a spotlight throughout the state of Maryland to perform at the MMEA State Conference. In 2022 they performed at the Annapolis statehouse in conjunction with the Governor's mansion open house.



Zach Tilkens, NBCT, is currently in his fifteenth year teaching with MCPS and his ninth year at Thomas W. Pyle Middle School. Tilkens has been active at the county and state levels as a judge.

His choirs consistently earn superior ratings at county, state, and regional festivals, notably participating in "Nationals for Top Choirs" in NYC. His audition choir was selected to perform at the 2023 MMEA state conference. Tilkens is proud of his contributions around the topic of equity, having contributed to the MMEA Diversity Lens Committee and presenting a session titled: "Affirming Students' Identities through Repertoire Selection."

University of Delaware University Singers



The University Singers is a select ensemble of treble voices at the University of Delaware, chosen by audition each year, and comprising freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors from dozens of majors across the University. The University Singers perform three to four concerts each year and tour regionally to Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. They appeared at ACDA Eastern Region in 2014 (Baltimore) and 2018 (Pittsburgh). The University Singers perform a varied and diverse repertoire, including medieval chant, Baroque chamber music, nineteenth-century opera, as well as jazz, contemporary, and multicultural works.



Duane Cottrell is associate professor of choral music education at the University of Delaware, where he directs the University Singers and the Jazz Singers and teaches courses in choral music education.

After earning a BME at LSU under Ken Fulton and teaching high school in Texas, Cottrell earned MM and DMA degrees at the University of North Texas with Jerry McCoy. He frequently presents and publishes research on vocal pedagogy and was previously the editor of the "On the Voice" column in the *Choral Journal*. His choirs have appeared at NAFME and ACDA conferences.

Washington Adventist University Pro Musica



Pro Musica of Washington Adventist University was established in 1962 by the late Paul Hill, director of the famous Paul Hill Chorale. The Pro Musica is a select ensemble comprising the university student community, specializing in advanced choral repertoire from all musical periods. The choir maintains a heavy schedule, traveling extensively both nationally and internationally. It has appeared in numerous prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, the National Gallery of Art, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington D.C., as well as other leading concert halls and cathedrals both within the United States and abroad.



Anwar Ottley is an associate professor of music and director of choral activities at Washington Adventist University, and the pastor of worship at the Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist Church, both located in Takoma Park, Maryland. He is a published composer whose works have been performed in venues across the country, including the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the Washington National Cathedral. Ottley earned a doctor of worship studies degree from Liberty University, an MM in choral conducting from Andrews University, and a BM from Washington Adventist University.

Western Connecticut State University University Singers



The WCSU University Singers (formerly University Choir) have earned a reputation as a premier collegiate choral ensemble in the Northeast. This dynamic group sustains a busy calendar of performances. Over the past year, they have taken part in performances in Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center and were a featured ensemble at the 2023 Connecticut MEA State Conference. The WCSU University Singers have also performed at regional ACDA conferences and toured internationally. They regularly collaborate with orchestras throughout the state in performances of choral-orchestral works.



Jeremy Wiggins serves as the director of choral activities and graduate studies at Western Connecticut State University, where he conducts choral ensembles and teaches courses in conducting and music education. Wiggins recently prepared the WCSU University Singers for performances in Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. Currently he serves as the artistic director of Charis Chamber Voices and is the R&R Chair for College Choirs for CT-ACDA. Wiggins taught secondary choral music in southern California for nine years. He completed his doctoral studies at the Florida State University and holds an MM in conducting and BME from CSU, Fullerton.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Performing Choirs

Young New Yorkers' Chorus Mixed Ensemble



Established in 2001, the Young New Yorkers' Chorus (YNYC) fosters a vibrant choral community through singing, performance, and collaboration with emerging composers. We work to ensure that New Yorkers have a haven that brings music to those who need it and amplifies the voices of those who wish to make it.

Guided by the artistic vision of conductor Alex Canovas, the choir performs a vast variety of music, specializing in the performance of works by young composers. Committed to the growth of new repertoire, YNYC debuts three original works annually through its Competition for Young Composers.



Alex Canovas is the artistic director of the Young New Yorkers' Chorus (YNYC), leading both their Mixed and Treble Ensembles in concerts around New York City every year. Canovas also oversees YNYC's celebrated Competition for Young Composers. Choirs under his direction have appeared at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, National Sawdust, and other well-known venues in the New York area. Previous positions include director of music and choirmaster at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn; associate conductor of Choral Chameleon; assistant conductor of the Empire City Men's Chorus; and assistant conductor of Ars Musica (NJ).

Eastern Region Registration Information

Register at acda.org/region-conferences

Attendee \$315 Retired \$215 Student \$100

Registration after 11:59 PM CST February 7, 2024

Attendee \$345 Retired \$245 Student \$140

On-site registration

Attendee \$360 Retired \$260 Student \$155

One-Day Registration \$175 (only available on-site)

2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Insight Choirs

Creating in the Aural Tradition

In this session, our directors will engage conference participants, supported by the ensemble, in a creative journey—from learning a simple, unison Jamaican folk song in the aural tradition to crafting a fully fledged harmonized performance, including movement, percussion and improvisation. Participants will gain a strong understanding of our process and the confidence to explore further.



The **Boston City Singers Tour Choir** is a choir of twenty-eight voices conducted by Jane Money, Kimani Lumsden, and Matthew Leese. The choir has a repertoire spanning classic American Jazz standards, traditional compositions from Ukraine to New Zealand, aurally learned Jamaican and South African folk songs, and much more. In alternate years, the Tour Choir ventures to countries that have a deep connection to music as it affects their history, social justice, and culture. The Tour Choir has toured to Costa Rica, New Zealand and Australia, South Africa, Argentina, Canada, the Czech Republic, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.



Kimani Lumsden joined Boston City Singers in 2012 as World Rhythm Ensemble Director. He is a vibrant music educator who is passionate about the percussion and dance traditions of West Africa and the African diaspora. Lumsden grew up in Kingston, Jamaica, where he studied classical piano, and traditional Jamaican and Caribbean drumming at the Jamaica School of Music. In addition to his work

with Boston City Singers, Lumsden teaches general music and traditional percussion at the Lincoln School in Providence, Rhode Island, an independent, college preparatory school for girls.

Healing a Community: The Gertrude Banks Intergenerational Gospel Choir

The Gertrude Banks Gospel Choir is an intergenerational ensemble out of Connecticut that has brought together and provided healing for different members of its community of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities. This session will focus on culturally responsive teaching of Gospel music, techniques to engage your community, and strategies for teaching and differentiating for an intergenerational choir. The session will feature performances, demonstrations, and stories by the choir members.



The **Gertrude Banks Gospel Choir** was founded in 2019 as a way to bridge gaps between students at Simsbury High School. It has since developed into an intergenerational ensemble ages eleven through seventy, including middle school students, high schoolers, parents, grandparents, and local gospel professionals. The ensemble celebrates the American art of Gospel music and provides a place for singers of all levels to perform, learn, and sing together.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Insight Choirs



Rebecca Saltzman is the choral director at Simsbury High School, where she directs five ensembles in addition to an extracurricular Gospel ensemble. She is an adjunct faculty member at the Hartt School, where she teaches their course on school choral programs and supervises the pre-service educator secondary choral teaching lab experience. Saltzman holds a master's degree from the Florida State University and her BME from Ithaca College. She is currently serving as the ACDA Eastern Region Vocal Jazz and A Cappella R&R Chair.

The Unearthing and Illumination of Stories: Music of Melissa Dunphy

This session will examine and present works by Australian American composer Melissa Dunphy that revive our history and bring to light our common human struggles through musical storytelling. The composing, commissioning, and collaboration processes of particular works, including *American DREAMers*, will be

discussed. In addition to the performances of selected works, attendees will also have a chance to sing excerpts of the composer's works.



Since 2013, **PhilHarmonia** has delighted audiences with its commitment to musical excellence and its eclectic range of choral programming and repertoire under the artistic direction of Dr. Mito Andaya Hart of Temple University. The ensemble opens and closes seasons with free public concerts and also produces two continuing seasonal concert events each year, *Winter Spirits* and *From PhilHarmonia With Love*. PhilHarmonia takes pride in collaborations and partnerships with local artists and organizations, including Melissa Dunphy, Adam Silverman, the Free Library of Philadelphia, SEPTA, The German Society of Pennsylvania, the Museum of the American Revolution, Nashirah, and Singing City.



Mito Andaya Hart is the associate director of choral activities in the Boyer College of Music and Dance at Temple University. She has taught choral and jazz at the university level in the United States, South Africa, and Australia. She has served as a clinician and guest conductor for honor and all-state choruses for festivals and workshops nationally and in Germany, Kenya, the Netherlands, and South Korea. Andaya Hart is the artistic director of PhilHarmonia, a Philadelphia-based chamber choir, which has commissioned and premiered works, including Melissa Dunphy's *American DREAMers* based on texts by young American Immigrants and DACA recipients.

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2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Interest Sessions

Approaching Contemporary Korean Choral Repertoire and Pedagogical Considerations

The American choral world advocates diversity in choral music to a greater extent than ever before, yet choir directors often find it challenging introducing music from different cultures. This session aims to introduce composers of South Korean background and their carefully selected choral works, provide practical resources about basic rules of Korean diction in singing, stir thoughts on appropriate vocal tones and cultural contexts, and share resources easily accessible for non-native choir directors.



Minji Kim serves as an assistant professor of music at Gordon College and the music director for the Newburyport Choral Society in Massachusetts. As a native South Korean conductor now living in

the United States, she is passionate about incorporating her cultural background into teaching. She earned an MM in choral conducting at the Ohio State University and a DMA at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Bridging the Gap: From Concert Choir to Contemporary A Cappella

This interactive workshop aims to answer three questions: First, why should choral conductors who've immersed their entire lives in standard choral literature care about contemporary a cappella? Second, how can a fundamental understanding of contemporary a cappella help improve your choir's understanding of more traditional literature? Third, how can choral conductors who are unfamiliar with the culture of contemporary a cappella dip their toe in the proverbial water?



Marc Silverberg has served on the executive board of CASA.org and presented workshops on vocal improvisation at national and state festivals. Beginning in 2020, Silverberg pioneered two new breakthroughs in a cappella education: A cappella Masterclass (acappellamasterclass.com) and VocaVerity, the world's first, certified online school for contemporary a cappella. In 2020, Silverberg released his first book, co-written with Deke Sharon and GIA Publications, *Teaching Music Through Performance in Contemporary A Cappella*. He has degrees from the University of Delaware (BM), Westminster Choir College (MM), and Five Towns College (DMA).

Building the Ensemble through Collaborative Circle Activities Across Ages

Together we will explore ways to build our ensembles and encourage collaboration, exploration, and improvisation through a few circle activities. Together we will discover how these activities can be used in both the middle and high school setting and experience and discuss how these activities encourage collaboration and trust amongst our singers. Come ready to participate and take away new activities you can implement into your rehearsal space.



Jameelah Taylor is a choral director and vocalist based in New York City. She holds an MME from Teachers College, Columbia University, as well as a BA in vocal performance from The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music. She has performed in venues across New York City, including The Stone, Joe's Pub, Carnegie Hall, Webster Hall, and the historic Kings Theatre for New York Fashion Week. Taylor is the middle and upper school choral director at the Trevor Day School on the UES.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Interest Sessions

ChoralWorks – Rehearsal Tracks on Smartphones for Free

The ChoralWorks web app makes interactive rehearsal tracks with high-quality piano sounds available for free on smartphones, tablets, and computers. Singers can isolate their own part or combine them with others. Directors and singers can include markers to indicate passages that need special attention. Directors can easily create and distribute these tracks using free resources. Session participants will learn how to use the app and how to make and distribute ChoralWorks files for their singers. ChoralWorks can be an efficient and effective practice tool that lets choirs use precious rehearsal time to make music instead of learning notes.



Robert Natter is associate professor of music and director of choral activities at Gettysburg College, where he has taught since 1998. He conducts the Gettysburg College Choir, Concert Choir, Audeamus, and Camerata, and teaches conducting. His choirs have performed throughout the eastern United States and toured internationally. He also serves on the executive board for the Eastern ACDA Region. Natter earned a BM and MM from the University of California at Santa Cruz, and a DMA in choral conducting from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Choral Singing in America: Nurturing the Country's Soul

Choral Singing in America: Nurturing the Country's Soul is now a captivating documentary that illuminates the vibrant spectrum of choral singing across our nation. With close to seventy inspiring performances from amateur and professional groups, plus personal stories from Marques L.A. Garrett, Doreen Rao, André Thomas, Eric Whitacre, Rosephanye Powell, and dozens more, the deep impact of choral singing on body

and soul shines forth. From concert halls to hospice beds, from sacred spaces to street corners, the film brings to life the diverse stories of American choral singers and leaders who inspire, uplift, heal, create opportunity, find meaning, and build bridges through the power of song.

Emily Ellsworth will be the host for this movie. Her photo and bio are on page 33.

Choral Teaching Strategies and Repertoire Ideas for Young/Beginning Singers

In this session the clinician will discuss techniques and strategies for working with young choral singers. We will cover three main topics: child-friendly vocal health terminology, scaffolding suggestions for skill development, rehearsal routines, and repertoire suggestions and examples.



Lauren Torres Lambert is a music teacher at the University of Hartford Magnet School in West Hartford, Connecticut. She was also the director of The Youth Choir of Connecticut Children's Chorus for nine years. Lambert has spoken as a panelist and presented sessions at conferences both in and out of state, and serves on the CTACDA R&R Committee as the Children's Choir Chairperson. In 2023 she conducted her first festival with Connecticut's Western Regional Middle School Honors Choir. Lambert received her undergraduate and graduate degrees from The Hartt School, where she is an adjunct professor.

Commercial Music Opportunities Roundtable

In this session, Grammy-nominated composer and R&R Chair of Commercial Music for ACDA Eastern Region, Cheryl B. Engelhardt, will walk through the

lesser-known avenues of commercial choral music and how choirs can profit from this genre. She'll explore the recording for commercials, movies, and other artists, as well as the topic of selling choral recordings commercially. Other questions that will be addressed include: What is the role of commercial choral music and how can we incorporate it into programming? What type of choral music is most often used (and paid for) in the commercial spaces? Where is choral music being utilized in commercial and mass media? What are the choral benefits for pursuing commercial music opportunities?



Cheryl B. Engelhardt is a Grammy-nominated and #1 best-selling recording artist, and a composer for films, theater, social justice choirs, and other ensembles. Her unique journey has landed her in *Forbes*, *Grammy.com*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *People*, on stage singing with Sting, collaborating with Martin Luther King's goddaughter, and on a train. She is the first person to produce an entire album on a cross-USA journey. Additionally, she is a certified trauma-informed success coach, providing resources for musicians through her site www.InTheKeyOfSuccess.com as well as in her popular mastermind, Amplify. She's a member of The Recording Academy's District Advocacy team and the R&R Chair of Contemporary/Commercial Repertoire for the ACDA Eastern Region.

Community Connections: Telling American Stories

The U.S. military has a longstanding tradition of reaching communities through music. The U.S. Army Field Band Soldiers' Chorus and West Point Glee Club, two of the military's most traveled choirs, prioritize connections with diverse audiences in innovative ways. They have developed unique strategies to dissolve boundaries between performers and audience, and strengthen these bonds nationwide. The session shares member experiences and use of multimedia,

inspiring choral directors to brainstorm site-specific possibilities of their own. The diversity of projects, venues, and audiences clearly demonstrate the power of singing to create spontaneous, genuine connection between fellow humans in non-traditional spaces.

Constance Chase will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 134.

Curran Schenck will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 64.

Additional members of the West Point Glee Club and Soldier's Chorus will contribute to the panel discussion.

Composers Forum

Moderated by Eastern Region Choral Composition R&R Chair, Michael Bussewitz-Quarm, a panel of Eastern Region composers will discuss topics including commission consortium models, self-publication and working with large publishing houses.

Conducting Context and Loving Gestures: Journey from Motion to Emotion

There is no such thing as an ideal conducting gesture. Uncovering the delicate balance of context and connection in conducting, this session explores the power of affectionate gestures as the "Love Languages of Choirs." Attendees will delve into effective ways of adapting gestural vocabulary for various musical genres—Renaissance, Gospel, Spirituals, contemporary—and types of choral communities. Through interactive exercises and demonstrations by Elevation, the Delaware Academy of Vocal Arts' flagship ensemble, participants will learn how to evoke both musical intention and a sense of love for their singers.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Interest Sessions



Arreon A. Harley-Emerson is a conductor, composer, nonprofit strategist, and equity coach and is the founder of Equity Sings. He is the CEO and artistic director of the Delaware Academy of Vocal Arts.

Harley-Emerson's work includes longitudinal studies, strategic planning, board governance, resource and asset development, and board diversification. Harley-Emerson is a University Fellow at the Boyer School of Music Dance at Temple University, where he is pursuing a PhD in music education with a cognate in choral conducting and has completed a graduate certificate in Diversity in Higher Education.

DEI in Action: Auditing Your Choral Library

Choral directors continue to program and purchase new music that acknowledges and authentically represents minority communities. We strive to present and perform music into a diverse and equitable society. This session will encourage attendees to review choral library holdings and examine their relevance within today's global world. The choral library is often considered to be an archive—a place to store music performed in the past. It should, however, serve as a living artifact. Join the conversation and take a look at the work New Hampshire ACDA and NafME are engaged in to evaluate its state choral library.



Emma Forest is the choral director at Moultonborough Academy in Moultonborough, New Hampshire, where she teaches 6-12 chorus and general music.

Forest serves as the music director for the theater department and is also a two season coach. She graduated from Keene State College with a BME, majoring in voice with a secondary in oboe. She currently holds the positions of president-elect for New Hampshire ACDA and Large Group Festival Chairperson for New Hampshire MEA. She actively performs as a

soprano and sings with New Hampshire Master Chorale and Pemigewasset Choral Society.



Sandra Howard is a professor of music and coordinator of choral music education at Keene State College. Howard earned a BME and MM in vocal performance from the University of Maine and

an Interdisciplinary PhD Music Education/Curriculum & Instruction from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. Howard has worked with singers of all ages ranging from preschoolers to senior citizens. Her research has been presented at regional and national conferences for NafME, ACDA, SRME, SMTE, and at the ISME international conference. She is a NHMEA director and past president and NH ACDA treasurer.

Dimensions of Justice in Choral Works by Black Women Composers

The purpose of this presentation is to provide thorough textual and musical analyses of a specific set of justice-themed repertoire composed by Margaret Bonds, Lena McLin, and Undine Smith Moore. *Credo* (1965-67), *Free at Last: A Portrait of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (1973), and *Scenes from the Life of a Martyr* (1981), respectively. Participants will leave with tools for advocacy, study, and performance along with general resources for performers who are interested in programming music by Black women composers.



Khyle Wooten is director of choral activities and assistant professor of music performance at Ithaca College. Previously associate director of choral activities with the University of Tennessee,

Knoxville, he is an inaugural fellow of the Future of Music Faculty Fellowship with the Cleveland Institute of Music. He leads ongoing research on Black women composers and choral music pedagogues. Wooten

holds degrees in music education and choral conducting from Lincoln University of PA (BS), Georgia State University (MM), and the Florida State University (PhD).

Divisive Concept or Student Lifeline?

Critical pedagogy, critical race theory, and culturally responsive pedagogy are distinct concepts with differing contexts, historical backgrounds, influences on teaching approaches, and impacts on student engagement and learning—none of which are, nor should be, divisive. Choral conductor educators will be able to connect these concepts to their practice to make and advocate for informed musical and educational decisions that support the creation of a culturally sustaining, life-giving, and life-saving choral community. Provided in this session will be an Advocacy Wheel: a tool for engaging in conversations about these concepts with principals, parents, boards of directors, and other governing bodies.



Kristina Westover is a PhD student and teaching assistant in music education at Temple University. She earned her BME from the University of Oklahoma and her MME from Michigan State University. Her teaching experience includes elementary general music with an extracurricular choir, middle school general music, and middle school choir. Her research interests include musical identity development in adolescents and preservice music teachers, music teacher attrition, and the development of culturally sustaining music programs.



Daniel Jackson is a PhD student at Temple University studying choral music education. During his twenty-one years in music education, Jackson served as the director of choral activities at Olympia High School in Orlando, Fl.; Stone Bridge High

School in Ashburn, VA; and the committee chairperson for the Diversity Coalition of Virginia ACDA. He also served as associate artistic director of the Orlando Choral Society. Jackson has served as a clinician, speaker, and adjudicator across the East Coast, providing musical leadership and interest sessions on culturally responsive choral practices in Virginia and Florida.

Arreon A. Harley-Emerson will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on the previous page.



Keith Roeckle is a PhD student in music education at Temple University, where he also serves as director of the Night Owls Campus-Community Band. Prior to his doctoral studies, he was a high school instrumental music teacher at Ridley High School (Folsom, PA), Lincoln High School (Philadelphia, PA), and the Lawrenceville School (Lawrenceville, NJ). In addition to directing, Roeckle is an accomplished arranger for instrumental ensembles and is a frequent piano accompanist for soloists and ensembles. His research interests include aural skills acquisition, adolescents and music, and music theory pedagogy.

Doing the Dishes: Beyond Tolerance of Gender-Diverse Students in Music

“Everybody wants to save the Earth; nobody wants to help Mom do the dishes.” While many well-intentioned educators may consider themselves allies to the transgender community in a general sense; few are equipped to interact confidently and competently with gender-diverse students. Through a review of current research, personal accounts, and guided self-examination, this session seeks to expand current understandings of gender diversity, student agency, and gender-inclusive curriculum and policy with the ultimate goal of gender equity for all students, teachers, staff, and members of the community.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Interest Sessions



Evan Montemayor, MME, is a pianist and conductor-educator from Sacramento, CA. He is co-chair of the NY-ACDA R&R Committee and a doctoral student in choral conducting at Arizona State University. Research and teaching interests include absolute pitch, musicians with speech and language impairments, and gender diverse voices.

Entering Uncharted Territory: Re-Mapping Our Understanding of the Female Voice

During this session, we will delve into the transformations that occur throughout the lifespan of the female voice. We will explore the influence of hormones and the pelvic floor and examine strategies to address these changes in a healthy manner with students of all ages. Our discussion will focus on gaining a comprehensive understanding of the intricate modifications that take place in the female voice. As a result of this session, participants will gain practical knowledge on how to incorporate these insights about hormones, the pelvic floor, and the female voice into their rehearsals and classrooms.



Victoria Sigafos was born and raised in Mansfield, Pennsylvania. She pursued her BME from Mansfield University before moving to Philadelphia to complete her MM in choral conducting at Temple University. Sigafos has been teaching choir at Middle School North in Center Grove CSC for the last five years. She has enjoyed directing the MSN Drama Club, conducting CGHS Fall Musicals, and building a successful private voice studio. She has been a featured speaker at the ICDA summer conference in Indianapolis, served as a guest conductor for CSWS Festivals, and continues to lecture in the area.

The Filipino Choral Tradition: Your Starter Pack

The Philippines enjoys a robust culture of fantastic choral music. However, our music is rarely performed beyond the boundaries of our archipelago. Join me as we unpack and overcome the barriers restraining this music. Learn about new repertoire and how to authentically approach this music as you share it with your singers.



Reagan G. Paras serves as a full-time associate professor for Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. A passionate conductor, singer, and educator, he has directed performance tours across the United States and abroad. He is the artistic director for Many Voices: Mechanics Hall's Youth Singers, performing repertoire that authentically honors the mosaic of cultures represented in the ensemble. He serves as music director for The Nashua Choral Society and conducts the summer Kodály Music Institute Choir, which comprises music educators from across the globe. He is a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator across the country.

Flexible Fach: Gender-Affirming Vocal Pedagogy through Science-Informed Practices

In this interactive session, attendees will be invited to sing and discuss vocal exercises from a new protocol developed by the presenter that focuses on helping transgender and gender-expansive (TGE) singers produce an aural aesthetic that better aligns with their gender identity. Created through an understanding of the gendered associations and vocal characteristics of common fach categories and voice classifications, this protocol synthesizes practices from gender-affirming

speech-language pathology (SLP) with source-filter theory and science-informed vocal pedagogy to present a healthy gender-affirming practice routine for TGE singers who are seeking to masculinize or feminize their voices.

Stevie J. Hirner will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 23.

Freedom Trail: Lessons from Retracing Harriet Tubman's Journey through Music

In the footsteps of Harriet Tubman, three choirs embarked on an unprecedented journey, intertwining their voices with the echoes of the Underground Railroad. Visiting historical sites and engaging in memorable communal musicking experiences, these choirs brought history to life through song and shared reflection. Our session will dive deep into this transformative experience, offering a comprehensive exploration of the tour's creation, student preparation, and intercultural dialogue. We will delve into the power of communal musicking as a tool for cultural understanding and connection. We aim to empower others to initiate similar initiatives in their communities.



Joy Hirokawa was the founder and artistic director of The Bel Canto Youth Chorus. She is a passionate advocate for creating musical spaces in which youth can express themselves through the choral art as they navigate and learn about a complicated world. She is a frequent guest conductor and clinician nationally and internationally and a published arranger and author. Following twenty years of teaching at all levels in the public schools, Hirokawa taught at Moravian University, Temple University, and Lafayette College. She is the ACDA National R&R Chair for Children and Youth Choirs.

Margaret Nomura Clark joined the Children's Chorus



of Washington as artistic director in August 2016. Clark has made it her mission to provide outstanding choral education and performance experiences for youth through collaborative partnerships across the DMV. Her creative approach to programming has led to innovative projects with many youth choral organizations, dance companies, and composers. In addition to her work at CCW, Clark is an adjudicator and guest conductor for MD and DC choral festivals and serves as the diversity initiatives co-chair for the ACDA MD/DC chapter.

Arreon A. Harley-Emerson will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 152.



Brittney L. Stanton is deputy director and assistant conductor at the Choir School of Delaware. She is a highly trained music teacher and soprano who works with students of varying ages and abilities to help them develop strong music literacy skills and grow a love for the arts that is lifelong. Having taught music in both suburban and urban settings, Stanton is a dedicated, veteran pedagogue. She holds a BM with a focus in choral arts and an MS in teaching, both from McDaniel College.

Full Circle— The Grace and Power of Rounds

October Project's brand of Conscious Rounds™ offers choir directors and choral teachers an innovative tool for learning, listening, musical understanding, and fun that also stirs mind, body, and spirit. Accessible and easy to learn, their newest rounds open new possibilities with a fun exploration of major to minor. How does the change of mode affect the message and impact of the lyric? How are different emotions evoked? Come enjoy a delightful and expansive experience to grow your choir in rehearsal and performance, and add a dependable, flexible tool to your toolbox.



2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

Interest Sessions

Emil Adler is an Emmy Award-winning composer with October Project.

Julie Flanders is an ACDA Genesis Prize-winning writer (“Holding our Breath”) with October Project.

Marina Belica is a vocalist/producer with October Project.



Their award-winning virtual choirs, the Worldwide Choir of Return to Me (Gold Telly, 2023) and Virtual Choir of Joy (Telly & Anthem Award, 2021), were each in contention for a Grammy, along with the group’s first choral work, *The Book of Rounds: 21 Songs of Grace*.



Kirsten Oberoi is the founder and artistic director of the South Shore Children’s Chorus, currently serving over 170 singers from the greater South Shore of Massachusetts. Oberoi taught public school music and chorus for eight years. Regarded as a unique and creative choral artist and arts entrepreneur, she is known for her strong philosophies based on inclusion and equity in the music education classroom. She is frequently invited to guest conduct festival choirs. Projects in 2024 include conducting the New Hampshire MEA Southeastern Junior Districts Festival, the Connecticut MEA Northern Region Junior Honor Choir, and adjudicating for the Rhode Island ACDA Elementary School Choral Festival.

South Shore Children’s Chorus will be the demonstration choir for this session.

Growth Mindset: Striving for Improvement in Yourself and Your Ensemble

How can our mindset improve our daily lives and the ensembles we work with? This session dives into that question by examining different approaches to our mindsets, understanding the science and research behind a mindset, presenting strategies and examples for implementing a growth mindset in an ensemble, and exploring how the growth mindset can be used to address current societal issues like diversity and equity. In the session, participants will learn about their own mindset tendencies, gain ideas for creating an environment of growth, and discover ways to promote equity and inclusivity in our ensembles and our field.



Trevor Tran is the former head of performing arts and director of vocal arts at Fort Myers High School in Southwest Florida. He was recognized as a 2023 Yamaha “40 under 40” Educator for his work there. Besides serving as an educator, Tran is an active composer and presenter, with his work appearing at state, regional, and national music educator conferences. He holds a BM from San José State University, concurrent master’s degrees in choral conducting and music composition from Temple University, and is currently pursuing a DMA in choral conducting at the University of Maryland.

The Impact of Communal Singing on Those Affected by Homelessness

The Dallas Street Choir has received great attention for its use of choral music to create a safe and affirming community for those most marginalized by society. Through engaged performances and educational outreach, the Dallas Street Choir has become a bridge to the “housed” community, sparking conversations on

stigma and stereotype. This session explores the structure of the Dallas Street Choir, how participation impacts singers' mental and physical health, and factors of social inclusion and sense of self.

#HomelessNotVoiceless

Jonathan Palant will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 95.

Lessons from the Tacoma Refugee Choir

This session will explore pedagogical strategies we've employed in creating a space that has welcomed members from sixty-five countries with a range of ability and cultural backgrounds. We will consider pedagogical strategies including rote singing, generative song creation, improvised harmonization, and shared leadership with singers and potential benefits and opportunities that may arise. These include access, autonomy and leadership, and minimized perfectionism/self-judgment. We will also consider how these strategies may influence vocal production, registration, style, and tuning, and introduce some practical exercises.



Erin Guinup is the founding executive and artistic director of the Tacoma Refugee Choir, which performed at the 2023 National ACDA Conference. With the choir, she has spoken at TEDxSeattle, Starbucks, and national conferences for ACDA, Chorus America, NATS, and the Global Migrant Festival. A sought-after performer and clinician in classical and contemporary vocal technique, Guinup performed her one-woman show internationally and has taught students performing on Broadway, operatic stages, and television. She is a composer, active choral clinician, author, and consultant on arts administration, community engagement, and leadership through music.

Place for All:

Diverse Perspectives in J. S. Bach's Cantatas

In order to honor a work's original context, conductors encourage participants to engage deeply with a work's text and meaning. When a student and/or audience member comes from a religious perspective different from the selected repertoire, achieving this goal becomes complex. The sacred cantatas of J. S. Bach offer countless opportunities for participants to engage deeply with his works while discovering themes that resonate beyond its original theological purpose. This lecture examines four cantatas (172, 56, 158, and 25) through various non-musical, diverse perspectives, and demonstrates how Bach's cantatas engage musicians/audiences with a plurality of beliefs and experiences.

C. Michael Porter will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 10.

Programming Effectively around Social Issues: A Panel Discussion

Over the last decade, a wave of new socially conscious choral works has entered the repertoire, focusing on issues like homophobia, police violence, voting rights, and climate change. In a lively conversation, panelists Arianne Abela, Geoffrey Hudson, Emily Isaacson, Chris Shepard, and Anthony Trecek-King explore why you should consider programming socially conscious works and how to do so effectively. Attendees will learn skills and strategies to effectively plan and present concerts related to current social issues and receive resources for finding socially conscious choral repertoire.



Alisa Pearson (moderator) is artistic director of Hybrid Vigor Music, a non-profit dedicated to developing new works that reach beyond the concert hall. HVM commissioned Geoffrey Hudson's *A Pas-*



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sion for the Planet and continues to champion that work. As a performer, she has commissioned and premiered dozens of vocal works in Austria and the United States. Pearson has degrees in vocal performance from Oberlin and Eastman and is manager of concerts, programming, and publicity at Amherst College.

Arianne Abela will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 35.



Emily Isaacson is fiercely committed to reimagining classical music for today's audience. She is founder and artistic director of Classical Uprising, a performing arts collective serving over 6,000 musicians and music lovers that believes classical music must rise up, challenge current norms, and re-envision where, how, and for whom we are making music. For this work, Isaacson was named the 2018 Maine Artist of the Year, one of the 50 Mainers Leading the State, and the 2022 winner of the American Prize.



Anthony Trecek-King has cultivated an international reputation as a choral conductor, scholar, pedagogue, and media personality over the past twenty years. He is passionate about cultivating artistically excellent ensembles that explore socially relevant issues through emotionally immersive programs, challenging both artists and audiences to feel and think. Longtime director of the Boston Children's Chorus, Trecek-King has recently been appointed as both an associate professor of choral music and director of choral activities at The Hartt School, University of Hartford, and a resident conductor with the Handel and Haydn Society.



Geoffrey Hudson's music has been performed across the United States and Europe. His 2019 eco-oratorio, *A Passion for the Planet*, blends scientific prose, poetry, and sacred texts from many faiths. Premiered by Tony Thornton and the Illuminati Vocal Arts Ensemble in 2019 and revived by Chris Shepard and CONCORA in 2023, the *Passion* traces an arc

from beauty and gratitude into darkness and out again into hope. Hudson holds degrees in composition from Oberlin and New England Conservatory and has twenty years' experience as a choral conductor.



Chris Shepard is music director of three choral ensembles: The Masterwork Chorus, based in Morristown, NJ; CONCORA, a professional choir in Hartford, CT; and the Worcester Chorus in central Massachusetts. With these choirs, Shepard has performed a wide range of repertoire, including *Considering Matthew Shepard* and *A Passion for the Planet*. He holds degrees from the Hartt School, Yale, and the University of Sydney. His PhD dissertation won the ACDA's 2012 Julius Herford Prize for outstanding doctoral thesis in choral music.

"Real Talk" in Rehearsal: Cultivating a Sense of Belonging

How can we as choral educators create an environment that is maximally engaging and relevant to our students in order to cultivate a sense of belonging? This session answers this question by examining ways to implement Paul Hernandez's innovative "Pedagogy of Real Talk" in the choral rehearsal. By the end of this session, participants will have a clear understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of the Pedagogy, methods for directly incorporating it into choral rehearsal spaces, and specific successful examples of how it has been used with choral ensembles.



Jonathan Harvey is associate professor of music and director of choirs at Fitchburg State University (MA), and music director of the Brattleboro Concert Choir and the Brattleboro Camerata (VT). He also serves on the board of Choral Arts New England as the Grants Chair. Harvey holds a DMA in conducting and music history from the University of Connecticut,

an MM in choral conducting and musicology from Indiana University, and a BA (Phi Beta Kappa) in music and philosophy from Earlham College.

Recruiting, Engaging, and Maintaining Tenors and Basses

Need more tenors and basses in your choirs? How can you keep them, train them, and get them hooked so they become your future ambassadors for choral music? This session focuses on a major problem for many choral directors: recruiting tenors and basses. Practical strategies for adding to your tenor and bass membership will be explored. Session participants will be the “demo” choir for this session. Repertoire ideas from the Hal Leonard Corporation will be shared.



Christine Bass is a retired Temple University Men's and Women's Choruses conductor and assistant professor of music education, previously DCA at Cherry Hill West High School, where her program grew from 60 to 320. Bass's choirs performed at multiple ACDA National and Eastern Region conferences and MENC. Her men's a cappella group, Men of Note, won three consecutive National Championships for Best of High School A Cappella. She conducts numerous all-state and honors choirs, including the 2009 ACDA National High School Honors Choir. A guest conductor, adjudicator, and clinician, her educational products are “Vocal Transformation,” “Where The Boys Are,” and “Front-Loading Your Choral Rehearsal.”



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Compositions for mixed choir (SATB, divisi possible), unaccompanied with keyboard, or with instrumental accompaniment of not more than three individual instruments

For full details and submission info, please visit:

» <https://gleeclub.yalecollege.yale.edu/new-music/emerging-composers-competition>

Submission Deadline: April 1, 2024



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Interest Sessions

(re)sounding Joy: Paradigm Shifts for DEI Work in Choral Spaces

Utilizing a trauma-informed approach, this session will address equity through programming by highlighting repertoire written by historically excluded composers. Attendees will gain strategies for reframing or replacing potentially triggering or trauma-centered music (as well as other harmful practices in choral spaces) and expand singers' awareness and understanding—through repertoire—of cultures outside their own. While still centering historically excluded voices, this session will help participants shift their DEI practices to create a more welcoming, safe, and joy-centered choral space for all.



Alyssa J. Cossey (she/her) is a conductor, singer, educator, and scholar. She is a contributing author for a new choral text on women composers (edited by Hilary Apfelstadt), an inaugural member of the professional women's choir mirabai, and she is currently serving as associate director of choral activities at Coastal Carolina University. Before relocating to the East Coast for love, she was an assistant professor of choral music at the University of Arizona, and prior to that she taught both middle and high school choir in Southern California for nearly a decade.

Sama: Listening and Engaging with Musics of the Muslim World

Choral music of the Islamic tradition is often misrepresented, and VOICES 21C seeks to create space for conversation and education about ways to authentically engage. This interactive session, focused on music and culture of the Muslim world, will share our first-hand experiences as members of the international Sama Choral Festival alongside our work singing music of Islam across the world. Our presentation will in-

clude educational material recorded during the festival from practicing artists alongside the teaching of songs, resources to engage in conversation with student and community singers, a repertoire guide, historical contexts and practices, and time for questions.



André de Quadros is a professor of music at Boston University with affiliations in African, African American, Asian, Jewish, Muslim studies, prison education, Forced Migration, and Antiracist Research. As an artist, scholar, and human rights activist, he has worked in over forty countries in diverse settings, including professional ensembles, projects with prisons, psychosocial rehabilitation, refugees, and victims of sexual violence, torture, and trauma. His work crosses race and mass incarceration, peacebuilding, forced migration, LGBTQ+ folx, and Islamic culture. He directs choral projects in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, the United States, Israel and the Arab world, and the Mexico-US border.



Krystal Morin (she/her) is a New England-based conductor, singer, and educator who is passionate about leading singing experiences rooted in empowerment, co-creation, and storytelling. Morin's background includes diverse music-making experiences, including ten years as a public high school choir and music teacher, designing and implementing curriculums in varied settings, providing artistic development and ensemble leadership, multi-modal artistic work in incarceration settings, field leadership, and experience performing in a broad range of community and professional ensembles. Currently, she is a conductor for Boston Children's Chorus, sings with VOICES 21C, and is a teacher for Boston University's Prison Arts Initiative.



Brad Dumont is a passionate arts advocate working to create and support artistic projects that contribute to cultural improvement and community-based arts education. As a conductor, he believes in the power of choral singing to build empathetic communi-

ties, providing space for those who may otherwise not be heard. Dumont is committed to a process-oriented approach of music making, which allows for artists to explore broad themes within the topics of equity and justice. He serves as director of choral activities at Assumption University, artistic director of the Salisbury Singers in Worcester, and as artistic projects manager for Emmanuel Music in Boston.



VOICES 21C is an artists' collective that is devoted to exercising the choral art in pursuit of human rights and justice, dedicated to a mission of global understanding through music. We explore improvisational and interdisciplinary modes of music making and collaboration, through co-creating and utilizing an egalitarian consensus model. V21C has been performing since 2016 through collaborations in Palestine, Israel, Sri Lanka, France, Mexico, and across the United States.

Singing Social Change: An Investigation of Two U.S. Children's Choruses

Scholars have frequently linked social change to choral music education, arguing that the arts can play a substantial role in transforming communities. Children's choruses may offer an avenue for choral music educators to explore social change in practice. In this presentation, we draw from a case study of two children's choruses in order to highlight findings relevant to how choral music educators might learn with and from these organizations as models for commitment

to social change. We make connections between the actions taken by these choruses and how such actions might apply in K-12 and community choral settings.



Cara Bernard is associate professor of music education at the University of Connecticut. Currently, she is president of CT-ACDA. Bernard has conducted, performed, and prepared choruses for performances at some of the most prestigious venues throughout the Northeast. Bernard was the director and conductor of the Count Me In program at Carnegie Hall, where she created a choral curriculum for beginning-level middle school music students. Additionally, she worked with the Young People's Chorus of New York City in their School Choral Program, bringing a choral experience to over 1,000 children throughout the city.



Kelly Bylica serves as assistant professor of music education at Boston University, where she teaches in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. Originally from Chicago, Bylica taught middle school choral music and has served on the teaching faculty and board of directors of several community-based choral programs in both Canada and the United States. She has presented and published her work on critical pedagogy, curriculum and policy, project-based learning, and music teacher education both nationally and internationally. She holds a PhD in music education from The University of Western Ontario.

Teaching, Singing, and "Being" in the Aural-Oral Tradition

Participants will explore, experience, and "be" in the aural-oral tradition as a framework for learning vocal music informed by the presenter's research immersed with three experts of Black Gospel music in Philadelphia and her work over many years learning in this tradition from her own students, colleagues,



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and community members. We will explore how the participatory, liberatory, and inclusive nature of the aural-oral framework for teaching and learning can be experienced, understood, valued, and centered in music classrooms. We will also explore important issues of ownership and the intersection of race and teaching in this great art form.



Whitney Covalle is a singer, researcher, and choral music educator. Her research focuses on music education in the city, the aural-oral tradition, and the intersection of race and teaching music. Her

dissertation research on Philadelphia experts teaching Black Gospel music was recently published in *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* (2022). She is a postdoctoral teaching and learning fellow in music education at Montclair State University. She was a choir director in public schools and community music organizations in urban settings for seventeen years, primarily in Chicago at Jones College Prep High School and Chicago Children's Choir.

Teaching the Voice through Empathy: Laban Movement Analysis

This session provides a framework for teaching choral pedagogies to culturally, ethnically, and artistically diverse singers through interaction with a live choir. Participants will employ Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) to explore gesture, meaning, and communication through a study of conducting techniques. Participants will focus on specific skills that produce artistic empathy, convey musical imagination, and evoke sound and its related vocal technique intentionally. Session outcomes include assessing/classifying/executing movement through LMA; analyzing the physical sensations of singing and breathing to an awareness of physical gestures; and applying performance practice congruent with all genres, cultures, and learning styles.



Timothy Little Trần is the director of choral studies at Slippery Rock University. Prior to SRU he was executive director and professor of choral music at Notre Dame College. Little Trần has also

worked in the arts at Oberlin Conservatory, Louisiana State University, Interlochen Arts Academy, and School of Creative and Performing Arts-Manhattan. He holds a DMA in choral conducting from the University of Washington, an MM in choral conducting and literature from Louisiana State University, and a BM with vocal and music education studies from the Shenandoah Conservatory.

The Unbounded Voice: An Exploration into Finnish Vocal Folk Traditions

This session will focus on elements of Finnish choral tradition from “kelkyttely” to “kyylaus,” cattle-calls, and healthy chest voice. Participants will explore holistic, instrument-like sound creation, Finnish vowels, and extended vocal ranges. Participants will also experiment with the limit(lessness) of vocal dynamics and percussive consonants, and vocal improvisation. Participants will walk away with flexible repertoire options, resources and connections with Finnish choral composers and choral professionals, Finnish diction guide, experiences of exploring their own vocal potential, and tools to further explore the emotional palette of their choirs.



Riikka Pietiläinen Caffrey is an associate professor of the practice and director of choral and vocal performance at Boston College. She is a native Finn and holds degrees in choral conducting from Uni-

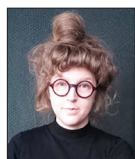
versity of Colorado, Boulder, and jazz performance from the City College of New York. Her research is focused on holistic choral pedagogy, challenging patriarchal narratives in music, and cross-disciplinary collaborations. She is an active conductor, soloist, and vocal coach, and frequently works as a clinician and

singer with choral ensembles in Europe and within the United States. Her compositions have been published by Alliance Music Publications and Kandinsky Music.



Tellu Turkka is a Finnish composer, musician, performer, and choir director in the contemporary folk/neofolk music genre. Turkka is known as a composer of moving choral works, many of which

are based on old archetypal fairy tales and stories. The award-winning Finnish choir Philomela has performed Turkka's "Suden aika" (choreography by Päivi Järvinen) continuously since 1999. In the performances, "tone - movement - rhythm - space - story overlap and a miracle happens: the whole body resonates, the mind quiets down and is moved to the core of the heart." Turkka's published compositions can be found under Sulasol.



Petra Poutanen is a Finnish freelance musician, multi-instrumentalist, and a choral conductor. She holds a master's degree in folk music from Sibelius Academy. Her compositional career ex-

pands from working for the Finnish National Theater to bands and choral music. Her three choirs' musical styles lean on contemporary folk singing and improvisation. Poutanen is known for her virtuosic voice using techniques from Scandinavian and Finno-Ugrian folk singing and throat singing, exploring instrumentation from traditional folk instruments to live electronics. Her debut solo album was nominated for the Etno-Emma and Teosto award, one of the biggest art awards in Scandinavia.

The Values Audit: Aligning Your Program's Priorities and Actions

Choral directors manage many competing priorities: musical excellence, students' mental health, and honoring diverse musical traditions, to name a few. But our good intentions can pile up without translat-

ing into action, especially when resources are stretched thin. In this workshop, participants will reflect on the habits and actions embedded in their choral program in order to more intentionally shape their choral culture and program trajectory. Participants will articulate their highest values for the program they lead, reflect on the habits of their current practice, and identify specific action steps to bridge the gap.



Margaret Winchell is currently pursuing a DMA in choral conducting at Yale University, where she serves as the assistant conductor for the Schola Cantorum and sings in several choral ensembles.

She holds an MM from Western Michigan University and a BME from Wheaton College (IL). Before her graduate studies, Winchell taught high school for several years in the Chicagoland area, where she often returns in the summers as a teaching artist at the Goodman Theatre.

Voices in Transition: Gender Inclusive Choral Voicings

The session will provide choral voicing options to meet the needs of both the changing transgender voice and those of cis-gender singers. As choir directors are faced with more students who identify as transgender, the need to be able to choose literature that meets those needs is imperative. In addition to existing voicings, options for adapting scores with a new "flex" part using guidelines created by Stevie J. Hirner will be included.

Roger Emerson will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 27.



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Why Words Matter

This session explores the dynamics of the choral experience, particularly focusing on the power of words to impart meaning and to be a bridge between the individual singer, the ensemble, and the audience. The ways of analyzing, rehearsing, teaching, and performing text will be the session's main pedagogical focus. There will be communal singing, a discussion of relevant repertoire and new approaches to programming, based on musical elements and dramatic values. We will introduce specific works as models to study music whose texts will inspire singers to get involved in confronting the challenges of the world. Scores and texts will be provided.



Judith Clurman is the music director of Essential Voices USA and The Symphony Singers and teaches voice and ensemble voice at The Manhattan School of Music. She was director of choral activities at The Juilliard School (1989-2007) and was the vocal specialist at the NEA/Columbia University Institute of Classical Music. She previously directed The New York Concert Singers and has worked with many of the world's finest symphonies at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. She has received two Emmy nominations and conducted her chorus on a Grammy-nominated CD. Clurman edits two choral series for Hal Leonard.



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R&R Sessions

Children and Community Youth

Leave the Score at the Door

Participants will have the opportunity to learn four pieces of music in styles traditionally taught through oral/aural tradition. While scores and recordings will be available as reference materials, rehearsal and teaching will highlight techniques and context for the music, performance practice, and pedagogical tools specific to learning music in this style. Expect multiple languages and a few new dance moves to add to your repertoire.

Kendra Balmer and Diana Sáez, presenters

College and University

Music from the Ring of Fire

This session will highlight SATB choral music from countries situated on the Pacific Ring of Fire, a path of active volcanoes and earthquake sites along the edges of the Pacific Ocean. This session will take a deep dive into lesser-known music from the western coast of Latin America and Asian and Oceanic islands and explore the backgrounds of these pieces and pedagogical tools necessary for teaching them. This music is accessible, beautiful, and an important addition to our collegiate, community, and advanced high school music programs.

Rachel Carlson, presenter

Contemporary A Cappella

Beyond “Doo Wop” Accessible A Cappella Arrangements

Explore contemporary a cappella pieces that will work for your ensemble whether it is a small group of 4-5 singers or a choir of 100+. This reading session will take a deep dive into accessible contemporary repertoire for SAB, SSA, TB, and SATB ensembles. Contemporary a cappella is a great tool to “bring in” students who may not otherwise be interested in our programs, and this session will provide responsive strategies to explore multiple contemporary genres (pop, r&b, hiphop, soul, rock & roll, etc.) to appeal to our students of all backgrounds.

Rebecca Saltzman, presenter

Junior High/Middle School

Building Music Literacy Skills Using Repertoire

While we might not use all of our repertoire to build literacy skills at the middle school level, the best way to create more independent musicians is to strategically pick repertoire that leverages their skill set. In this session, we will look at pieces that can build literacy skills for middle school students and a variety of strategies for applying literacy skills.

Karla McClain, presenter

Senior High School

Students at the Front: Strategies for Student-Led Rehearsals

Teachers often struggle with students who don't seem

invested in the rehearsal process. In this reading session, we will explore new music and different strategies to let students take ownership of the rehearsal process. The music will include a variety of styles, genres, and levels of difficulty to fit the needs of any high school choir. We will also integrate assessment strategies into student-driven rehearsals. Come learn some new music and find ways to bring the students to the front.

William Gunn, presenter

SSAA/Women's

Music for Today's Treble Ensemble

Join us in a reading session of music for treble ensembles that encapsulates a range of topics and themes. The pieces we will explore cover a variety of styles and topics that anyone could find relatable—regardless of identity—by composers from an array of backgrounds. Included in this session are rehearsal tools, context, and further programming ideas for each piece.

Hana Cai, presenter

World Musics and Cultures

En Español, Por Favor

Join us as we examine selections in Spanish from many geographic origins in diverse styles and for varied voicings and difficulty levels. We will include tips on how to engage the language, the rhythms, and the styles with courage and respect.

José “Peppie” Calvar, presenter



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Honor Choir Conductors

Collegiate and Adult Mixed Voice



Alysia Lee is a Kennedy Center Citizen Artist and the founder and artistic director of Sister Cities Girlchoir, the youth-centered choral and songwriting academy in Philadelphia, Camden, and Baltimore in its twelfth season. Her piece *Say Her Name* is performed worldwide. She has recent composition commissions from Baltimore Choral Arts, Portland Lesbian Choir, Artemisia Trio, and ComMission Possible. She frequents as a guest conductor, most recently with the Mendelssohn Chorus and Boston Children's Chorus. She is a board member of Chorus America. Speaking/facilitation engagements include the U.S. Department of Education, The Kennedy Center, Save the Music, Carnegie Hall, and many universities/colleges, school districts, and professional associations.

High School Mixed Voice



Felicia Barber is an associate professor, adjunct, of choral conducting and conductor of the Yale Camerata at Yale University. In addition to teaching graduate-level choral conductors and aspiring undergraduate conductors, she is developing a new initiative designed to prepare Yale students to work with young musicians in both school and church settings. Her research interests include fostering classroom diversity in choral curricula and the linguistic performance practice of African American spirituals. A sought-after guest conductor, she will conduct the Carnegie Hall Festival in 2024. She holds a BM in vocal performance from Oral Roberts University, an MME from Mansfield University, and a PhD in music education and choral conducting from the Florida State University.

Elementary



Sophia Papoulis is a conductor, clinician, singer, and music educator based in New York City. An expert in children's voices, she seeks to empower the youngest of young artists in her work, and is honored to direct the 2024 ACDA Eastern Elementary Honor Choir. Most recently, Papoulis served as the senior associate conductor for the award-winning Young People's Chorus of New York City, where she conducted young people since 2007. Last season, she conducted YPC in *Brundibár*, a children's opera written before the start of World War II by Hans Krása and Adolf Hoffmeister. She has furthered her impact as a widely sought-after guest conductor and choral clinician, bringing her expertise to choristers and choral conductors around the US and the world.

Middle School/Junior High Mixed Voice



Liana Salinas is a music educator and entrepreneur based in Miami, Florida. Salinas is passionate about leading people—especially young people—to find their purposes and use their voices confidently! She believes in the power of music to inspire change, and in the practice of choral singing to unite. Salinas proudly serves as the artistic director for the Miami Children's Chorus, an organization near and dear to her heart. She is entering her twenty-fifth season with the MCC, having been a chorister, conductor, and now artistic director. Salinas is also the CEO and founder of My Music Match, a company that matches students with teachers for private lessons, group classes, masterclasses, and live music events in Miami, New York, and online all over the world.



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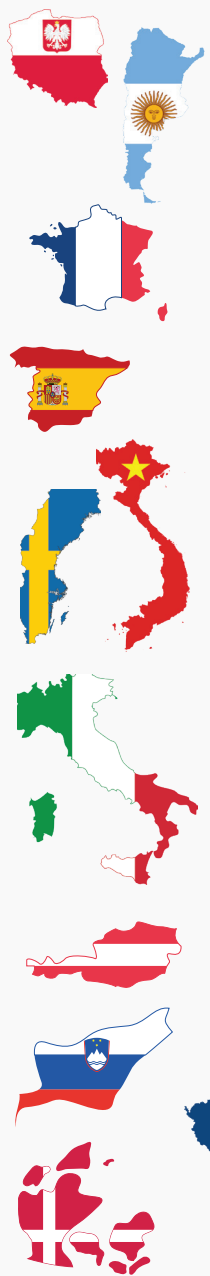
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Headliners

Choral Arts Initiative



Widely recognized as a champion of new music, Choral Arts Initiative has been praised as “gracefully lyrical” (Tim Mangan, Voice of OC), and hailed as one of Orange County’s “Best Choirs” (CBS News, Los Angeles). Winner of the American Prize in Choral Performance, recipient of the ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming, and winner of the San Francisco Classical Voice Audience Choice Awards for Best New Music Performance, Choral Arts Initiative continues its commitment to musical innovation. Their passion for new music has led to the commission of twenty-five compositions, the premiere of over one hundred works, and the release of two Billboard-charting albums.



Brandon Elliott enjoys an expansive career as a conductor-educator, musician, arts leader, and consultant. He is the founder and artistic director of Choral Arts Initiative and the Choral and Vocal Studies Director at Saddleback College. He has received the Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal from Chorus America and was recognized by the Recording Academy as a 2022 Grammy Music Educator Award Semifinalist. He currently serves as the ACDA National R&R Co-Chair for Two-Year Colleg-

es. He earned degrees and certificates from California State University, Fullerton, the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Berklee College of Music, and the University of Southern California.

säje



When a jazz ensemble earns a Grammy Award nomination with its very first song, something unusual is in the works. säje is an unprecedented collaboration that brings together four women creators who are all composer/arrangers, vocalists, and entrepreneurs with impressive individual careers. Featuring Los Angeles-based Sara Gazarek and Erin Bentlage and Seattle-situated Johnaye Kendrick and Amanda Taylor, säje (rhymes with beige) is closer in spirit to collective instrumental ensembles than jazz vocal combos. Encompassing finely wrought originals, reimagined jazz standards, and inventive interpretations of contemporary tunes, the group’s eponymous debut album is a striking achievement.

Conducting Masterclasses



Joseph Huszti, Professor Emeritus, retired from UC Irvine in 2014 after a fifty-four-year teaching career, thirty-seven at UCI. After joining ACDA in 1960 as the 214th member, he continues to be active as a singer and conductor of the Men in Blaque. During his tenure at UC Irvine, twenty-seven international concert tours included prize-winning performances at the International Musical Eistedfod, the Bela Bartok International Choral Competition, the Koorfest and the World Choir Games. Huszti headed the Young Vocalists Program at the Tanglewood Festival from 1972 to 1977. Huszti has held leadership posi-

tions in ACDA in Delaware and Boston and served as Western Region President (1980-82). Huszti was honored by CCDA with the Howard Swan Award in 2020.



Iris S. Levine is nationally recognized for her excellence in choral conducting. She is founder and artistic director of VOX Femina Los Angeles, L.A.'s premier women's chorus. Levine has charted VOX Femina on an impressive journey, building its prominence in the choral community by way of numerous concerts and appearances at ACDA conferences, Chorus America conferences, and more. Under Levine's artistic leadership, VOX Femina Los Angeles has commissioned more than fifty new works for women's voices. Levine is faculty emerita at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, where she served as director of choral activities, dean, interim provost and vice president for academic affairs. She has had former leadership roles as ACDA state, regional, and National R&R Chair for Women's Chorus.



Marcela Molina has been affiliated with the Tucson Girls Chorus since 2006, first serving as artistic director and taking the helm as executive director in 2011. Under Molina's guidance, the Tucson Girls Chorus has grown significantly in programming and community engagement. With her leadership, the TGC has transformed into a vibrant and collaborative organization that creates access to inclusive programming for youth, and provides resources to music educators and support to their classroom year-round. In addition to her work with the TGC, Molina serves as director of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra Chorus. Born in Bogotá, Colombia, Molina holds degrees from Westminster Choir College and the University of Arizona. She was named 2019 Choral Director of the Year by Arizona ACDA.

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Performing Choirs

Biola University Chorale



The Biola University Chorale comprises thirty-seven undergraduate voices from various disciplines on campus. Nationally, the Chorale has enjoyed performances on the *Tonight Show*, at Disney's D23 Convention, in Carnegie Hall, and with the Pacific Symphony Orchestra. Regularly touring domestically and internationally, the Chorale's most recent tours include South Korea, Ireland, and Italy. Each spring they join forces with the Biola Symphony Orchestra for the performance of a major choral-orchestral work. The Chorale performed at ACDA Western Region Conferences in 2016 and 2020, and the NCCO's 7th Biennial National Conference in 2017.



Shawna Stewart is the director of choral studies at Biola University in La Mirada, CA, where she conducts the Biola University Chorale and the Vocal Jazz Ensemble. As associate professor, she teaches courses in conducting and choral methods. Stewart holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music (M.M. Conducting), the University of Southern California (D.M.A. Choral Music), and has served on the faculty at John Brown University and North Dakota State College of Science. She has also held the position of music director at several churches in CA and NY. She is the owner of and teacher at Children's Music Academy in Whittier, CA.

Cal Poly University - San Luis Obispo Cantabile



Cal Poly Cantabile was founded in 2018 under the direction of Scott Glysson and is an advanced ensemble specializing in the performance of repertoire for soprano and alto voices. With sixty singers representing nearly every major at Cal Poly, Cantabile is a more than 75 percent non-music major ensemble. Since its creation, Cantabile has commissioned more than four new works by contemporary composers and has a mission of creating, celebrating, and performing music of female composers. Cantabile has been honored with performance invitations to the California MEA Conference in 2021 and Lincoln Center NYC in 2022.



Scott Glysson is the director of choral activities and vocal studies at Cal Poly University in San Luis Obispo, California. Glysson has been recognized for his achievements in conducting in both the choral and orchestral genres. He has led performances on five continents and over ten countries. In 2013, Glysson was a finalist in the ACDA National Choral Conducting Competition. Glysson was previously director of choral activities at West Liberty University in WV and artistic director of the Tucson Masterworks Chorale. Glysson has presented and published in the fields of music education and musicology. He holds a DMA and MM in choral conducting from the University of Arizona and a BME from George Mason University.

Performing Choirs

California State University-Fullerton University Singers



California State University-Fullerton's University Singers perform all over the world and regularly collaborate with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, and the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra. They performed at the 2013 ACDA National Conference, 2013 NCCO Conference, and 2012 and 2018 ACDA Western Region Conferences. They are heard on Sony Records' "John Williams and Steven Spielberg: The Ultimate Collection" and Yarlung Records' "Nostos: The Homecoming of Music." In July 2024, the University Singers will tour Rwanda and South Africa.



Robert Istad is a Grammy Award-winning conductor and director of choral studies at CSU Fullerton, where he was recognized as CSUF's 2016 Outstanding Professor. He is also artistic director of

Pacific Chorale. His artistic impact can be heard on two recent recordings featuring Pacific Chorale: "Mahler's Eighth Symphony" with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Gustavo Dudamel (Deutsche Grammophon, 2021), which was awarded the Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance; and "Ecstasies Above: The Music of Tarik O'Regan" (Yarlung Records, 2020). He serves on the Executive Board of Chorus America and as dean of Chorus America's Conducting Academy.

California State University - Long Beach Jazz & Tonic



Jazz & Tonic is one of two premier vocal jazz ensembles at the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach. The group features a diverse educational background, having members who are jazz studies majors, music education majors, composition majors, and other non-music majors. Following in the footsteps of CSULB's flagship vocal jazz ensemble, Pacific Standard Time, Jazz & Tonic has begun to earn acclaim. Most recently, they were recognized as the winner of the *Downbeat Magazine* Student Music Awards undergraduate vocal jazz ensemble division.



Jonny Arenas is an educator, vocalist, and arranger based in Los Angeles and is currently part of the jazz faculty at the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach.

There, he majored in jazz studies, was mentored by renowned vocalist and educator Christine Guter, and graduated with both his bachelor's and master's degrees. As a member of the jazz faculty at CSULB, he directs Jazz & Tonic. Since being hired in 2021, he has helped the group earn two *Downbeat Magazine* Student Music Awards, one of which as the sole winner of the undergraduate college division.

Chandler Children's Choir Ad Astra



In its fifteenth season, the Chandler Children's Choir created an ensemble of top performers ages 16-18 who demonstrated a desire to excel, naming it Ad Astra (to the stars). Many founding members had been singing with CCC since ages 6 or 7. Now high school juniors and seniors, Ad Astra enables singers to launch into future musical opportunities after graduation, either as a hobby or academic pursuit. In 2023 they released an album, *To the Stars: An Ad Astra Christmas*, and were invited as featured performers at the Arizona MEA conference.



Aimee Stewart is the founder and artistic director of the Chandler Children's Choir in Arizona. Since its inception in 2008, CCC has grown from a young choir of twenty-seven singers to a comprehensive choral program with five choirs. She also conducts the Chamber Singers at Chandler-Gilbert Community College, the Tempe Community Messiah, has served as president of AzACDA, and currently serves as Community & Children Youth R&R Chair for WACDA. In 2022 she was awarded AzACDA Choral Director of the Year. Stewart is in a master's program for choral conducting with Jace Saplan at Arizona State University. She enjoys skiing with her husband, Adam, and their four children.

Crystal Children's Choir



Established in 1994 within Northern California, Crystal Children's Choir was founded with the mission to pursue choral music excellence and to serve as a cultural ambassador harmonizing the finest facets of Eastern and Western cultures. Crystal singers from more than 120 schools have graced the stages of numerous globally renowned venues. They have performed at conferences including Kodaly, CMEA, MENC, and ACDA. Over the past three decades, they have established an education platform that serves as a nurturing ground for choral arts and addressed the pressing need for arts funding in California to provide a distinctive musical experience for young singers.



Karl Chang has held the positions of co-founder, president, and conductor of Crystal Children's Choir since 1994. He has led performances and interest sessions at ACDA conferences and is a frequently sought-after guest conductor for youth and collegiate choirs throughout Asia. Chang is the visionary behind a 200 mixed-voice community chorus started at Stanford University in 1981. Over these forty-three years, he has served as the founding director, consistently igniting musical passion within singers from diverse backgrounds. He holds a doctoral degree in education leadership, an MBA, and an M.S. in engineering.

Mater Dei High School Chamber Singers



Based in Santa Ana, California, the Mater Dei High School Choral and Vocal Program serves a diverse Southern California community. With eleven ensembles and nearly 300 singers participating in athletics, ASB, the arts, campus ministry, and more, the program consistently earns superior ratings at competitions and festivals nationwide. They recently performed solo concerts at Carnegie Hall and renowned venues in Italy. Graduates of the program thrive in artistic careers ranging from the Metropolitan Opera to Broadway.



Jodi Reed, a conductor and pianist, began her musical journey with competitive piano studies at a young age. Introduced to choral music in high school, she has led university, school, church, and community choirs. She was the first female conductor to win multiple first-place awards in Golden State choral competitions. She has conducted her choirs on NPR's *From The Top*, at Carnegie Hall, and St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, as well as iconic international venues like La Sagrada Familia and St. Peter's Basilica. She is the director of choral and vocal music at Mater Dei High School and a musical director with Millennial® Choirs & Orchestras.

Ragazzi Boys Chorus, Silicon Valley



Grammy Award-winning Ragazzi Boys Chorus, Silicon Valley, provides outstanding musical education and performance opportunities for boys and young men ages five to eighteen. The largest boys' chorus in the San Francisco Bay Area, Ragazzi serves over 200 choristers in six tiered levels from diverse backgrounds, developing tenacious and confident young musicians who pursue choral arts of the highest caliber together. Ragazzi is a prominent collaborator, providing vocalists for notable organizations, including San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Symphony, Opera San Jose, and Symphony Silicon Valley.



Kent Jue leads the Grammy Award-winning Ragazzi Boys Chorus, Silicon Valley, as the artistic and executive director. Known for building high-level musicianship skills through his engaging style and rapport with youth, Jue is in demand as a guest conductor, adjudicator, educator, and mentor. He has conducted Ragazzi with the San Francisco Symphony and prepared vocalists for Opera San Jose, Symphony Silicon Valley, and West Bay Opera. He previously conducted youth choruses at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and performed with the Golden Gate Men's Chorus. He serves as the California Choral Directors Association Children's and Community Youth R&R Chair.

Resounding Achord



Resounding Achord is the founding choir of Resounding Achord Productions (RAP), a nonprofit organization based in San José, California. From their beginnings in 2012, the choir has been faithful to creating a positive, family-friendly member experience, while maintaining a high performance standard. The choir's members are teachers, students, engineers, administrative professionals, scientists, lawyers, caretakers, and retirees. Repertoire is selected from all musical periods and a multitude of world cultures. The organization has awarded over \$60,000 in need-based scholarships to more than 400 students to attend state and regional honor choirs.



Kristina Nakagawa is the founding artistic director of Resounding Achord Productions and has been performing in Silicon Valley since 2001. She is also the executive artistic director of Vivace

Youth Chorus of San José and previously directed choirs at San José State University, UC Irvine, Pinewood School, and St. Francis Episcopal Church. Nakagawa has a degree in vocal performance from UC Irvine, and a master's degree in choral conducting from San José State University. Nakagawa is currently president-elect for the California Choral Directors Association. She and her husband, Ryan, are the proud stage parents of their son, Russell.

Riverside City College Chamber Singers



The Riverside City College Chamber Singers have performed at the ACDA Western Region Conference (2010, 2014, and 2020); at the ACDA National Conference (2011, 2017, and 2021); at the NCCO National Conference (2011 and 2015); and at the CASMEC Conference (2016). The Chamber Singers have competed nationally and internationally, taking first place at the California International Choral Competition (2011), the Eisteddfod Choral Competition in Wales (2009), the Yeosu International Choral Competition in Korea (2013), and at the Choral Competition in Spittal, Austria (2015).



John Byun received his BM in vocal performance from University of California, Irvine, and his master's in choral conducting from California State University, Long Beach. He is the director of choral and vocal activities at Riverside City College, where he directs the Chamber Singers and the Vocal Jazz Ensemble. He has been the guest conductor for several district honor choirs, SCVA Men's Honor Choir, Central California Women's Honor Choir, Texas Honor Choir Region 9, Clark County, NV Honor Choir, and at the NWACDA Region Conference. He has also conducted all-state honor choirs in North Carolina, Tennessee, New Mexico, and Arizona. Byun maintains the John Byun Choral Series with Pavane Publishing.

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San Juan Hills High School Chamber Singers



The San Juan Hills High School Chamber Singers is the most advanced audition-only choral ensemble in the choral/vocal arts department at SJHHS. The Chamber Singers have built a reputation of singing challenging works from a variety of historical periods of music and cultures from around the world. In February 2023, the Chamber Singers performed at the California All-State Music Educators Conference in Fresno, California. The choir has performed many functions around the Capistrano Unified School District and is proud to be a part of the SJHHS Stallion Family.



Michael Ushino serves as the director of the choral/vocal arts department and the Vocal Music Conservatory at San Juan Hills High School. He received his MM from the Bob Cole Conservatory at California State University, Long Beach, and also studied at University of California, Irvine. He currently serves as the president-elect of the Southern California Vocal Association and previously served as the High School Honor Choir Vice President. Ushino also serves as the co-artistic director of the Men in Blaque, based in Irvine, California.

Saugus High School Blue Notes



Blue Notes is Saugus High School's top vocal jazz choir. Under the direction of Kaitlin Holt for the past five years, this award-winning ensemble has sung in various jazz festivals and competitions throughout Southern California, including the Fullerton College Jazz Festival (First Place in HS Vocal Jazz/Intermediate, 2022; Third Place in HS Vocal Jazz/Advanced, 2023). Blue Notes singers consistently place in both regional and all-state Vocal Jazz High School Honor Choirs. Saugus High School Blue Notes comprises inspiringly resilient students who are honored to be performing at their first ACDA conference.



Kaitlin Holt is head of the choral program at Saugus High School in Saugus, California, where she directs five award-winning vocal ensembles and teaches the Music Industry Career Technology Pathway courses. She actively performs with various groups in the Los Angeles area, including her all-female acapella quartet "Angeles." Holt holds a BME in choral studies from CSU Long Beach, an associate's degree in jazz studies from Cuesta College, and recently completed the coursework for her master's from CSU Los Angeles. She currently serves as the Southern California Vocal Association Vocal Jazz Festival chair.

The Sterling Ensemble Los Angeles



Sterling Ensemble Los Angeles is a semi-professional choir founded in 2018 by Artistic Director Michelle Jensen. This community of singers specializes in performing historic literature from diverse voices and workshopping new music with local artists. Collaborations include Grammy-winning artists Hila Plitmann, Sangeeta Kaur, Danaë Vlasse, and Ben Bram. While most members studied music in college, teachers, military members, business leaders, and entrepreneurs join with professional musicians two hours a week to make excellent choral music. The ensemble performed at the 2023 ACDA National Conference. Sterling Ensemble is currently in residence at St. Andrew Catholic Church in Pasadena.



Michelle Jensen is a Los Angeles-based choral conductor, clinician, and teacher. In addition to directing Sterling Ensemble, she serves as the director of choral activities at Azusa Pacific University, where she is also the director of graduate choral studies and the conductor of the university's Chamber Singers. Jensen has led choirs to place first in such prestigious international music competitions as Chorwettbewerb Spittal an der Drau and the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod. In 2019 she was invited to conduct the Connecticut All-State Mixed Choir.

The Sunday Night Singers



The Sunday Night Singers (SNS), founded by Palmdale High alumni and artistic director Mike McCullough in 2005, is a thirty-two-voice community ensemble in the Antelope Valley, CA. From inception, SNS celebrates and uplifts diverse communities, mirroring an authentic and organic representation of the diversity found in LA County. SNS has won the Mixed Chamber Choir category at World Choir Games and has made appearances at WACDA, CCDA, Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, and Montana International Choral Festival. Collaborations with composers nationwide have yielded three albums, including *Didn't It Rain* by Stacey V. Gibbs.



Michael McCullough assumed the role of director of choral music at Palmdale High School in 1995. He holds a BM in voice and an MM in choral conducting from California State University, Northridge. He continued his professional certification at Chapman University. With a rich thirty-two-year history as part of the Antelope Valley College faculty, McCullough has conducted the AV Master Chorale and College Singers. He has also taught individual voice, music history, and music theory. McCullough is the artistic director of The Sunday Night Singers, which was founded to allow former students to continue their pursuit of choral excellence. Notable recordings encompass works by Joshua Shank and Stacey V. Gibbs.

Performing Choirs

Tesoro High School Vocal Ensemble



The Tesoro HS Vocal Ensemble performed at ACDA Western Region Conferences in 2012 and 2016. They have performed and/or recorded with or opened for A-list performers, including Jason Mraz, Sara Bareilles, Colbie Caillat, Johnny Mathis, Five for Fighting, Quentin Tarantino, Mark Lindsay, Take 6, Eric Whitacre, and Morten Lauridsen. They are multiple winners of the Golden State Choral Competition, and they have performed in Carnegie Hall, the Grand Ole Opry, and Staples Center. Vocal Ensemble has performed several major choral/orchestral works with the Tesoro orchestra.



Keith Hancock is in his twenty-second year teaching at Tesoro HS. He was recently named the Grammy Music Educator Award winner, a top fifty finalist for the Global Teacher Prize, one of the ten CMA National Teachers of Excellence, and one of the 100 Most Influential People of Orange County. Hancock has frequently collaborated with Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter Jason Mraz, arranging, conducting, and recording for his album, *Know*, and performing with him on his tour. Hancock is also a contributor to *Careers Through Music*, a book/video presented by Alfred Music and the Grammy Museum Foundation.

Thurman White Academy Advanced Choir



The Thurman White Academy Advanced Choir has been under the direction of Athena Mertes since 2015. Thurman White Academy is a Performing Arts Magnet Middle School program that accepts students through a random lottery system. This 7th/8th-grade ensemble consistently receives superior ratings at choral festivals and competitions and regularly performs as a guest choir with the Southern Nevada Musical Arts Society. Their virtual choir performance of “Don’t Give Up On Me” was featured at the 2022 Western Region ACDA Conference “Stories of the Pandemic.” In 2019 they received numerous awards at the Worldstrides Choral Festival in San Diego, California.



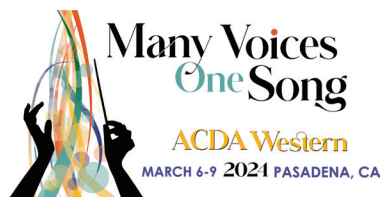
Athena Mertes is the director at the Thurman White Academy of the Performing Arts, where she has approximately 400 students. In 2020 she received the Teacher of the Year Award from Magnet Schools of America. Mertes is the chorus master of the Opera Las Vegas Youth Chorus and is a regular performer of concert and operatic repertoire. She has performed as a guest soloist with the Burbank Philharmonic, Las Vegas Philharmonic, Henderson Symphony, and Opera Las Vegas, among others. This season, she will perform as Marie in *The Daughter of the Regiment* with Vegas City Opera, and the world premiere of a new opera, *Behold the Man*, with Opera Las Vegas.

University of Arizona Symphonic Choir



Symphonic Choir is the premier choral ensemble at the University of Arizona, carrying on a seventy-two-year tradition of joyful excellence. Members hail from throughout the world and represent a variety of majors. The choir regularly engages in musical collaborations in Southern Arizona, including with Tucson Symphony Orchestra, Mariachi Arizona, Reveille Men's Chorus (a GALA chorus), Tucson Girls Chorus, and Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus. The ensemble also partners with service organizations in the Greater Tucson area to bring awareness and support to vulnerable populations including refugees, asylum seekers, and unhoused people.

Elizabeth Schauer is the conductor of this choir. Her photo and bio are on page 23.



2024 ACDA Western Region Conference

Interest Sessions

Building a Repertoire of Gestures: Laban Movement for Choral Conductors

Receive a crash course in the fundamentals of Laban Movement Theory, a holistic and efficient gestural approach to choral conducting. Learn a variety of gestures, movements, and rehearsal strategies that are sure to enhance your ensemble's engagement, improve memory retention, develop a stronger conductor/ensemble connection, and provide musicians a deeper understanding of the music that will lead to a more impactful and inclusive performance experience.



Jenny Bent is professor of music, director of choral activities, and associate dean of the school of arts & humanities at Sonoma State University in Rohnert Park, CA. She is also choral director of the Santa Rosa Symphony and manages Chanticleer's

summer program, Chanticleer in Sonoma. Bent earned degrees from Boston University (BM and MM Voice Performance, MM Choral Conducting) and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (DMA Choral Conducting and Choral Literature). Recipient of the 2023 CMEA Pearson/Scott Foresman/Silver Burdett Choral Educator Award and the 2019 CMEA Bay Section Outstanding Choral Educator Award, Bent serves as treasurer for the California Choral Directors Association.

Choirs for Change: Programming with Purpose

Choirs can be connectional and welcoming spaces for diverse groups of people who come together through their love of singing. The same sense of belonging and compassion that often exists in choral groups can be extended outward into both local and global communities

Interest Sessions

to create bridges of understanding and positive change. In this session Elizabeth Schauer will discuss creative, moving and impactful programming approaches that can increase awareness, engagement, and even philanthropy in choirs and their audiences. Recent effective concert programs related to homelessness, Syrian and Afghani war refugees, and domestic violence will serve as models for consideration and discussion.

Elizabeth Schauer will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 23.

Creating an Adaptive Choir Program

This session will describe the administrative and pedagogical tools required to start and run an adaptive needs choir at your school or in your community. Participants will learn the profound benefits of universally designed rehearsals for all students, and the particular importance of providing meaningful artistic experiences for students with disabilities. Participants will leave this session equipped with concrete rehearsal strategies and activities to support an adaptive needs program.



Brandi Dignum is the director of education for the Tucson Girls Chorus, where she conducts the Ladybugs and Hummingbirds choirs, along with TGC early childhood and adaptive music classes. She is the artistic director for the TGC Shine Camp and serves on the Teacher Advisory Board for Tucson Girls Chorus. Dignum holds a BME from the University of Arizona and is certified in Orff-Schulwerk levels I-III. She believes that all students deserve an inclusive music experience. She has over twenty-five years of experience teaching preschool music, elementary general music, middle school choir and musical theater, and high school choir. Dignum was recognized as “Teacher of the Year” for the Flowing Wells School District.

Flexible Fach: Gender-Affirming Vocal Pedagogy through Science-Informed Practices

In this interactive session, attendees will be invited to sing and discuss vocal exercises from a new protocol developed by the presenter that focuses on helping transgender and gender-expansive (TGE) singers produce an aural aesthetic that better aligns with their gender identity. Created through an understanding of the gendered associations and vocal characteristics of common fach categories and voice classifications, this protocol synthesizes practices from gender-affirming speech-language pathology (SLP) with source-filter theory and science-informed vocal pedagogy to present a healthy, gender-affirming practice routine for TGE singers who are seeking to masculinize or feminize their voices.

Stevie J. Hirner will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 23.

Many Voices, Many Centers: 6 Steps for Multicentric Choral Programming

When we label our concert programs as “multicultural,” we begin with good intentions; however, celebrating diversity sometimes tokenizes the historically excluded cultures we are attempting to recognize and honor. Using multicentrism, which argues for “the marginalized moving from the margins to the center, and not simply being grafted into the existing order,” this session will outline a culturally conscious six-step process for choral programming: acknowledge privilege, decide what you value, choosing repertoire, do your due diligence, identify who holds the power, and contextualize. Attendees will receive multicentric programming suggestions and ways to respectfully study less-familiar repertoire with your ensembles.



Jennifer Hansen Heder, DMA, is the director of choral activities at Fresno City College. She received her DMA in choral conducting from Michigan State University. Her doctoral research highlights the ways in which choral educators can decenter Eurocentric music in their classrooms. She co-presented the session, “Empowered Leaders Empower Others,” at the 2022 Western Region ACDA Conference. Hansen Heder was previously the director of choirs at Spanish Fork High School in Utah. Her choirs at Spanish Fork were invited to perform at the 2018 ACDA Salt Lake City Conference and the 2019 Utah MEA State Conference. She also holds MM and BM degrees from Brigham Young University in Utah.

Middle School Choral Students: How Do You Motivate Them?

When middle school students are motivated, they are unstoppable. How do you channel their energy so that you can guide them on a musical journey? Explore tips and ideas of various master choral music educators who teach young adolescents. Be ready to sing and move!

Lynn Brinckmeyer will be the clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 122.

Mosaics from the Middle East

There is a wealth of beautiful and significant choral music from the Middle East in both the Arabic and Jewish traditions, yet many choral directors find it intimidating to approach this music. This interactive session will present treble music from both traditions, providing helpful guides in how to successfully approach this music, pronunciation, and stylistic considerations. We will present contemporary settings of traditional musical material, appropriate for various levels of treble ensembles. We will provide opportunities for ex-

perience in singing representative selections, as well as hearing selected pieces performed by VOX Femina Los Angeles.

Iris S. Levine will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 170.



Cari Earnhart serves as the director of choral activities at California State University, Fresno, where she conducts the top choral ensembles and teaches undergraduate and graduate conducting.

In demand as a conductor, clinician, and adjudicator, Earnhart has worked with choirs throughout the US and abroad. She served as DCA at the American University of Sharjah in the UAE and as artistic director of Nassim al Saba, an Arabic choral music ensemble. She has been a guest conductor with the Budapesti Vándor Kórus and the Istanbul International Chamber Choir. She served as Maestro of Ensemble Vocale Tempus Floridum and as Maestro Collaboratore of Coro dell'Accademia del Diletto and Coro Polofonico del Caricentro in Florence.

Practice Your Pitch: Advocacy is Everybody's Business

The culture that music creates is magnetic, but how is it perceived outside the rehearsal space? How can we build bridges between our ensembles and the diverse values and expertise found in the larger community? While it's easy to talk about the importance of music among colleagues, translating that conversation to those outside our sphere can be challenging. This session will help you step confidently into public spaces equipped with a new vocabulary to communicate your program's value to attract new supporters. By reframing your “elevator pitch,” you'll be able to build a network that empowers you to thrive.

Alex Gartner will be the clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 74.

Interest Sessions

Real Talk:

Getting Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable about Race in Choral Music

Considering the current socio-political climate, the rise in violence against AAPI communities, and a re-ignited Black Lives Matter movement, we as choral conductor-teachers are faced with some uncomfortable truths about choral music. We as artist-citizens can, and must, leverage coalitions to dismantle systems of oppression. Utilizing Intercultural Dialogue and Whiteness as Property as frameworks, the presenters will equip attendees with tools and language needed to become comfortable engaging in uncomfortable conversations surrounding race and contemporary choral culture. This uncomfortability may be seen as growing pains for a choral community grappling with difficult and long-overdue conversations about equity, “inclusion,” and access.

Arreon A. Harley-Emerson will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 152.



Joshua Palkki (he/him) is assistant professor of music learning and teaching/choral conducting and associate director of choral activities at Arizona State University and co-author of *Honoring Trans and Gender-Expansive Students in Music Education* (Oxford University Press, 2021). He holds degrees from Michigan State University (PhD), Northern Arizona University (MM), and Ball State University (BS). Palkki has presented at national and international events including the National ACDA Conference, NAFME National Conference, and the Society for Music Teacher Education Symposium and is a sought-after guest conductor and scholar on equity and justice topics. His writing appears in several scholarly choral and music education publications.

Show Me the Rhythm!

This interactive session offers a kinesthetic system for building and assessing rhythmic literacy for all ages. Like hand signs, rhythm gestures are a physical manifestation of pulse, pulse division, and meter. The instructor can visually assess individual comprehension within a group setting. Students are able to self-correct within the context of group practice. Rhythm gestures reinforce precision and make music literacy accessible to all. They work with any counting system, combined with solfege, or in multi-part score reading. Rhythm gestures offer an alternative (kinesthetic) mode of learning while calling upon and strengthening our sense of underlying pulse and rhythmic flow.



Pamela McDermott is director of choral activities at Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia, where she directs ensembles and teaches conducting, choral methods, show choir techniques, and aural skills. She is also a founding member and associate artistic director of The Piedmont Singers of Central Virginia, a professional vocal octet. McDermott earned her DMA in choral conducting at UNC-Greensboro. Her dissertation offers an analysis of Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem* through the lens of semiotics in an examination of the work's relationship to the requiem genre. She earned a master's in theory/composition at James Madison University and a BME at East Carolina University. She is past president of Virginia ACDA.

(she/her/ella) Unlocking the Music of Latina Choral Composers

Dive into the music and backgrounds of female-identified composers from across Latin America through singing, moving, and unlocking the rhythms of works that rarely, if ever, have been performed in the States. Composers such as Modesta Bor of Venezuela, Eliza

Schmelkes of Mexico, Diana Sáez of Puerto Rico, and María Olga Piñeros of Colombia are composers whose works our singers need to sing. Conductors will leave with deeper appreciation for and confidence to teach this important repertoire from an informed and joyful place. Resources and scores are appropriate for all levels/voicings.



Corie Brown (she/her) serves as assistant professor of choral music education at San José State University. She leads two choirs, teaches music education courses, and is fueled by the integration of justice

and music education. Prior to studies in choral conducting at the University of Colorado Boulder and University of Oregon, Brown taught in Colombia with the Fundación Nacional Batuta and in the midwest United States. She was a guest conductor at the 2023 Festival Coral de Santander in Colombia. She also arranges and serves as artistic director of the Mission Peak Chamber Singers, a joyful community chorus in Fremont, California.



Juan Manuel Hernández-Morales (he/him) is the director of the Youth Choir of La Cuerda Foundation, the Universidad Industrial de Santander University Choir, and teaches choral and instrumen-

tal studies at the Universidad Industrial de Santander of Colombia. His works for children's choirs, youth choirs, and mixed choirs have been performed internationally. He is an active clinician and has held workshops throughout Colombia, Ecuador, Argentina, and the United States. Since 2007, Hernández-Morales has been the coordinator and organizer of the Santander Choral Festival and the Santander Children's and Youth Choir Encounter.

Understanding and Engaging with "Toxic" Masculinity and Male-Presenting Expression in the Post COVID-19 Choral Classroom

From the fallout of COVID-19, a key behavior that school counselors have reported on as a result of the temporary elimination of in-person activities amongst adolescent cis-men is toxic masculinity. Defined as, "manliness' [that] perpetuates domination and aggression," toxic masculinity has been reported as an invasive phenomena within the choral craft's communal ecosystem. In this session, we address what toxic masculinity looks like in our craft and how we can be change agents in facilitating culturally responsive models for cis-men, built on the embodiment of social consciousness, empathy, and community-oriented ideals. We offer strategies relating to repertoire, rehearsals, and performance.



Corbin Cowan is a student at Arizona State University completing a bachelor's of music in music learning and teaching with a minor in music theatre performance. He is also a part of ASU's Barrett,

the Honors College. Originally from Colorado, he has been singing his whole life and has a strong background in musical theatre and choral ensemble.

Joshua Palkki will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on the previous page.

Jace Kaholokula Saplan will be a clinician for this session. Their photo and bio are on page 32.

Understanding the Unique Voice of the Gospel Musician: Sound, Harmony, and Culture

It can be quite a challenge understanding the perspective of a student who walks into your choral classroom armed with only experience in contemporary gos-

Interest Sessions

pel and little-to-no music reading exposure. Through recorded examples, demonstrations, and the experiences of the clinicians, we will explore the unique voice of the Black gospel musician by seeking to understand the core of the gospel vocal sound, common gospel harmonic devices, and the cultural heartbeat that seeps through this special musical art. Participants will learn about how to better connect with, honor, and educate these students.



Matt Falker is a jazz and gospel pianist, vocalist, arranger, and clinician. Falker distributes his vocal jazz arrangements through his publishing company, Anchor Music Publications (formerly Sound Music Publications founded by Frank DeMiero in 1988), as well as the music of dozens of other vocal jazz arrangers and composers. He is also the executive director of the Vocal Jazz Academy: a nonprofit organization dedicated to training and supporting vocal jazz educators through a series of one-day jazz workshops for teachers and students. As a full-time piano and vocal jazz professor at MiraCosta College, he directs the Downbeat Award-winning Frequency vocal jazz program, and hosts the Oceanside Jazz Festival. Falker directed the Jazz Immersion Choir at the 2023 ACDA National Conference.



Jamond McCoy is an improvisational jazz and gospel influenced vocalist, pianist, composer, arranger, session singer, and accompanist, creating music for various venues and other fellow musicians. He is the baritone for the famous a cappella group m-pact and is also a passionate educator, teaching privately and at various institutions, including California Baptist University, Cerritos College, and Orange County High School of the Arts. He has worked as the assistant director at the Monterey Jazz Summer Camp, the famous A Cappella Academy (Ben Bram and Avi Kaplan form PTX), and loves giving back to the church communities that helped shape him as a musical director.

Unlocking the Power of the Vagus Nerve: The Key to Vocal Freedom

The presentation will explore the mind, body, and voice through neuroscience and pedagogical application. There will be discussion on the function of the vagus nerve, our body's neurological response to fight or flight, and how to recognize students triggered by various neurological reactions. Participants will learn how to align the four systems of the voice using Vocal Toning, a method used to release trauma in the mind, body, and voice. The presentation will take a collaborative approach, including participation from the audience to explore vagal toning exercises that can be used in the classroom to create the optimal learning experience.



Natasha Valdes is a certified trauma-informed voice professional through the Voice Study Center in England with an MM from the Boston Conservatory and a BM from California State University, Long Beach. Valdes became a trauma voice specialist after struggling to find healing solutions for her own issues with psychogenic dysphonia. Valdes is the founder and CEO of Complete Vocal Wellness, a neuro-centric coaching program for voice users to learn functional-based voice training, increase optimal performance, and heal core trauma wounds. Valdes is known for sharing her research on "Rewiring trauma, anxiety, and depression in the Voice" at conferences like CCDA, ACDA, NATS, CASMEC, and BOCO Vocal Symposium.

Yes, You Can Compose and Arrange for Your Own Choir: Why and How Every Educator Should Try Writing for Their Own Ensemble

Composer/conductor Saundar Choi and composer Dale Trumbore lead this interest session for conductors who want to learn how to write and arrange for their

own ensemble. Choi and Trumbore will highlight how you know your choir better than anyone; how writing for your singers can challenge their weaknesses, leading them to become stronger musicians; and how to fill gaps in the repertoire for your singers by creating that music yourself. Conductors will gain hands-on experience arranging an eight-bar melody and will leave this session empowered to continue composing, with resources on what to expect and where to begin.



Dale Trumbore is a Los Angeles-based composer and writer whose compositions have been performed widely in the U.S. and internationally by the Aeolians of Oakwood University, Chicago Symphony's MusicNOW ensemble, Conspirare and the Miró Quartet, soprano Liv Redpath, Los Angeles Children's Chorus, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Modesto Symphony, Pasadena Symphony, Phoenix Chorale, Tonality, and VocalEssence. The recipient of ACDA's inaugural Raymond W. Brock Competition for Professional Composers, an ASCAP Morton Gould Award, and a Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Grant, Trumbore has also served as composer in residence for Choral Chameleon.



Saunder Choi, a Filipino composer and choral artist in Los Angeles, has gained international recognition for his works. As a choral artist, he actively performs in ensembles like Pacific Chorale, L.A. Choral Lab, and HEX Vocal Ensemble, as well as singing in film scores of Disney's *The Lion King*, *Mulan*, *Turning Red*, and *Avatar 2: The Way of the Water*, etc. Choi's compositions strongly advocate for DEI, focusing on themes such as immigration, racial justice, LGBTQ+ advocacy, climate justice, and his own Filipino-Chinese identity. He is the director of music at the UU Church of Santa Monica and teaches as an artist with the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

You Are the Voice Teacher: Teaching Technique and Authenticity of Vocal Production in Choral Singing

"Blend. Drop your jaw. Straight tone. Darker." Most have likely heard one of these phrases before, but do they really help inexperienced singers? Choral directors are the primary voice teachers for our singers. Are we teaching them the pedagogy behind their instrument in terms that are clear and concrete? What terminology can we use to provide clarity? This session will provide practical applications of how to teach singers to find and use their authentic voices by sharing suggestions from various vocal pedagogy approaches, including Estill Voice. It is applicable to directors working with high school, college and older community singers.

Amy Johnston Blosser will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 58.

C. Andrew Blosser will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 58.

Western Region Registration Information

Register at acda.org/region-conferences

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Children's



Judy Bowers was named professor emerita in the College of Music at the Florida State University upon retirement after more than fifty years of teaching, and subsequently completed four years as Biedenharn Endowed Chair in Music at the University of Louisiana Monroe. Throughout a career dedicated to preparing music teachers, Bowers has taught undergraduate and graduate music education classes and choirs, and has provided honor choirs in Canada, Africa, and numerous US all-state/honor choirs, regional ACDA honor choirs, and a National ACDA Middle School Honor Choir in 2009. In 2014, Bowers was named a Lowell Mason National Music Education Fellow by NAfME, and in 2023, the Florida MEA inducted her into the Florida Music Hall of Fame.

High School SSAA



Julie Yu (she/her) is professor of music and director of choral studies at the Wanda L. Bass School of Music at Oklahoma City University and the artistic director of Canterbury Voices, Oklahoma's premier symphony chorus. She holds a BME from the University of Central Oklahoma, MM from Oklahoma State University, and a DMA from the University of North Texas. She taught at Norman North High School in Oklahoma, San José State University, and Kansas State University. She has given presentations, conducted, and/or her choirs have performed for state and regional conferences of ACDA, NAfME, and the European MEA. She is the past president of the Southwestern ACDA Region and served as an International Conducting Exchange Fellow to Kenya in 2019.

Gospel



Rollo Dilworth is vice dean and professor of choral music education in the department of music education and therapy at Temple University's Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts in Philadelphia, PA. Prior to his position with Boyer College, he taught music education and was the director of choral activities for thirteen years at North Park University in Chicago. Dilworth's contributions extend to conducting the Temple University Singing Owls Campus/Community Chorus, leading the Singing City Choir, and conducting the School District of Philadelphia High School All-City Chorus. He is a prolific composer and arranger, with over 200 published choral works. Much of Dilworth's creative output as a composer and arranger focuses on themes of social justice. He serves on the national boards of Chorus America and the NCCO.

Youth SATB



Emily Ellsworth has conducted all-state choirs and prestigious festivals across thirty US states, as well as honor choirs for ACDA regions. Her global appearances include directing festival choirs in various countries and presenting for national choral directors in Brazil. In academia, Ellsworth contributed to Luther College's choral faculty, conducted the Elmhurst University Concert Choir, and lectured at Northwestern University. Notably, she served as artistic director of Anima-Glen Ellyn Children's Chorus for over two decades. Her choral work garnered numerous accolades, including the 2014 Tribute Award from Chicago A Cappella and 2013 ASCAP award for Adventurous Programming from Chorus America. She holds vocal performance degrees from Macalester College and the University of Southern California.



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OTHER ACDA PUBLICATIONS CONTACT INFORMATION

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International Journal of Research in Choral Singing	Patrick K. Freer	pfreer@gsu.edu

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