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# Virginia Harmony



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President's Message:  
Did you hear THAT!?  
— Bonny Tynch



Dear Colleagues,

Did you hear that? It's a bird singing just before sunrise--a sure sign of spring! Did you hear THAT!? It's a choir singing--a sure sign of our return to singing together!

Congratulations to you for guiding your singers through district events, musicals, classes, concerts, worship services and/or public appearances--all while navigating the changing pandemic landscape! Your service to your singers and your community is making an impact far greater than you will ever know.

As I write this message to you, I'm listening to the final moments of rehearsal of my district's middle school honors chorus. They are working brilliantly with their guest conductor, confidently polishing the last details and following her every direction--and I am reminded that even though **SOMETIMES** this year it has felt like singers came back as blank slates--they most certainly did not. In a short time, they were back in touch with the deep experiences they carry from childhood to present. The music is still inside.

Yet, the process of getting to performance feels different this year, right? Do you feel like there are more challenges, less certainties and catch yourself saying, "In a **NORMAL** year... this would be different?"

Perhaps what has changed for many of our students, as well as ourselves is not capability, but capacity.

Capable: having the qualities or abilities that are needed to do or accomplish something

Capacity: the facility or power to produce, perform, or deploy

We all know that just because a choir may be **CAPABLE** of performing a difficult piece, it doesn't mean they should perform four difficult pieces on the same program. What if we thought of our personal and professional lives/school year/performance season as a well-planned, dynamic, and balanced choral concert? What would you include?

For the health and well-being of ourselves, our singers, and the programs we are contending to develop and/or rebuild, choose wisely. Do great work, have high expectations--but leave space and time for yourself to heal and grow, and your singers will feel that and just might heal and grow right alongside you.

Warmly,  
Bonny M. Tynch  
President  
Virginia ACDA



# Voices United

American Choral Directors Association

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## *From your Membership Chair: Leslie Dripps*

### **Support for Developing Programs**

If you're reading this, you likely know that Virginia ACDA isn't only for established programs, but provides many, many resources to chorus leaders who are in the early or developing stages of their programs. *You* may know this, but others might not.

So, if you happen to be, or know of, a chorus teacher/director/leader who is:

- occasionally (or often) treated as if they spontaneously invent all choral arts for personal gain
- told by administration that a student should "try something new" after taking chorus for a semester
- bribing a potential baritone section with weekly hamburgers
- googling "evidence for my principal that singing aids cognitive development"
- frequently reminding the board or pastor or rabbi that sheet music does in fact cost money and can't be copied

**...have we got some great things cooking for you! Stay tuned!**





**Virginia ACDA  
All-Virginia Middle School Honor Choir  
2021-2022 Application Packet**



**[CLICK HERE](#)**

VA-ACDA is excited to announce that the All-Virginia Middle School Honor Choir event will be held this year at Fairmount Christian Church near Richmond, VA. The dates are April 21-23, 2022.

Our event includes two choirs: a treble choir (conducted by Christopher Fox) for 6th and 7th grade sopranos and altos, and a mixed choir (conducted by Dr. Derrick Fox) for 8th grade sopranos and altos and 6-8th grade tenors and basses. Teachers will be able to order music packets directly from The Musical Source for this event.

If you have any questions, email Annabelle Mills at [annabelle.mills@lcps.org](mailto:annabelle.mills@lcps.org).

## ***From your Community Choir R&R Chair: Michael Ehrlich***

Greetings Virginia ACDA,

I am honored and excited to serve as the chair of community choirs for VA ACDA. We have all been through so much the past 2 years, and I hope that being back together with your ensembles has been as fulfilling for you as it has been for me.

After thirty years as a choral director at the high-school level, I am now the director of an adult community choir. The differences and similarities have been quite eye-popping!

The differences for adult community choirs: everyone is a legal adult, some are in college (undergrad and grad students), some are in the workforce, many are parents, and several are retirees. Their lives are certainly busy, but are they busier than students who are taking a full load of classes, who have homework, extra-curricular activities, work, and family responsibilities? The answer is yes and no! Yes, being a parent is very demanding of your time, but work may require overtime, travel, and other obligations causing you to miss a rehearsal or a performance. While a parent might strive to adhere to the choir's attendance policy, there isn't that all-important grade hanging over their heads if they miss a session, as there might be with a student!

The similarities: they elected to be in the ensemble, they want to be there, they want to sing well, they build friendships, they are supportive of each other, and they love performing. Another interesting similarity: when the sopranos and altos are not in the room, the tenors and basses behave just like my former 4<sup>th</sup> period class at Woodson!

The most important similarity is that music education is still happening in the community choir. Many community ensembles have a solid music education plan in place. We tend to think music education stops after high school or college. But, consider what the adult community choir director does in rehearsals and possibly outside of rehearsal. We are still teaching vocal technique, musicianship skills, sight-singing, and a myriad other aspects of music education. And yes, on occasion, fussing about posture and talking!

Strengthening the skills for each singer makes rehearsals much more productive. I offer musicianship classes for any singer who wishes to participate. Online programs such as **musictheory.net** and **Sight-Reading Factory** allow for the classes to be taught online and not overload anyone's already busy schedule. A thirty-minute class is a reasonable amount of time and can accomplish the goals you set forth.

Receiving positive feedback from those who participate certainly helps reinforce the importance of continuing music education at this level. The greatest benefits are the comfort level and the musicianship skills of less-experienced singers will get stronger, and the process and pace of learning the music improves.

What similarities and differences do we have as directors and how our organizations are run? How can we help each other? What can we do to engage our communities at a higher level?

I would like to host an online forum to discuss issues and concerns that are unique in the community choir setting for all levels. Sharing ideas with each other will help make our organizations stronger.

One of the purposes of the survey that you received from me recently was to determine where we are all located. Asking which VMEA district you are aligned with gives us the opportunity to create regions for the community ensembles. Regional events can be developed and hopefully, at some point, a statewide event. How nice it would be to get together and sing for each other!

Thank you for all your effort to build community choirs. I look forward to learning about the wonderful things you are doing.

Michael Ehrlich

### ***From your Children's & Community Youth Choir R&R Chair:*** **Jane DeLoach Morison**

My heart is full, and my head is spinning after attending the Children's and Community Youth Choirs Conductors Retreat in Tucson, AZ. This national biennial conference is always informative (and fun!), but this time it was my first foray into a conference and even FLYING since COVID began. I found myself much more emotional than I had anticipated. And, not just because we were getting back together.

Because I had an early flight, I was able to register for the "deep dive" event on Friday afternoon which saw Arreon Harley-Emerson presenting, "The Pact in *Impact*: A Practical ADEI Toolkit." The session focused on access, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. It was a transformative session. He led us through discussions about how we cannot make any steps forward into diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging until we give ACCESS to everyone. He encouraged us to make "scorecards" for our organizations instead of plans, because a scorecard would hold us accountable as we track our progress. He gave us lots of tools for addressing the needs within our own choirs and organizations, including addressing outdated language and practices. There was just SO MUCH in this session. Way too much to put in this brief article, but I would be happy to talk to you more about specifics. I know if you and your organization were able to hear him, it would be well worth your while.

Maybe, like me, you have been faced with decreasing numbers in your choirs. It is so hard to not get discouraged, not take it personally, etc. But, I feel in my heart that we will make a great comeback, although maybe not at the speed we had all hoped. Let's continue to support each other and share ideas in this time.

Speaking of support, we are so proud of our Virginia Children's and Community Youth Choirs who performed at the Southern Division Conference in Raleigh! Both Western Branch Middle School (Kyle Cook) and The Shenandoah Valley Children's Choir (Janet Hostetter) were fantastic! Make sure to congratulate them!

Jane DeLoach Morison

## **Words Still Matter**

There have been many discussions over inclusivity and cultural sensitivity in sacred music. Existing literature addresses the teaching and use of hymns in church liturgy and sacred worship spaces and on the teaching of sacred hymns from a music education perspective. However, due to the predominance of masculine pronouns in hymns that reference the Creator and texts that can appear to promote ableism, recent research suggests a need to modify hymn lyrics to reflect diversity.

The second stanza of Charles Wesley's hymn text *A Charge to Keep I Have* begins with the words: "To serve this present age my calling to fulfill." This stanza reflects the notion that hymns should meet the needs of contemporary society or generation of believers. Equally as important is the removal of sexist and ethnically exclusive language while preserving the historical idioms, expressions, original tone, timbre, and prayerful intent of the hymn's poet. The global fight against social injustice makes it imperative that churches lead the way out of oppressive non-liberating ways of being in the world. It is well documented that some hymn language was particularly offensive to African Americans. The enslaved brought with them their traditions, yet eventually learned to sing the European hymns and psalms of the church. The style of customary hymns and sacred songs were revised for use in their lives and circumstances.

Additionally, services of worship must also include hymns that speak to the experiences of the LGBTQ+ community with hymns specifically about, by, and for the queer community. As with all hymns, these hymns must be integrated in the common worship experience as we strive for inclusion, equity, and understanding. A trilogy of literature (two articles and one study) addresses gender, human identity, language and their roles in healing and reconciliation (Uchem, 2014) thereby examining the connection to Christian theology and psychology (Ackerman, 2015). Lukenbill's study (2012) addresses the changes his predominantly gay and lesbian congregation went through identifying "liberation lines" in some of the hymns that were inclusive in nature, if not in language (p. 120). Music used by this congregation did "not appear to embrace gay and lesbian hymns composed by musicians who write beyond the traditions" of the local church (p. 122). A constructivist approach was used to create inclusiveness in the music they sang and the values to which they adhered, such as: (1) moving away from patriarchal terms and symbols such as "Lord" and "Kingdom," not referring to God as only masculine, (2) to educate and make the congregations more comfortable with inclusive language, and (3) using language that upheld core values of the church and the central core of worship (p. 123).

Another community subject to marginalization in hymn lyrics includes persons with disabilities. Reverend Kyle Stevenson (personal communication, January 25, 2022) states that disability is a socially constructed category with a social model. Stevenson further admonishes that people "are not disabled because of how their body and mind function. Society is built for certain bodies and minds." Some hymns and sacred songs have been revised for use in the lives and circumstances of the disabled. Huyser-Honig and Newman (2015) address the issue of inclusivity as it relates to the disabled by creating multisensory environments and worship experiences that yield what they call accessible conversation with God in accessible worship experiences. Newman (2015) suggests teaching the concept of "vertical habits to illustrate a universal design that recognizes and uses each person's gifts in ministry." The universal design aspect of the inclusivity plan for the worshipping disabled is to create physical environments conducive to their special needs and gifts.



Intent, inclusivity, and integrity must matter to the contemporary revisionist of hymn lyrics. Streufert (2016) cites the example of the Lutheran church's encouragement to "know and experience both the human and divine identity untethered from gender and sexual dualism... and to use more inclusive language and symbols when referring to God...and reflect the wholeness of the Christian community and the all-encompassing nature of God" (p. 3). Streufert includes in her article the nature of American English to refer to God as "he," addresses the idolatry associated with referring to God exclusively as male and embraces androcentric language which furthers the causes of an inclusive dialectic (Streufert, 2016). Her work is significant and makes a case on the realities of the interconnectedness of meaning and understanding through the expanded use of language.

Thematic, personal, theological, inspirational, congregational, emotional, and unifying descriptors are used to convey what the sacred hymn has meant to churchgoers and worshipers. Other elements used to undergird, support, inspire beauty, and contribute a poetic edge of sacred hymns are literary tools such as allusion and figurative language. Hymns have been used to accompany soldiers going to war, motivate individuals fighting for social justice, revitalize religious and faith-based organizations seeking rallying points of unification as well as other situations of practical application.

A great challenge exists in making hymn revisions with substitute lyrics replacing original lyrics which reflect a contemporary or postmodern view without compromising theological integrity. Hymn revisionists are challenged with maintaining substance and truth, retaining poetic rhyme and rhythm, and monitoring styles and trends.

Pastors, musicians, and others challenged by the work of inclusivity who take on the task of revision understand that the ideas and concepts in some hymns may be "unrevisable" and are inclusive as they are written. Smaller revisions, rather than larger ones, can be made to literary devices such as meter and alliteration. Some hymns may not be amenable to pronoun changes and the modernization of thee, thou, and ye without compromising poetic integrity. Articles, blogs, and discussions are available on the internet concerning the modernization of hymns and the inclusionary or exclusionary aspects of hymn revision. Various opinions and platforms have been developed to give the hymn prominence and revival.

McIntyre (2019) writes in his article "the words we sing in our hymns have the power to hurt or to heal and to include or to exclude." McIntyre, in his next statement, expands his description re-emphasizing what he seeks to convey in the previous quote: to include, to affirm, to invite through the intentional use of language that embraces all, excludes none, and does not marginalize or negatively characterize one group through language, nouns, pronouns, images or perhaps metaphors of another group" (p. 1). Further, McIntyre characterizes race, gender, national origin, handicapping condition, and age among others to identify places where inclusion or exclusion are possible.

These expanded ideas of culture make the use of words employed in hymn revisions more important than one may think. The effective communication of spiritual truths through sound theological concepts calls for the careful choice, replacement, and selection of culturally relevant lyrics and phrases vital to the preservation and integrity of the original intent of the songwriter. The global and inclusive nature of the hymn is extended if the words are researched for their original meaning, context, and cultural reach. Therefore, we find that both revisionist language and its accompanying visual imagery matter greatly to protect the integrity of the hymn.

Imagery and language or vision and words come together to craft a powerful liturgical moment. These words whether spoken or read must be felt with the heart, spirit, and soul. Without the proper dialectic between the original writer's words and intent with the contemporary revisionist's purpose, word replacement, cultural sensitivity, and meaning can be lost and the original intent never discovered.

Words matter because of the theological themes inherent in lyrics communicated by the songwriter in the hymn. Therefore, the use of masculine and feminine pronouns and creative work of revisionists must take specific care that the replacement of gender designations do not interfere with or alter theological meanings and truths espoused in the original form of the hymn. Changing texts for the sake of change is counterintuitive and counterproductive to the enhancement of understanding and the lived experiences of deeper and richer spirituality.

In conclusion, it can be said that original hymns and contemporary efforts to revise aging lyrics to accommodate this 21<sup>st</sup> century and its contexts have one major commonality: worship. Worship is at the heart of hymn revision. The hymnologist aims to increase one's ability to understand words set to music, receive edification and inspiration from a favorite hymn, and foster growth and development through sacred songs. Hymn revisionists have as their objective theme-based growth without the distraction of archaic language, which does not resonate with practical life application for the 21<sup>st</sup>-century worshiper or church goer. The greater mission of revisionists is that the worship experience should not be hindered for any person desiring to participate in liturgical services and experience meaningful worship. Liberating language from the perspective of non-traditional and marginalized voices is the work of hymn revisionists. Making audible muted voices and perspectives which may be silenced by the language of tradition furthers the vision of hymn inclusivity while breathing new life and meaning into musical expressions of liturgy and faith intent on fulfilling the call of this present age.

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## ***From your Student Activity R&R Chair: John Irving***

With rehearsals and performances being cancelled or postponed after a brief halcyon of fall concerts with rapid tests and vaccination cards, we find ourselves again in a season of longing for in-person choral performance. In this season I am pining for the timeless moments *before* a performance. I'm remembering, first as a boy chorister and later as a graduate student, when directors read short stories and poems to us offstage during the quiet *before*.

The readings grounded and focused me while creating connection within the ensemble as the pre-concert energy flowed. On the shoulders of my teachers, I share this literary tradition with the choirs that I conduct. Today I wish to share a poem by Mary Oliver with you as we wait backstage once again in the *before*.

As you are able, set aside 60 seconds or so to read "Starlings in the Winter" from *Owls and Other Fantasies: Poems and Essays* found [here](#) online.

In calendar year three of the Covid-19 pandemic, the choral moments of acrobatic starlings appear far in the past and future. Since December alone, four contracted gigs have been cancelled; church choir has been postponed indefinitely; two university performances were moved to the '22-'23 academic year; and my inbox receives daily updates for a rescheduled all-district honor choir that may or may not happen in a few weeks. Anyone else feel frozen with grief in the seventh and eighth stanzas trying to move in a "leafless winter"? What are choral directors to do when our poetic boots (concert black, of course) are on but we are unable to leave the actual dressing room?

I asked the choral music education majors at CNU to describe how they were doing after two weeks of virtual instruction followed by one week of in-person classes. You can probably guess their responses.

"Overwhelmed...exhausted...unmotivated...uncertain..."

They were giving voice to exactly what I was/am feeling, too. Like nature's calendar, we know the next season will come in time, but what do we do right now in the middle of a long-winded lesson the world has prepared for us?

Today I find guidance and movement in the poet's description of the starling's flight in the natural world. Her words invite me to be present, observe, listen, acknowledge, express, and move. She reminds me that we are like the starlings—a "wheel of many parts." She invites me to live a full and balanced life which includes choral music, but not just choral music. She teaches me that theater exists in spaces outside of the concert hall. She challenges me to simultaneously hold grief and hope. She dares me to move in an instant.

Will we be ready to move in the wings of a concert hall when this season is over? What else will we be ready for? Continue to take care of yourself and each other as we wait to spring from this season to the next.

## ***From your Student Chapter Representative: Travis Krickovic***

### **ACDA @ VCU: Finding Meaningful Contributions During the Pandemic**

Since Virginia Commonwealth University's Student Chapter of ACDA was founded, our mission statement has been anchored in three core values: social, singing, and service. COVID breaking out during my sophomore year made our traditional movie nights, singing valentines, and volunteer days at VCU's Vocal Arts Project or District/State auditions impossible as we knew them. Like the entire choral world, we had to determine how to stay true to our values without being able to gather together and sing.

I've been so inspired by the innovative efforts of Virginia's choral directors to keep their ensembles active and enriched despite the challenges of the pandemic. As student chapter representative, I wanted to share what the students of ACDA at VCU have recently done to make a difference in our department and our lives by our chapter's values. This will also shed light on the initiatives emerging professionals in our field want to support as they begin their careers.

#### **Social:**

Being invited to an ACDA meeting the first week of my freshman year introduced me to a whole community of new friends and helped me feel right at home. Since nearly the entire 2020-2021 school year was taught virtually, that freshman class was unable to meet *anybody* in person and valuable social time between classes was lost for everyone. Therefore, ACDA made our online meetings a community hub for students, inviting in new students to meet upperclassmen and build a supportive network with one another. Game days and Voices United watch parties weren't ideal through a computer screen, but they did help restore the social aspect of college taken from us by the lockdown.

#### **Singing:**

Especially before vaccines were rolled out, just about every choral director suddenly had to become a sound engineer and video editor to keep their ensembles singing through virtual choir projects. Our members all pitched in to record and edit virtual choir videos for the 2020 holiday season, sending them out as a holiday gram fundraiser. It was a solid final product to look back on for that semester (as well as a learning experience on Garageband and iMovie). Thankfully, the chapter was able to sing together (IN PERSON!) for a local neighborhood holiday festival this year!

#### **Service:**

Our chapter has always been dedicated to uplifting the educational experience of our music department through professional development and conference attendance. Since the nationwide reckoning with racial injustice in 2020, our members have been working toward making our department a more welcoming and equitable place for all people as well.

Our group connected with our faculty's DEI committee and investigated their goals. This semester, ACDA is surveying the choral repertoire performed in recent years to give the directors their starting percentage of works by historically excluded composers from which they can improve.

We also tapped into our student body's perspective: the places in which they hope the department can become more inclusive. We wanted to communicate their convictions to the faculty in a respectful, collegial, and constructive way, which culminated in our student-faculty game night called "Learn Something Classical" last spring. It focused on a discussion about why embracing diversity is important for the program, ways we can promote diversity in our curriculum, and introducing everyone to musicians and composers from a variety of backgrounds, presented by both students and professors. It was well-received by all and set the groundwork for future collaborations.

All the while, the chapter has put on some great professional development seminars featuring alumni giving first year teaching advice, and guest speakers from the VCU's psychology department sharing how to incorporate trauma-informed care into our teaching and daily interactions. And, we're thrilled to resume the tradition of attending the ACDA Southern Region Conference.





## *From your Soprano and Alto R&R Chair: Sherlee Glomb*

### **Guideposts to Daring Greatly**

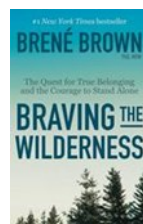
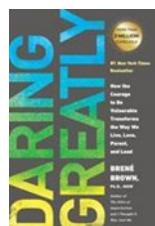
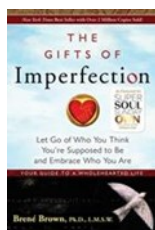
As music educators, we often have the advantage of being able to build relationships over several years with the same students, so we may often see warning signs before others if our students are struggling with anxiety or depression. Our choir family fosters a sense of community and family in our ensembles that offers a safe space or a support network that they might not have in other places in their lives. After teaching over 20 years in public education from grades K-12, I have found that coming back to the “new normal” after a year and a half of virtual learning has been helpful to some, but honestly, quite traumatizing to most others, including myself. Our job as music educators has turned into helping students articulate their emotions more and finding healthy coping mechanisms after such an intense cultural pause that has been quite a challenge to navigate. Students came back to school struggling more than ever to be seen or heard because they have been hiding behind their screens and homes for over a year, losing all sense of self-worth or drive. The resilience factor was non-existent in most students and honestly, really affected me, too. My normal bag of tricks in trying to get students to connect with me and one another didn’t really work. I was new teacher last year during the pandemic, virtually with 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. This year, it’s literally like starting over, as if I’ve never taught any of them.

So, I began to do research on how to raise the self-esteem of my classes and help them out of this slump. I stumbled upon University of Houston research professor, Brené Brown. She has a website [www.brenebrown.com](http://www.brenebrown.com) and has done a bunch of Ted talks and podcasts. Most recently, I read her book “Daring Greatly” which is based on Theodore Roosevelt’s famous quote:

“ It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while **daring greatly** . . . ”

— THEODORE ROOSEVELT

We started talking about the idea of what it meant to “dare greatly” in our everyday lives. We challenged one another in class to show up to the arena everyday and fight for what they know is good for themselves and good for their classmates. We talked about accountability and how a true leader has nothing to do with their title or status, but more with their ability to hold themselves accountable to those around them. Here are a few of her books for your reference that are all fantastic:



Brené Brown talks a lot about a culture of scarcity--a culture preoccupied with focusing on one's inadequacies, one which leaves that perpetual sense of “never being enough.” After bringing this up to my students, they all started taking off their shields and armor and having vulnerable discussions about their shame and vulnerability--of how they don't feel adequate enough and always judged by their peers and teachers, even when they know we've said it's a safe environment. So, I turn to Brené Brown's guideposts which are free to download on her website.

### Ten Guideposts for Wholehearted Living

#### **Guidepost #1**

Cultivating Authenticity: Letting Go of What People Think

#### **Guidepost #2**

Cultivating Self-Compassion: Letting Go of Perfectionism

#### **Guidepost #3**

Cultivating a Resilient Spirit: Letting Go of Numbing and Powerlessness

#### **Guidepost #4**

Cultivating Gratitude and Joy: Letting Go of Scarcity and Fear of the Dark

#### **Guidepost #5**

Cultivating Intuition and Trusting Faith: Letting Go of the Need for Certainty

#### **Guidepost #6**

Cultivating Creativity: Letting Go of Comparison

#### **Guidepost #7**

Cultivating Play and Rest: Letting Go of Exhaustion as a Status Symbol and Productivity as Self-Worth

#### **Guidepost #8**

Cultivating Calm and Stillness: Letting Go of Anxiety as a Lifestyle

#### **Guidepost #9**

Cultivating Meaningful Work: Letting Go of Self-Doubt and “Supposed To”

#### **Guidepost #10**

Cultivating Laughter, Song, and Dance: Letting Go of Being Cool and “Always in Control”

I have these all on index cards and hand them out to each section. I have the students read them aloud and have students give feedback and discuss. These prompts have been extremely helpful for kids who don't normally speak. They now speak up and speak out. It's as if they truly appreciate that someone cares enough for them to share and speak out. These guideposts have unlocked something inside of them. I said to the students that I notice when students don't consistently speak out. I said we can say they are "shy," but, in reality, a lot of times these students are ashamed that maybe what they have to say isn't important enough or correct. I said, "We don't care if the answer is right, we care about YOU and what you think. So please speak up!" And, more and more of these kids in the past quarter have broken out of their shells. Their singing has really improved because of their care for one another and their deepened understanding about empathy. Does this take time out of my assessment music making time? Absolutely!!! Is it worth it? Totally 100% worth it! It is our job to help these students find their worthiness in this world and, in turn, we will see their courage and bravery break through the dark and into their voices! It's been a great journey so far, and I am grateful that it has also helped me see the light, too!

Before I close, I wanted also to share this wonderful resource that houses historical data of all All-State festivals and conductors along with various blogposts and resources. You can look it up here: [www.allstatechoralarchive.org](http://www.allstatechoralarchive.org). It's really worth visiting! It has a ton of great repertoire resources. It was created by my friend, Jamey Kelly, who is a choral music education professor at University of North Texas.

Sending yellow and lots of snaps to all of you for a wonderful assessment season! Please take care of yourselves and continue to make self-care a priority. Be encouraged, my friends. You are brilliant, focused, creative, and profoundly dedicated to your singers and their well-being. Let's continue to reach out and encourage one another during the coming months.

**“ You either walk inside your story and own it, or you stand outside your story and hustle for your worthiness. ”**

**- Brené Brown**

# VA-ACDA Calendar of Events

All Year	Sing for Virginia composer advocacy initiative #sing4va
September 1, 2021	Newsletter Publication #1 articles due: Voices United Wrap-up, Leadership Team highlights, membership drive information
September 15, 2021	Newsletter #1: Published via website, email, and social media
Sept. 15 - Nov. 15, 2021	ACDA membership drive - encourage someone to join!
November 7, 2021	<i>Executive Board Virtual Meeting @ 7:30 PM</i>
November 18-20, 2021	VMEA Conference: <b>VA-ACDA membership meeting</b> during the conference, date and time TBD
January 2022	Recruitment for open R&R chair positions
January 15, 2022	Newsletter #2 articles due: Voices United Conference information, All Virginia Middle School Chorus Information, articles from membership, membership drive updates
January 29, 2022	<u>VA-ACDA Leadership Team virtual meeting</u> - 8:30am-9:30am
February 1, 2022	Newsletter #2: Published via website, email, and social media
February 23-26, 2022	Southern Region Conference, Raleigh, NC
March 28, 2022	<i>Executive Board Virtual Meeting @ 7:30 PM</i>
April 21-23, 2022	All Virginia Honor Choirs, free professional development workshops, <b>VA-ACDA membership meeting</b> - Richmond, VA
May 14, 2022	<u>VA-ACDA Leadership Team Virtual Meeting</u> - 8:30am-9:30am
May 15 2022	Newsletter #3 articles due: All Virginia Middle School highlights, Voices United Conference information, state leadership information
June 1, 2022	Newsletter #3: Published via website, email, and social media
August 5-6, 2022	Voices United Conference - Manassas, VA <a href="http://www.acdavoicesunited.org">www.acdavoicesunited.org</a>

Voices United committee planning meetings: September, October, November, January, March & May. Interested in being part of the planning committee? Please email Amy Moir at [amoir@vaacda.org](mailto:amoir@vaacda.org)



# SING4VA!!!



ARE YOU A CHORAL COMPOSER LIVING IN VIRGINIA?  
DO YOU KNOW A CHORAL COMPOSER LIVING IN VIRGINIA?  
HELP US PROMOTE VIRGINIA COMPOSERS!!  
TO REGISTER YOURSELF OR A VA COMPOSER, VISIT:  
<https://www.vaacda.org/sing-for-va>



*From your Newsletter Editor: Matthew Russell*

# *Virginia Harmony*



## **June 2022 Edition**

The VA-ACDA leadership team and I would like to invite all of you to contribute your articles and ideas for OUR June 2022 Edition of *Virginia Harmony*. ALL Virginia ACDA members and R&R chairs are enCOURAGED to contribute submissions. TOGETHER, we are ALL made better by sharing our GROUP GENIUS!!!

Article due date: May 15, 2022

Publication date: June 1, 2022

Send to: [mnr10707@gmail.com](mailto:mnr10707@gmail.com)

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