



# 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.

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.

### 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



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### 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 Kesztemét, Hungary.

## Thursday Night Concert

## VOCES8



The 2023 Grammy-nominated British vocal ensemble VOICES8 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. VOICES8 is the flagship ensemble of the VOICES8 Foundation, which actively promotes “Music Education For All,” reaching up to 40,000 people annually. VOICES8 has performed at many notable venues from Wigmore Hall to Sydney Opera House. This season they perform over 100 concerts globally. Online, the VOICES8 Digital Academy and the LIVE From London digital festival continue. They publish music and educational material with VOICES8 Publishing and Edition Peters, including *The VOICES8 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.



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### 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.



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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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,



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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.



**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.

### 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.



**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.



**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.



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### Performing Choirs

#### Boston Arts Academy The Spirituals of Boston Arts Academy



#### Central Bucks East High School Select Choir



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.

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.



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### 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.



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## Performing Choirs

### Lux



### Nazareth Area High School Nightingales



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.



**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.



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### 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 Tilken**, NBCT, is currently in his fifteenth year teaching with MCPS and his ninth year at Thomas W. Pyle Middle School. Tilken 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. Tilken 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](https://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](http://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](http://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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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).

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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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### Interest Sessions

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.

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### "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.”



## YALE GLEE CLUB

Jeffrey Douma, Musical Director

### 2024 Emerging Composers Competition

**First Prize:** \$1500 plus travel expenses to New Haven for attendance at premiere performance by the Yale Glee Club during its 2024-25 concert season; possible future publication in Yale Glee Club New Classics Choral Series

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**



### Yale Glee Club New Classics Choral Series

*A source for new music that will engage your singers and your audiences*

Dominick Argento Cristian Grases Jocelyn Hagen James Macmillan Michael Gilbertson  
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# 2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

## 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.

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### Singing Social Change: An Investigation of Two U.S. Children's Chorus

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.

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### 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 University 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 expands

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.

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### 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 translating

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.

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### 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.



## 2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

### 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

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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



## 2024 ACDA Eastern Region Conference

### 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.

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#### 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.

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#### 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.

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#### 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.