



2026 ACDA Western Region Conference

Conference Overview



Julie Dana

I am so very thrilled to welcome you back to San Jose for the first time in forty years for the 2026 Western Region Conference, “A Tapestry of Voices.” Our conference celebrates the power of connection, community, and collaboration—the threads that make our

musical tapestry beautiful and strong. After four decades, it’s an exciting moment to return to San Jose, where we will weave together past, present, and future through the collective voices of our choral community. Our five states will come together to celebrate our history by introducing past presidents, showcasing our present with extraordinary performances by our region ensembles, sharing informative practices presented by colleagues and composers, and highlighting the potential of our future through the beautiful voices of our honor choirs.

The conference kicks off with our Welcome Concert, featuring the ACDA Western Collegiate Consortium conducted by Dr. Joshua Habermann, and an inspiring keynote address from Melanie DeMore. Our days together will be filled with performances by fifteen selected choirs, over twenty interest and reading sessions, eight poster sessions, conducting masterclasses, a composer track, four honor choirs, and opportunities to learn from

renowned ensembles like Chanticleer and Lyyra.

This year we also invite you to enjoy two special choral events before and after our conference! Our pre-conference offering, Nurturing Our Roots, invites both members and nonmembers to explore specialized learning for teaching young singers. Presented by the staff of the Tucson Girls Chorus, this session promises to provide invaluable tools for anyone working with children in choral settings.

After closing our conference with the Honor Choirs Concert, you are invited to stay and enjoy a special performance offered by the San Jose Symphony & Symphony San Jose Chorale on Saturday evening at the historic California Theatre. The Symphony’s concert, *The Enigmatic Voice*, will feature Handel’s *Zadok the Priest* and Vaughan Williams’s *Dona Nobis Pacem*. Conference attendees can receive a 15% discount on tickets with a special conference code available on the Western Region website.

Our amazing Western Region conference team has planned an unforgettable celebration of choral artistry for us. Like a centuries-old wall tapestry, we, too, weave stories through our voices and experiences, contributing to a legacy that will endure for the next generation of choral musicians. Join us in San Jose, March 4–7, 2026, as we weave a powerful Tapestry of Voices together!

Western Region Conference Registration Information

Until January 15 at 11:59 PM CST

Attendee \$325 Retired \$225 Student \$125

January 16 - March 7

Attendee \$375 Retired \$250 Student \$145

One Day \$175 **only available on site**

Register at acda.org/region-conferences



2026 ACDA Western Region Conference

Headliners/Opening Night Concert

Headliners

Chanticleer



Known around the world for its eclectic repertoire and dazzling virtuosity, the Grammy Award-winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer—under the leadership of Music Director Tim Keeler—has been hailed by the *Boston Globe* as “breathtaking in its accuracy of intonation, purity of blend, of color and swagger of style.” Founded in San Francisco in 1978 by singer and musicologist Louis Botto, Chanticleer quickly took its place as one of the most prolific recording and touring ensembles in the world, an “orchestra of voices” performing thousands of live concerts and selling more than one million recordings. Rooted in the Renaissance, Chanticleer’s repertoire has expanded to include classical, gospel, jazz, and popular music, and the group performs its beloved “A Chanticleer Christmas” program on tour every December. A new Christmas album, *Joy to the World*, released in fall 2025. The group is the recipient of Chorus America’s Dale Warland Commission Award and the Chorus America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming.

Lyyra



Lyyra is the new all-women vocal ensemble from The VOCES8 Foundation and is based in the United States. Lyyra records exclusively for Warner Classics. Creating world-class musical experiences to inspire audiences, Lyyra seeks to redefine the genre of upper voice music in the choral landscape, highlighting the astonishing capabilities within the full spectrum of women’s singing. The sound of this bright, young group combines velvety richness alongside star-like brilliance. With a broad texture and exhilarating range of sound, the group’s talented members specialize in classical, jazz, pop, and folk music from diverse traditions and backgrounds. Lyyra tours both at home in the United States and internationally. The group gave its debut performances in 2024, including ACDA, and released its debut EP *More Love* on the VOCES8 label. Lyyra is Anna Crumley, MaryRuth Miller, Elizabeth Tait, Aryssa Leigh Burrs, Ingrid Johnson, and Cecille Elliott. Lyyra’s creative director is Erik Jacobson.

Opening Night Concert: Collegiate Consortium

The Western ACDA Region Conference will open with the debut performance of the Collegiate Consortium, an honor chorus bringing together singers from northern California colleges and universities. Under

the direction of Dr. Joshua Habermann, conductor of the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, the ensemble reflects the conference's commitment to fostering collaboration among the next generation of choral artists.

The program, Bridges of Song, traces themes of praise, nature, and the human search for belonging. Works such as Johannes Brahms's *O schöne Nacht* and Lili Boulanger's *Hymne au Soleil* capture the beauty of night and the brilliance of dawn, while other selections lift up themes of reverence, home, journey, and hope.

Reflecting on the occasion, Habermann notes: "I'm thrilled to be returning to California for the opportunity to gather with collegiate singers from across the state, and sharing a session with an artist like Melanie DeMore is an inspiration."



Joshua Habermann leads the O'ahu Choral Society and is in his seventeenth season as artistic director of the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, one of America's leading professional choirs. Since joining the ensemble, he has broadened its repertoire to include choral-orchestral masterworks and unique concert experiences such as *Dancing the Mystery* and The American Immigrant Experience, fusions of music and poetry created for ACDA national conferences in Salt Lake City and Dallas. From 2011 to 2022 he led the Dallas Symphony Chorus and is a regular guest with professional and symphonic choirs. Recent projects include preparing choruses for Britten's *War Requiem* for the San Francisco Symphony and John Adam's *El Niño* for the Houston Symphony. Habermann is a frequent clinician for conducting programs and choral events.

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OCTOBER PROJECT PRESENTS

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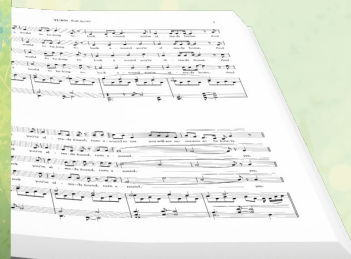


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Choral Arrangements

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arr. by Carrie Tennant
- **SATB, SSA & TREBLE**
arr. by Kirsten Oberoi
- **SAB** arr. by Keiji Ishiguri





2026 ACDA Western Region Conference

Special Events

Pre-Conference (Wednesday)

Nurturing Our Roots: Elementary-Level Practice and Pedagogy for 21st-Century Choirs

Nurturing Our Roots emerges from a desire to attend carefully to the beginning of all of our choir programs—the unique needs of our youngest singers. Facilitated by the Tucson Girls Chorus, this workshop will supplement the elementary-level offerings already planned at the Western ACDA Region conference.

This interactive workshop will share strategies for building engaging choral music programs for K–5 singers, focusing on techniques for building comprehensive music literacy, movement-based strategies to increase singer engagement and reinforce musical concepts, exciting and accessible repertoire, incorporating play, and singer-led strategies such as composition and student leadership. Participants will leave this workshop with both practical ideas to apply to their teaching right away and pedagogical tools to deepen their approach to teaching elementary-level musicians.

The **Tucson Girls Chorus** was founded in 1985 and prepares a diverse group of young women to be confident leaders through participation in a well-constructed educational program that emphasizes music, performance, leadership training, and community service. The TGC unites communities through collaborative partnerships, diverse repertoire, and singer-led programming. We celebrate the strength of each girl's voice, embracing innovation to create initiatives that ensure every girl who loves to sing can participate.

Keynote Speaker

Why We Must Sing Each Other's Songs: Community, Connection, and Commonality

These days there is a great fear of appropriation and cultural missteps. Folks, out of fear, think it is best to stay in their own lane, only singing music from their own culture. This is dangerous thinking that works to keep us apart. We will explore the ways our various traditions and songs connect. Be sure to attend Melanie's interest session on Thursday, March 5.



Melanie DeMore is a three-time Grammy-nominated singer/composer, choral conductor, music director, and vocal activist who believes in the power of voices raised together. She facilitates vocal and stick pounding workshops for professional choirs and community groups, as well as directing numerous choral organizations across the United States, Canada, and beyond. She is a featured presenter of SpeakOut!—The Institute for Social and Cultural Change, works with everyone from Baptists to Buddhists, and was a founding member of the Grammy-nominated ensemble Linda Tillery and the Cultural Heritage Choir. She is a charter member of Kate Munger's Threshold Choirs and conducts song circles with an emphasis on the voice as a vessel for healing. In her own words, "A song can hold you up when there seems to be no ground beneath you."

Chanticleer Interest Session

Challenges, Techniques, and Benefits of Unconducted Ensemble Singing for All Skill Levels

Unconducted ensemble singing increases agency and ownership among members, fosters interpersonal connection between singers, livens performances, and increases musicianship skills. Without a conductor, sing-

ers must work together, lift up one another, and share responsibility for the final product. Since 1978, Chanticleer has primarily performed as an unconducted ensemble. In this session, we will explore why and how Chanticleer works without a conductor, and how those lessons can be applied to choirs of all skill levels.

Lyyra Interest Session

Inspiring Through Music—
Combining Excellence with Creativity
to Create Inclusive Education and Performance

Lyyra and the VOCES8 Foundation will talk through their approach to various education programs that are crafted to inspire audiences of all ages and abilities toward a lifelong love of music. Hinging on meeting students and teachers where they are at, VOCES8 Foundation ensembles strive for a “music for all” approach that can drive excellence at the highest level, but all introduce music concepts in an accessible way for new singers. Lyyra will also touch on concepts of repertoire and vocal techniques that support inclusivity in choral music.

Post-Conference Offering

Symphony San Jose presents “The Enigmatic Voice”
Saturday, March 7, at 7:30pm

Discounted tickets available for Western Region conference attendees. Visit acdawestern.org/the-enigmatic-voice for the discount code and link to purchase.

Symphony San Jose presents “The Enigmatic Voice” at the majestic California Theatre, featuring three masterworks that celebrate power, peace, and mystery.

Handel’s *Zadok the Priest*, commissioned for King George II’s coronation, is a timeless masterpiece of

majesty and divine grandeur.

Vaughan Williams’s *Dona Nobis Pacem* blends Latin Mass with Walt Whitman’s poetry in a stirring 1936 plea for peace that resonates powerfully today.

Elgar’s *Enigma Variations* presents musical portraits of the composer’s closest friends, woven together with a hidden theme that has intrigued audiences for over a century.

Poster Sessions

Crafting a Flavorful Journey of
Asian Folk Choral Music
Supitcha Kansirisin

Last Things First!
Warm-ups that Perfect Your Concert
Jason Harney

Silly Songs to Foster Serious Music Skills
Anna Volodarskaya

The Heavens Declare the Glory of the Lord:
Our Tapestry of Voices Reflect Cosmological Heritage!
Harold Moses

The Motets of José Maurício Nunes Garcia
(1767-1830)
Youngeun Kim

The Voice of the Steppe:
Exploring Mongolian Choral Music
Through the Works of Se Enkhbayar
Mengda Jiang



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Special Events

Voices of the Philippines: Children's Songs for All Choirs

Lhara Groberg

Working Towards a More Equitable Honor Choir Process: A Content Analysis of Honor Choir Preparation Across the United States

Ramon Cardenas



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Student Conducting Masterclasses

Graduate and Conference Attendees



Craig Jessop is professor of music and coordinator of the master of music in conducting (choral emphasis) at Utah State University. From 2010 to 2019 he served as the founding dean of USU's Caine

College of the Arts, following his distinguished tenure as music director of the world-renowned Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square. He is the founder and music director of the American Festival Chorus and Orchestra, now in its eighteenth season, and continues to lead the National Memorial Day Choral Festival at the Kennedy Center. A former lieutenant colonel in the United States Air Force music programs, Jessop served as director of the Singing Sergeants and conducted air force ensembles in the United States and Europe. He has recorded more than fifteen albums with the Tabernacle Choir.

Hawai'i, Manoa (MME, Choral). Nahulu has been involved as a music educator/director of choral music in Hawai'i since 1977. She has been the artistic director of the Hawai'i Youth Opera Chorus since 1986. She, with her family, are garment manufacturers. They are the owners of "Bete Mu'u," which celebrates the "Classic Mu'umu'u," a line of traditionally based elegant Hawaiian mu'umu'u. Nahulu also plays the organ at Wai'anae Hongwanji's monthly service.

Undergraduate



Edith A. Copley is a Regents' Professor Emerita at Northern Arizona University. During her thirty-one-year tenure in Flagstaff, she conducted the Shrine of the Ages Choir and taught courses in undergraduate

and graduate conducting and graduate choral literature. Prior to her NAU appointment, Copley taught secondary choral music for seven years in Iowa and four years at the American International School in Vienna, Austria. She has contributed articles and chapters for several publications and has conducted all-state choirs in over thirty states and international festivals in Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, Luxembourg, Tasmania, England, Australia, China, Oman, Turkey, Ireland, Austria, and France. Copley has served ACDA in various leadership roles and is currently national president.

New Teachers and Emerging Conductors (5 years or less experience)



Nola A. Nahulu is a native of Makaha, O'ahu, Hawai'i. She received her education from Wai'anae Elementary School, Kamehameha Schools, Whitman College (BA Psychology), and University of



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Performing Choirs

California State University-Fullerton Concert Choir



The California State University Fullerton Concert Choir is a fifty-five-voice auditioned, mixed ensemble comprising primarily students studying voice in the School of Music. The ensemble gives a number of performances in Southern California every year and has also toured in Canada, Europe, and the United States. The choir has had the privilege of performing under the batons of John Williams and Gustavo Dudamel at the Hollywood Bowl, performing numerous times with Andrea Bocelli, and singing other professional engagements across the region.



Christopher Peterson teaches at Cal State Fullerton. He is a conductor, author, and arranger of music and books published in the United States and globally. In his over thirty-five years as a music educator, he has taught in public school, church, community, and collegiate settings. He earned a BME at the University of Southern Maine, the MM in choral conducting at the University of Maine, and a PhD in music education and choral conducting at The Florida State University. He has been invited to teach, judge, and conduct choirs in more than thirty US states, five Canadian provinces, and nine countries and has conducted all-state choirs across the nation. His textbook *Resonance: The Art of the Choral Music Educator* is used across the United States to train future choral music teachers and conductors.

Cantabella Children's Chorus



Cantabella Children's Chorus was founded in 1992 by Bee Chow in her Livermore living room with eleven young singers. Inspired by Zoltán Kodály's philosophy that the voice should be every child's first instrument, Bee aimed to create a local choral community for her own children, then ages six and eight. With an MME from the University of Iowa and certifications in Kodály and Suzuki methods, she built Cantabella into an award-winning program serving over 250 singers from kindergarten through high school. Under her leadership, the chorus has performed internationally and earned accolades such as the Grand Prix at the 2019 World Youth Choral Festival in South Korea. Bee Chow now serves as director emeritus, continuing to inspire the next generation of musicians.



Clement Cano holds a BM (voice) from San José State University and is pursuing an MME. With over twenty years of experience, he has served as choir manager, pit musician, accompanist, baritone, and musical theater director. He began singing in 1991 with Saringhimig and joined the SJSU Choraliers in 1995 under Dr. Charlene Archibeque, later serving as section leader and assistant conductor. Cano has performed at festivals worldwide. He is currently director of musical arts at Hillbrook School and music director at St. Joseph's Cathedral. He conducted Elaine Hagenberg's *Illuminare* at Carnegie Hall in June 2025. Outside of music, he loves video games, anything Disney, and cooking videos; as a longtime hockey player, he is proud to still have all his teeth.



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Performing Choirs

Casteel Junior High School Angels of Music



Angels of Music was founded in 2015 with the opening of Casteel High School. It is a women's choir comprising talented students in grades seven and eight. For many members, this marks their first experience in a choral setting. Despite their limited background, these young vocalists exhibit a strong dedication to personal and musical development. They consistently rise to the challenge, stepping outside their comfort zones to cultivate the vocal technique, discipline, and collaboration necessary to perform as a unified and expressive ensemble.



Jennifer Pearce holds a BM from Arizona State University and has over thirty years of teaching experience in the East Valley. Her diverse background includes teaching at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels, as well as conducting church and community choirs. She currently serves as the Fine Arts Department chair at Casteel Junior High School in Queen Creek, Arizona. In addition to her work in education, Pearce is an accomplished pianist and maintains a private piano studio in her home. She continues to perform, record, and tour with Millennial Choirs and Orchestras. She is deeply inspired by her husband, Marvin, their six children, and seven grandchildren, who remain her most treasured source of pride and motivation.

Castro Valley High School A Cappella



A Cappella hails from the diverse San Francisco Bay Area and is the premier concert choir in their large public high school, comprising three separate auditioned classes that practice together one evening per month. They have performed spotlights at Carnegie Hall and toured domestically and internationally. In 2018, A Cappella—and a subset within it, Madrigals—both placed first in their respective competition divisions of the Northern California Golden State Choral Competition. In 2022, A Cappella won the grand prize of America's Top Choir and Best Ensemble Choreography in FeelItLIVE's competition for top high school choir.



Laryssa Sadoway is in her fourteenth year at Castro Valley High School, where she conducts five choirs. She trained at the University of Massachusetts and North Park University in Chicago. Sadoway received an MM in vocal performance at San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Career highlights include leading her choirs to double gold victory at the 2018 Northern California Golden State Choral Competition, conducting at Carnegie Hall, collaborating with the BYU Singers, and conducting a featured performance ensemble at California MEA. Sadoway has presented sessions at the California Choral Directors summer conference at ECCO and at the California MEA's Bay Section winter conference.

Choral Audacity



Choral Audacity is a chamber choir that centers stories of marginalized communities through the programming of underrepresented composers with a roster of underrepresented singers. Founded in 2018 as a project-based ensemble, we seek to cultivate excellence of underrepresented voices through performance, mentorship, scholarship, and community. Together, we have presented programs such as: “We All Live Here” (American music through the eyes of BIPOC), “Freedom Come” (music of Civil Rights Movement and the apartheid), “Wildfire” (music in response to the California wildfires), and “Balikbayan” (stories of overseas Filipino workers).



Darita Seth is a Cambodian American conductor, haute-contre, and composer who serves as founder, president, and director of Choral Audacity. He is the director of choral and vocal studies at Santa Rosa Junior College. Prior conducting affiliations include: interim director of choral studies and conducting at University of the Pacific; Cantare Con Vivo in Oakland, CA; St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Long Beach, CA; St. Timothy’s Episcopal Church in Danville, CA; Danville Girls Chorus; Cantabella Children’s Chorus; and the Grammy Award-winning Pacific Boy-choir Academy. Seth holds a BM in vocal performance from Capital University’s Conservatory of Music and an MM in choral conducting from the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at CSU Long Beach.

Downey High School EPIC Jazz Choir



Downey High School’s EPIC Jazz Choir is located in the beautiful city of Downey, some thirteen miles east of downtown Los Angeles, and has twelve to eighteen voices. They rehearse five to eight hours per week learning songs from a variety of jazz styles. They perform at various jazz festivals and events in the community. They also sang at Carnegie Hall (2003, 2007); the Lincoln Center’s Allen Room (2010, 2013); and at the Apollo Theater (2016). They won the sweepstakes at the Folsom Jazz Festival (2008, 2020, 2024); Reno (2018); and the gold medal at the inaugural Disney World Celebration Jazz Festival (2009).



Cory Olariu was born in Romania and studied piano and trumpet at Ion Vidu School of Music in Timisoara, his hometown. He came to the United States in 1989 and graduated from CSU Long Beach, CA, in 2001 with an MM in instrumental conducting. That same year he began teaching all bands and choirs at Downey HS. He has performed at Carnegie Hall with the Jazz Choir and at the 2006 Hollywood Bowl opening night with the Jazz Ensemble. His Jazz Ensemble performed at the Disney Hall in 2008 and has won numerous local and nationwide jazz festivals. The ensemble is also a *Downbeat* winner twice in its category.



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Performing Choirs

Ensign Singers



The Ensign Singers is a community chamber ensemble specializing in the performance of sacred choral repertoire. Founded in 2019, the choir initially performed primarily for community religious events before beginning a series of summer seasons in 2021. Each summer, the choir highlights a choral masterwork paired with contemporary compositions and arrangements. Previous seasons have included large-scale works by Bach, Rachmaninoff, Vivaldi, and Rheinberger, with new music by Carlos Cordero, Reena Esmail, Josu Elberdin, and others. The choir also performs new works and arrangements by local composers.



David Kime is currently pursuing graduate studies in choral conducting at Brigham Young University, where he assists the university's ensembles and sings baritone with the BYU Singers. Since

founding the Ensign Singers in 2019, he has led the community chamber ensemble in performances that combine sacred choral masterworks with gems of contemporary repertoire. He also conducts for A Voice for Good and is the assistant director of the Utah Valley Interfaith Choir. He also competed in the 2024 Gheorghe Dima International Music Competition, choral conducting section. With a bachelor's degree in piano and organ, he frequently performs in university, professional, and church settings.

Faith Community Lutheran Church Kantori



Kantori at Faith Community Lutheran Church, located in Las Vegas, Nevada, is a church choir that provides traditional music for weekly Sunday and mid-week worship services and special occasions in Faith's Chapel of the Resurrection. Its singers range in age from eighteen to seventy. The choir has been honored to serve two English cathedral residencies in recent years, with performances at St. Paul's London, Kings College, Oxford, Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge, Ely Cathedral, and Bath Abbey.



Joseph Svendsen is cantor at Faith Community Lutheran Church in Summerlin, Nevada, where he leads the church's traditional music program. He serves as director of choral studies and associate

professor of music at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he conducts the UNLV Singers and teaches graduate coursework in choral literature and conducting. Svendsen is also the artistic director of the Las Vegas Master Singers, a ninety-voice volunteer ensemble. He is active as a clinician and guest conductor for festivals, honor choirs, and workshops. He has presented, performed, and published with several professional music education, choral, and church music organizations. He holds a DMA from Texas Tech University, an MME from the University of Illinois, and a BA from Luther College.

Foothill High School Madrigal Singers



The Foothill High School Madrigal Singers is an auditioned ensemble composed of students in grades nine through twelve. Performing only the highest level of choral repertoire, the Madrigal Singers regularly perform for events in their hometown of Tustin as well as an annual performance tour. During the holidays, they sing at over twenty caroling engagements to fundraise for the choral music program. Each spring they are featured in Foothill's Knights on Broadway, a fully choreographed production, now in its sixty-first year. They performed a solo concert in Carnegie Hall in 2013 and were honored to perform for ACDA in 2014 and 2018.



Chelsea Dehn holds a BM in vocal performance from UC, Irvine, and an MM in choral conducting from CSULA. Dehn is currently in her twentieth year of teaching choral music at Foothill High School. She finds that serving the students and community of Tustin is a privilege, and she hopes to remain at Foothill for the longevity of her career. In recognition of her exceptional teaching, she was honored with the Tustin Unified School District's Teacher of the Year Award in 2023. In addition to teaching high school, Dehn directs the chancel choir at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Orange and has held this position proudly since 2003.

Green Valley High School Green NV



Green NV is the contemporary a cappella ensemble at Green Valley High School in Henderson, Nevada. They are a totally student-run ensemble. Green NV was featured in an interest session at the 2010 Western ACDA Region Conference in Tucson, AZ, titled "Contemporary A Capella: From the Radio to the Classroom." They have received superior ratings in several festivals, performed in Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm, and host the annual Acapalooza, which features middle and high school a cappella groups in the Clark County School District and surrounding areas.



Kimberly Barclay Ritzer is in her thirty-fifth year as director of the Green Valley High School Choirs in Henderson, Nevada, opening the school in 1991. She is a 1990 graduate of UNLV, where she received a BME, and a 2001 graduate of the University of Phoenix with a master's in educational administration. Ritzer is currently the task force chair for high school choir and facility chair for the Clark County School District secondary fine arts programs. In addition, Ritzer serves as the Green Valley High School Performing Arts Department chair and has taught secondary choral methods at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.



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Performing Choirs

Los Gatos High School Treble Choir



The Los Gatos High School Treble Choir has maintained a tradition of choral excellence and active community service for years. The choir participates in concerts, festivals, and competitions throughout the year and consistently receives unanimous superior ratings in California MEA Large Ensemble Festivals and CMEA all-state choral festivals. In 2019 and 2025, the LGHS Treble Choir was selected as one of the featured ensembles at the California All-State Music Conference. In addition to performing locally and regionally, including Carnegie Hall, the choir has performed in prestigious venues internationally.



Ricel Riley is the choral activities director of Los Gatos High School and the artistic director of A Sharp Chorus based in Los Altos, California. Riley made her international conducting debut with the Los Gatos High School Choirs in England in 2014. Her audition choirs were chosen to perform at the CMEA All-State Choral Festival in 2024. Riley debuted her Carnegie Hall conducting with the Los Gatos High School Choirs in 2023. Choirs under her direction have earned unanimous superior ratings in the CMEA Large Ensemble Festival, first place at the Worldstrides Heritage Festival, and have performed in venues in Europe, including an invitation of her community choir to sing at a High Mass at the Vatican's St. Peter's Basilica.

Northern Arizona University High Altitude



Now in its eighteenth year under the direction of Dr. Ryan Holder, High Altitude has become one of the premier collegiate vocal jazz ensembles in the Southwest. With a strong emphasis on solo singing, stage presence, and vocal improvisation, the group is open to students of all majors. High Altitude has performed at state and regional conferences and shared the stage with internationally renowned artists, including the New York Voices, The Real Group, and The Swingles. In 2012 the ensemble was one of only three groups from the United States invited to perform at the Jazz Educators Network Conference in Louisville, Kentucky.



Ryan W. Holder is the associate director of choral studies at Northern Arizona University, where he directs the vocal jazz ensemble High Altitude and oversees multiple a cappella groups. A recognized vocal jazz educator and conductor, he has led all-state and honor vocal jazz ensembles across Arizona, Nevada, California, and Utah, and frequently serves as a clinician and adjudicator throughout the western United States. He coordinates the annual NAU Jazz Madrigal Festival, one of the nation's largest non-competitive choral events. His ensembles have performed at state, regional, and national conferences, and in 2023 he made his Carnegie Hall debut conducting the world premiere of *Lionteeth* by Anders Edenroth of The Real Group.

Ragazzi Boys Chorus Young Men's Ensemble



Grammy Award-winning Ragazzi Boys Chorus, Silicon Valley, under the leadership of artistic and executive director Kent Jue, provides outstanding musical education and performance opportunities for boys and young men ages five through eighteen. The largest boys' chorus in the San Francisco Bay Area, Ragazzi serves over 230 choristers in six tiered levels. Ragazzi ensembles have recently performed Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* with the San Francisco Symphony, Alma Deutscher's *Cinderella* with Opera San Jose, at the 2025 ACDA National and 2024 Western ACDA Conferences, and at the 2023 Chorus America Conference.



Travis Rogers has been a choral conductor for forty-nine years. Retired from Napa High School, he directed the activities of over three hundred students in seven ensembles. NHS choirs toured frequently, performing in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Notre Dame, Sydney Opera House, Westminster Abbey, Sagrada Familia, and the cathedrals of St. Patrick's, Christ Church, and Barcelona. Rogers began NHS's first men's choir with twenty singers. In subsequent years, up to 220 sang in one or more of three male ensembles at NHS. NHS's Beginning Men's Choir is the subject of the documentary *Top Row*. Rogers has served California ACDA in many capacities and is a past president of the Western ACDA Region.

University of British Columbia University Singers



University Singers is the premier choral ensemble of the University of British Columbia School of Music. This thirty-two-voice select ensemble performs the most advanced and exciting music written for chamber choir spanning the Renaissance to the modern day. The ensemble also performs major works with orchestra each season. The University Singers won several awards, including the CBC National Choral Competition and the BBC International Choral Competition, and is an active touring ensemble. The UBC choral program boasts five ensembles and a vibrant graduate program in choral conducting.



Graeme Langager is director of choral activities at the University of British Columbia School of Music and a frequent guest conductor, adjudicator, and clinician. He has conducted performances in cathedrals and concert halls throughout Europe and across North America, and at choral conferences and festivals. Langager served as the artistic director and conductor of the acclaimed Phoenix Chamber Choir in Vancouver from 2012 to 2018, during which time the choir released three CDs and was invited to perform at Canada's Podium Conference in 2016. He received his DMA in conducting from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and an MM in conducting from California State University.



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Performing Choirs

Westminster California Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society The Westminster Chorus



The Westminster Chorus was founded in 2002 and quickly climbed the ranks of the Barbershop Harmony Society; they became international champions in 2007, 2010, 2015, 2019, and 2024. In 2009 they were crowned Choir of the World at the International Musical Eisteddfod in Llangollen, Wales. The Westminster Chorus holds a mission to preserve and advance the

Barbershop art form, while providing and encouraging an inclusive community for youth in Southern California and around the world to engage in lifelong singing, music, and artistic expression.



Dan Wessler holds a DMA in choral conducting and literature from University of Colorado Boulder. In addition to his directorship of The Westminster Chorus, Wessler serves on the adjunct faculties of Concordia University Irvine and North Orange County Community College. He has had research published in the *Choral Journal* and has presented sessions at the annual conferences of Colorado MEA and California MEA. Wessler sings with After Hours, the 2018 International Barbershop Quartet champion. He is in demand as a clinician and coach, and is also an active barbershop arranger, having written over 250 arrangements for various groups around the world. In addition, he serves as a certified musicality judge for the Barbershop Harmony Society's contest and judging system.



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Interest Sessions

A Tapestry of Chinese and Taiwanese Choral Voices

Discover the vibrancy of Chinese and Taiwanese choral music through this culturally enriching session. The presenter offers a historical and practical exploration of repertoire, tonal language challenges, and performance practices in works by notable Chinese-speaking composers. Attendees will receive curated playlists, score access, and strategies for introducing this music to English-speaking choirs. This session is ideal for conductors seeking fresh, authentic repertoire that reflects today's global choral community.



Yu-Feng Huang is a Taiwanese choral conductor and scholar committed to bridging cultures through music. He holds a DMA in choral conducting from the University of Utah and has over a decade of experience directing university and community choirs in Taiwan. His research supports non-Chinese-speaking choirs in performing Chinese choral works authentically. As founder of the Chinese Choral Repertoire Promotion Project, Huang promotes access to diverse repertoire and fosters crosscultural engagement. He currently directs the Salt Lake Chinese Choir.

Building Literacy Through Play

Few elements speak to the deficiency of the American education system like our country's diminishing rates of literacy, which is affecting rates of music literacy as well. Working under the influence of Drs. Gordon and Krueger, this session serves to provide educators with strategies to promote music literacy through play-based approaches. Focusing heavily on rhythmic, melodic, and tonal acquisition, attendees will learn activities to be employed with lower elementary to adult learners. Educators will learn how to use these games as assessment tools and provide students with a more expansive vocabulary to understand their literacy skills. Attendees will walk away with a comprehensive understanding of the spiral of teaching music literacy, the value of audiation, dictation, and improvisation in the learning process, and how to implement these strategies in their classrooms through play.



Amanda Goldberg is a music educator passionate about the use of singing to develop the whole person. She holds a BME from St. Olaf College and is currently completing her MM in choral conducting at Michigan State University. She has worked on the artistic staff at the Girl Choir of South Florida and as a middle school teacher in Palm Beach County, FL, where she piloted a program for restorative practices in the classroom. Presently, Goldberg is the assistant director of Sistrum: Lansing Women's Chorus and the music director of First Presbyterian Church of Holt. Her passions include treble music and ensembles, caramelized onions, and the film *Titanic*.

Closing the Financial Gap in Your Choral Program

Imagine a choral program where funding supports—not limits—your vision, access, and impact. As conductors, we aim to provide meaningful, inclusive experiences for all students, but budget challenges often stand in the way. Whether it's paying for an accom-

panist, purchasing scores, or planning a tour, financial pressure is constant. In this session, Irene Messoloras offers real-world strategies drawn from her work in choral advancement. Topics include grassroots campaigns, donor tiers, grant writing, and cultivating lasting support. Learn how to build community partnerships, engage students in stewardship, and shift from scarcity to sustainability. Leave empowered with the tools to turn dreams into real opportunities for every voice in your choir.



Irene Messoloras maintains an active career as a conductor, clinician, and adjudicator, leading ensembles in powerful and dynamic performances across the United States, Europe, and Asia. Messoloras serves as director of choral activities at the University of California, Irvine, and conducts the London-based professional choir Meridian. Under her baton, professional, university, and community choirs have performed on some of the world's most prestigious stages. Her ensembles have been featured at ACDA National Conferences in 2021 and 2023, with major appearances at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and Beijing Concert Hall, as well as national commercial campaigns and professional music video productions. Her ensemble's work is represented by Signum Records and can be heard on all major streaming platforms.

Composing for Your Choir: Writing with Singers in Mind

This session explores effective strategies for composing and arranging music tailored to the unique strengths of your ensemble. Led by choral composers and arrangers MaryAnne Muglia Smith and Kate Crellin, the session will cover techniques for assessing vocal abilities, balancing accessibility with challenge, and crafting engaging textures that enhance ensemble cohesion. Attendees will gain insights into the commissioning process, hear examples of successful custom compositions, and explore ways to adapt existing works for specific groups. Interactive demonstrations will il-



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illustrate practical tools to create music that not only suits their singers but also elevates their artistry.



Kate Crellin (she/her) is a vocalist, arranger, composer, and educator. She has BAs in choral music and law from USC and an MM from Queens' College, Cambridge. Crellin is the choir director at Mira Costa High School and Manhattan Beach Middle School, and the director of music ministries at the Manhattan Beach Community Church. Additionally, she is on staff at A Cappella Academy.

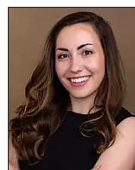


MaryAnne Muglia is an award-winning composer, singer, and educator known for creating music that is both melodically rich and emotionally impactful. Based in Arizona, she blends contemporary and classical influences to craft compositions and arrangements that resonate deeply with performers and audiences alike. Her enduring love for harmony and piano, which first inspired her to compose, remains at the core of her artistry. Muglia's music has been performed by a wide range of ensembles, from high school choirs to professional groups, and her work is celebrated for its ability to foster meaningful connections. She enjoys collaborating with musicians of all levels, crafting music that speaks to the heart while challenging and inspiring its performers.

Creating Artistry from Lead Sheets and Unison Singing

A vast and diverse repertoire exists beyond traditional octavo formats, offering accessible and engaging options for students of all ages. These flexible scores expand programming possibilities and empower students to play an active role in the creative process. This interactive session will explore strategies for elevating unison singing, interpreting lead sheets, and crafting collaborative arrangements from short melodies

that bring music to life in fresh and meaningful ways. Whether you're looking to diversify your programming or encourage student-led musicianship, you'll gain practical techniques for elementary, middle, and high school classrooms—and beyond! Participants will leave with a wealth of repertoire sources as well as innovative ideas for transforming simple charts into expressive, collaborative performances that foster creativity and confidence.



Jess Edelbrock is the director of operations at the Tucson Girls Chorus, overseeing all programming and strategy in partnership with Dr. Marcela Molina. She also directs TGC ensembles spanning grades K–12. Edelbrock earned a BME from Northern Arizona University and an MM in choral conducting from Michigan State University. In 2023 she was appointed adjunct professor of music education at the University of Arizona Fred Fox School of Music. She currently serves on the Arizona Choral Arts Association board and as the youth R&R chair for AZ ACDA. She is a frequent presenter at state conferences and a collaborative pianist for festival choirs, most recently accompanying the National ACDA 5–7 Treble Honor Choir. Under her direction, the TGC Bumblebees performed at the 2022 ACDA National C&YCC Retreat as the youngest choir to be invited to perform at a national ACDA event.



Nicky Manlove (they/them) is the community engagement director for the Tucson Girls Chorus, where they also conduct the Jubilate Choir and Las Estrellas at Prince Elementary, and accompany the Bumblebee Singers and Mariposa Singers. Manlove is a committed advocate of equity-centered and liberatory choral practice, and supports a number of justice-focused choral initiatives nationally. Their research has been featured at national conferences for ACDA, Chorus America, and Early Music America. Manlove is the chair of DEI for Western ACDA, has served on the ACDA National Diversity Initiative

Committee's task force for transgender justice, as well as equity-based committees for Western ACDA, Early Music America, GALA Choruses, and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians. They holds degrees from Seattle University and the University of Arizona.

Due Diligence: First Steps and Ethical Engagement with Native Peoples and Music

Choral educators are often asked to include diverse voices, but “due diligence” is not always part of the equation. In this session, we’ll explore what it means to ethically engage with Native American music. Thomas Goedecke and Alyssa Beltran (Pyramid Lake Paiute) will share how to navigate the complex layers of colonialism, appropriation, and misrepresentation in Native music programming. We’ll also examine how to build authentic relationships with Native communities, ensuring that your programming goes beyond tokenism. Attendees will leave with practical strategies for respecting Native music, creating space for Native voices, and ensuring that your programming benefits Native peoples.

Thomas Goedecke will be a clinician for this session. His photo and bio are on page 61.

Alyssa Beltran will be a clinician for this session. Her photo and bio are on page 61.

Harmonizing Through Hands: American Sign Language in Choral Music

Discover the power of American Sign Language (ASL) in choral music as a bridge to inclusivity and artistic expression. This session explores the use of ASL interpreters in choral performances, inspired by the presenter's personal experience as a partially deaf individual. Learn how ASL connects those with hearing disabilities to music, offering a visual and emotional

pathway to understanding. Gain practical strategies for integrating ASL into your choral programs to create a richer, more inclusive experience for audiences and performers alike.



Jacob Boland was born in Khabarovsk, Russia, and is a passionate musician and advocate for accessibility in the arts. Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder at the age of eight, Boland faced social challenges, finding refuge in music. In 2021 he developed permanent hearing loss due to COVID-19, which transformed his relationship with sound. Rather than seeing this as a setback, he embraced it as a source of strength, exploring music through vibrations and emotional resonance. He took a break from his studies at California State University, Long Beach, to adapt to his new reality as a hard-of-hearing musician. His compositions challenge traditional notions of music, emphasizing inclusivity and sensory experiences. As a conductor, he fosters collaboration and innovation, mentoring fellow musicians with disabilities. Boland aims to create a more inclusive music industry.

Making Admin Your Biggest Choir Fan

Building strong relationships with administrators is essential for choral directors navigating K–12 and higher education. This interactive session provides key strategies, practical “dos and don’ts,” and expert advice on advocating for programs, securing resources, and achieving tenure—all while avoiding unnecessary conflict. Led by experienced administrators who are also choral directors, this discussion offers real-world insights on working within institutional systems. Attendees can submit questions (anonymously, if preferred) for live, on-the-spot answers from the panel. The session aims to equip choral directors with the tools needed to foster productive administrator relationships, advocate effectively, and create sustainable, thriving programs for their students.



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Kellori Dower is the dean of visual and performing arts at Cypress College in Cypress, California. She was the director of two award-winning high school choral music programs prior to serving as director of choral activities at the collegiate level. Past appointments have also included high school principal, asst. principal, and district arts administrator. She is a past recipient of the Outstanding Music Educator Award from the California MEA. Dower is published through Hal Leonard and continues to conduct honor choirs nationally. She currently serves as the director of DEIAB for the California Choral Directors Association and is the immediate past president of NCCO.



Iris S. Levine, a nationally recognized choral conductor, is the founder and artistic director of VOX Femina Los Angeles, LA's premier women's chorus. Under her leadership, VOX Femina has gained national prominence, performing at ACDA and Chorus America conferences and GALA Chorus events. Levine is faculty emerita at Cal Poly Pomona, where she served as director of choral activities, dean of the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences, interim dean of the College of Education and Integrative Studies, and provost and vice president for academic affairs. Levine holds a DMA from USC and an MM in choral conducting from Temple University. A leader in ACDA, she has served as state, regional, and national R&R chair for women's choruses.



Elise Hepworth is the dean of the College of Arts, Communication, and Social Sciences at Northwest Missouri State University. Before her appointment, she spent a decade at Missouri Western State University as a tenured professor, leading the choral music program and later serving as assistant vice president and vice provost for academic affairs. She previously taught at Wayne State College in Nebraska. Hepworth holds degrees from Northwest Missouri State University (BME), UMKC Conservatory (MME), the

University of Mississippi (DA), and the New Zealand School of Music (G.Dip.). She is nationally certified in Orff Schulwerk and Zoltán Kodály pedagogies and remains an active guest conductor, clinician, and vocalist throughout the Midwest. She resides in Saint Joseph, Missouri, with her husband, Matt, and their three cats.

(re)sounding Joy:

Best Choral Practices for Turbulent Times

Utilizing trauma-informed pedagogy and group-cohesion practices, this session addresses the unique challenges choral leaders face in these unprecedented times. By examining current (and past) choral practices, attendees will gain strategies to help reframe or replace potentially triggering or trauma-centered music. Additionally, we will explore current challenges and common shortcomings of DEI work in choral spaces. This session will conclude with a comprehensive list of accessible repertoire and resources that will help participants shift their choral practices and create more welcoming, safe, and joy-centered choral spaces.



Alyssa J. Cossey is a conductor, singer, educator, and scholar. She is a contributing author for a new textbook on women composers (edited by Hilary Apfelstadt), an inaugural member of mirabai, and is currently serving as interim director of choral activities at Wellesley College. Before relocating to the East Coast, she was an assistant professor of choral music at the University of Arizona. Prior to that, she taught both middle and high school choir in Southern California for nearly a decade. Cossey holds degrees from Michigan State University; California State University, Fullerton; and California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

Sing with Us: Inside an Accessible Choral Rehearsal

What does an accessible choir actually sound like? In this immersive session, participants will rehearse alongside students from an inclusive choral program to experience firsthand the strategies that make inclusive rehearsals work. Through warmups, rehearsal activities, and accessible tools like AAC devices and visual schedules, attendees will participate in a real rehearsal built for access and belonging. A guided debrief will follow, offering practical takeaways and real-world strategies to adapt in your own classroom. This is not a performance; it's a shared rehearsal experience rooted in the belief that all singers deserve access to community and musical growth.



Brandon Ellsworth (he/they) is a choral director, adaptive music educator, and advocate for inclusion in music education. He teaches choir and adaptive general music at North Salinas High School, where he explores inclusive teaching practices through both traditional and adaptive ensemble settings. His work focuses on rehearsal design through Universal Design for Learning and the implementation of practical accommodations in school choral settings. His adaptive curriculum earned recognition with the 2025 CMEA Innovations in Music Education Award. He holds a BME from Westminster Choir College and is pursuing an MME (autism concentration) at Boston Conservatory at Berklee. He is also the founder and director of SingAble, an accessible community choir based in San Jose, CA.

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Transformative Vocal Techniques for Your Choirs: Tested, Tried, and True

A great educator is constantly searching for ways to improve their choral rehearsals. This session provides group vocal technique methods to build your choir's sound, strengthen individual singers, and achieve better choral tone and artistry. Designed for directors from elementary to high school, key learning outcomes include equipping directors with hands-on techniques for posture, breathing, support, resonance, and articulation. Participants will actively work on problem solving the many common issues within the rehearsal, experiencing creative teaching strategies used to increase focus and energy. This clinic is highly practical; participants will come away with new, useful techniques that can immediately be applied in their choral rehearsals.



Christine Bass has fifty years of teaching experience. She was former director of Temple University Men's and Women's Choruses and assistant professor of music education, previously DCA at Cherry Hill West High School, where her program grew from 60 to over 320 students in 7 choirs. Her ensembles have performed at multiple ACDA national conferences, MENC, and ACDA Eastern conferences. Bass's men's a cappella group won three consecutive national championships for Best of High School A Cappella. Bass has conducted numerous all-state honors choirs, including the 2009 ACDA National HS Honor Choir. Her educational products and her book are published by Hal Leonard: *Vocal Transformation*, *Where the Boys Are: Recruiting, Engaging, and Maintaining Tenors and Bases*, and *Front-Loading Your Choral Rehearsal: Constructing for Success*.

The Why and How of Student Leadership Programs

Strong student leadership can transform your ensembles, reduce director workload, and foster a positive, student-driven culture. This session explores the practical "nuts and bolts" for developing a leadership team that builds trust, accountability, and engagement while preventing cliques, disengagement, negativity, and retention issues. Learn the benefits of selecting vs. electing leaders, explore different leadership structures, and discover practical strategies for goal setting, retreats, and year-long leadership development. Whether you're refining an existing leadership program or starting from scratch, you'll gain actionable steps to empower student leaders and elevate your program's success.



Bruce Rockwell is the choir director at College Park High School in Pleasant Hill, California. He has taught choir, piano, and guitar at College Park for fifteen years. Rockwell received his MM in composition from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and his BM from the University of California at Santa Cruz. He has written and presented a number of articles and conference sessions on various topics of interest to music educators.

Vocal Pedagogy for Choirs: Keep the Magic, Lose the Myth

Better singers make better choirs. We know this, but so often it's hard to look beyond the notes and rhythms in the little time we have. Some conductors are highly trained singers and some are not, but all conductors face the same challenge of using phrases that mean something to us but, perhaps, mean nothing to our choirs. Voice teaching is both an art and a science, but finding ways to incorporate more science/reality-based pedagogy into the choral rehearsal will only make the

choir sound better and promote healthier singers. This session will examine the basic elements of singing (e.g., posture, breathing, phonation, resonance, and diction/articulation) to review what is actually happening, what we can actually feel, and give conductors strategies to convey this information to the choir within warmups, voice building, and rehearsals.



Aaron Humble has been described as remarkably virtuosic by the *Columbus Republic* and transcendent by the *Daytona Beach News Journal*. He is a Grammy-nominated tenor and conductor who has enjoyed solo appearances with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Columbus Philharmonic, and the Boston Pops with chamber music appearances at the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, the Library of Congress, Wolf Trap, and the Chautauqua Institution. During his tenure with Cantus, Humble sang nearly one thousand concerts and recorded ten albums with one of the nation's premier vocal ensembles. He continues to sing with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Tucson's Grammy-nominated True Concord, and Bach Collegium San Diego. He serves as an assistant professor of music in vocal and choral music at CSU San Marcos, conducts the Chancel Choir at Foothills United Methodist Church, and leads the Zimriyah Chorale at Congregation Beth Israel in San Diego.

Vocal Tone and Technique for Middle School Singers

This session will provide a comprehensive approach to developing vocal technique for choral singers focusing on warm-ups, effective techniques, and metacognitive strategies to help students assess their own vocal progress. Attendees will learn methods to create a solid foundation for healthy, beautiful singing while emphasizing the importance of individual vocal technique. Many young singers struggle to view themselves as vocalists and often lack the skills needed for proper technique and healthy vocal habits. This session will guide educators in helping students balance ensemble

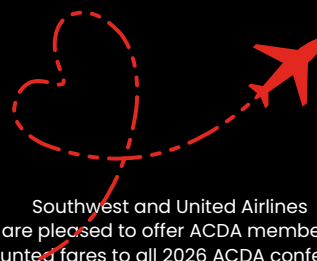
work with individual vocal growth. Key elements such as posture, breath support, resonance, and vocal placement will be explored, with practical exercises to incorporate into daily practice.



Athena Mertes is the director of choirs at Thurman White Academy of the Performing Arts in Henderson, Nevada. A graduate of UNLV with a master's in vocal performance and a bachelor's in music education, Mertes established the Choir Magnet Program at Thurman White Academy in 2016. She developed a curriculum offering choral and vocal performance classes for approximately four hundred students. Her Advanced Choir performed at the 2025 National ACDA Conference and the 2024 Western ACDA Region Conference. In 2020 she received the Teacher of the Year Award from Magnet Schools of America. Mertes, now in her fourteenth year teaching middle school choir, is a national board-certified teacher passionate about helping students and educators unlock the true potential of middle school singers.

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Honor Choir Conductors

4th-8th Grade Youth Unchanged Voices



Liana Salinas is a dynamic music educator and entrepreneur based in Miami, Florida. She serves as the artistic director of the Miami Children's Chorus, an organization she has been a part of for

twenty-six years. Having grown up in the chorus, she knows firsthand the power of choral singing and the beautiful community it fosters. In 2023 she proudly shared this message on national television during her interviews on *The Kelly Clarkson Show*. Under her leadership, MCC has built upon its sixty-year legacy with a fresh approach that embraces contemporary styles and skills such as jazz and songwriting. Salinas is also the CEO and founder of My Music Match, a company connecting students with private music teachers.

9th-12th Grade SSAA



Lynnel Joy Jenkins is artistic director of Westrick Music Academy, music director of Princeton Girlchoir, and a choral teacher in the Hopewell Valley Regional School District, New Jersey. Jenkins has

varied conducting and teaching experience from elementary to collegiate levels, including positions at the American Boychoir, Westminster Choir College, and the Haverford School. She has conducted choirs, lectured worldwide, and led several all-state choirs. She conducted the eighth- through tenth-grade National Treble Honor Choir at the 2025 ACDA National Conference. She earned degrees from Westminster Choir College (BA), Temple University (MM), and the University of Arizona (DMA), and received the Elaine Brown Conducting Award from both institutions.

7th-9th Grade SATB



Judith Herrington is the founder and artistic director of Tacoma Youth Chorus and conductor of the Treble Choir, Chorale and Chamber Choir. Recently retired from forty-four years of teaching

and conducting at Charles Wright Academy, she was the recipient of the Inspirational Faculty Award and Murray Foundation Chair for Teaching Excellence. A graduate of the University of Oregon, Herrington earned her MME from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. Having served in several leadership positions for the WA-ACDA, she is the 2011 recipient of its Leadership and Service Award, and was recently inducted into the Washington State MEA Hall of Fame. A noted composer and arranger, she has published through Pavane Publishing, Hal Leonard Publishing, and Colla Voce Publishing. She also edits two choral series for Pavane Publishing.

10th-12th Grade SATB



Jason Max Ferdinand is an inspirational musician, leader, and teaching mentor whose gifts are sought after by choirs and orchestras worldwide. Since 2022 he has served as the director of choral activities

at the University of Maryland, having spent the preceding fourteen years as professor at Oakwood University, conducting the renowned Aeolians of Oakwood University. He is the founding artistic director of the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers. In 2023 they performed at the ACDA National Conference in Cincinnati, which included a surprise appearance from Jacob Collier. This followed their appearance on *Saturday Night Live* with Coldplay and Jacob Collier. They made their debut at the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, London, in 2024. His GIA publications include *Teaching with Heart: Tools for Addressing Societal Challenges Through Music*, and the *Jason Max Ferdinand Choral Series*.