



Virginia Harmony

President's Message:

Together, Hope Still Remains — Amy Moir



I have rewritten this letter to our membership at least five times. We are in an epic time period and it is hard to know what to say when there is so much uncertainty and loss. We all feel it in the lack of attended religious services in our places of worship, lack of students in our classrooms, lack of singers in our community ensembles—the list can go on and on. We can all still sing at home on our own, yet it is void of personal human interaction. All the current apps, fun activities, and digital choirs are wonderful. Still, they cannot replace the sympathetic vibrations that take place within us when we make music together. While music has always been there with its own integrity, it lacks the connection to humanity that is not completely replaceable by a screen.

Along with health fears and economic uncertainty, we also face substantial changes to our profession for the near term future. On May 5th, many of us watched the webinar “What Do Science and Data Say About the Near Term Future of Singing” hosted by ACDA, NATS, Chorus America, the Barbershop Harmony Society, and the Performing Arts Medicine Associates. If you did not get to view the webinar, you can find it at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFI3GsVzj6Q>. In the days following, I heard many conversations that focused on sadness, fear, despair, frustration, and loss. I found myself avoiding social media as much as I was avoiding any close interaction with other humans. I found the list of things to modify and ideas to implement exhausting and overwhelming.



Inside this issue

President's Message.....	1-2
Vice President's Message.....	3
Voices United Conference Update.....	4-5
Leadership, R&R, and Membership	
Articles.....	6-13
Editor's Note.....	14
Leadership Directory.....	15

President's Message, continued:

As we forge ahead, there are a few very important things to remember. The first is that we are not alone in this on many levels, not even just as singers. While we study and listen to research that affects our specific profession, these conversations are happening within so many other circles such as athletics, public transportation, restaurants, and the airline industry. We are all collectively adjusting and in this as a society. Even when we see and hear divisive comments and rhetoric, we can rest assured that we will get through this together. We have each other as artists, and we have a broader community with whom we can empathize.

On a personal level, anytime there is struggle in life hope is what carries me through. When I was facing serious illness, hope for effective medical treatment or a cure helped me continue to seek answers. Hope to see my children grow up helped me fight on the hardest days. Hope is an eternal flame in darkness which remains always. George Lucas created an enterprise based on hope that crosses generations because we all can identify with hope and root for its success. Hope is how I know we will be ok and that we will find solutions. As the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope."

We will return to our choral singing on a large scale one day. We do not know when that day is and it might not be as soon as we would like, but we will get there again. We were all born with our vocal instruments. It is our human nature to sing, and its perfect creation has allowed us to feel a connection with each other that we cannot fully replicate in any other way than together. On our journey back together, we will learn new skills that will make us all even better than when we started. They may not be skills we originally intended to learn, but we will learn them anyway because we are resilient artists. We are a community that is here for each other to share ideas, celebrate successes, and come up with new and brilliant ways to create music together while being apart.

Our profession is more encompassing than traditional performances and worship services. It is the humanity, culture, creativity, and identity of each community. This is how I am confident we will persist. As for me, I hope to see you in the choir when we get there. Until then, I will be cheering on your success and brilliance from the other side of a screen. Thank you for being amazing and inspiring!



***From your Vice President and Voices United Conference Chair:
Pamela McDermott***

Looking Toward Hope

Instead of concert stages and worship platforms, we find ourselves standing firmly in the stages of grief. Where are you now, and how can you move toward hope? I find myself moving from stage to stage, two steps forward and one step back.

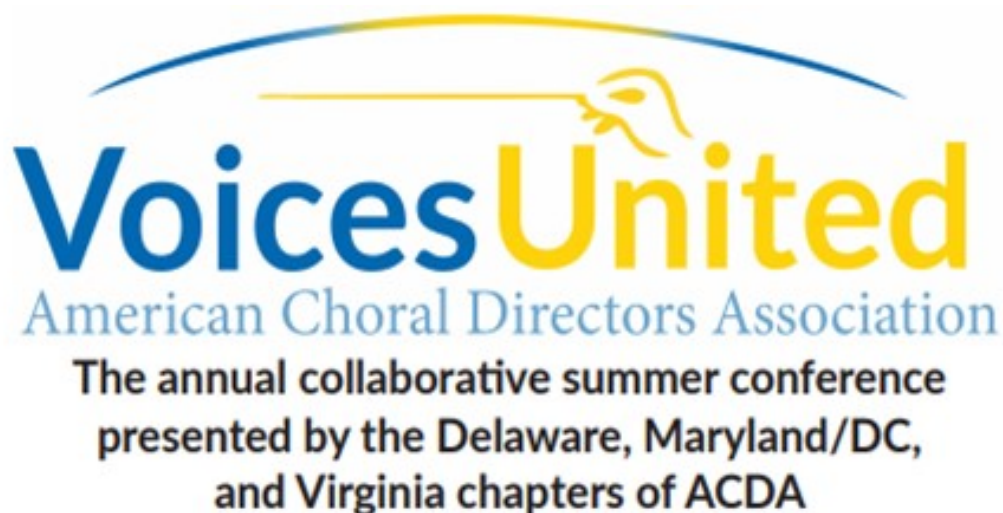
1. **Shock and Denial.** Disbelief, compounded by the urgency to solve immediate problems, characterizes the first stage of grief. There are days of numbness and inaction; days of furiously plugging the dam to keep the water back; complete focus on how to survive today and return to normal. Acknowledge your shock. Reach out to others; stay connected to those who lift you up. Do little things for yourself; do little things for others; allow yourself to let go of the responsibility of holding everything together.
2. **Pain and Guilt.** Acknowledgement of the gut-wrenching pain we are feeling – for ourselves and for our singers; and the guilt of lowering standards, just barely getting by, letting people down, letting ourselves down, not measuring up to those who seem to be “crushing it.” Reach deep for your core beliefs; know that you are a valuable, needed person beyond the job you’ve been doing. Remember who you are; consider your strengths. Sing. Acknowledge that excellence may not be possible; congratulate yourself for doing “good.”
3. **Anger and Bargaining.** So many things keep us from doing our jobs – administrative decisions that are out of our control, technology that fails to perform, singers who both need us more and connect with us less, family responsibilities that leave us with little time. Anger at being stopped in our tracks; our long-term plans being disrupted and upended. Figure out what you can control; what you can change; what you can create; what parts of your work you “own.” Focus on those things. Forgive people ... so that your burden is lighter. They too are grieving.
4. **Depression, Reflection, Loneliness.** It is breath-taking that the whole world is going through this ... and still only you are dealing with your specific circumstances. Embrace the reflection: journal, write music, draw, create. Fight the loneliness: use that device to actually make a phone call, check on a friend, reconnect lapsed relationships. Set up regular dates to call, FaceTime, Zoom. Get through today; wake up tomorrow and try again. Write things down – what you mourn, what you might change.
5. **The Upward Turn.** You are a choral conductor. You lead people to be their best selves. This is something you can still do, in creative, crazy, satisfying ways that are NOT what you want to be doing. And yet, you can bring music; you can uplift; you can help singers express themselves and enjoy expressions of others. You think of something that might actually work for your specific circumstances ... and that spark diminishes the darkness and starts you toward the light.
6. **Reconstruction and Working Through.** Determination to deal with the hand you’ve been dealt until we can sing together again. See that the small steps you have been taking are beginning to achieve some momentum. Adapt and adopt ideas that might work for you and your singers; be confident that your program is still uniquely yours and that you know best what your singers need. Enjoy them; keep them connected; set their sights forward.
7. **Acceptance and Hope.** You know this will end. You know that things will be different, but that we will sing together again. Your path has shifted, but your feet are firmly planted once again. You hope, you dream, you return to long-term plans for excellence.

Where are you? Wherever you are, ACDA is there with you. Visit our National website; connect with our Facebook groups. **We are in this together!**

Join us ONLINE in 2020!

**We will be offering online content in August!
Check back for interest sessions and repertoire lists to inspire you
for 2020-2021!**

Join us face-to-face in 2021!



Sponsored by The Musical Source



Michael John Trotta
Seminar Track
Conductor's Chorus



Ysaye Barnwell
Voices United Honor Chorus
(ages 15-adult)



Janet Hostetter
Children's Honor Chorus
(age 9-15)

**Save the date! Invite a friend! Sponsor Singers!
Join us as we celebrate 23 years of Voices United!**

**August 5-7, 2021
Fairfax, VA**

www.acdavoicesunited.org

REBECCA TYREE "BRING A FRIEND" MEMORIAL FUND



Becky Tyree, past VA-ACDA President and Voices United Chair passed away unexpectedly on May 24, 2018. Becky had a huge heart and positive spirit. She was a constant presence at Voices United, Southern Region, and National ACDA conferences as a presenter and participant. She led an active student chapter at VCU and worked to bring young educators into ACDA.

Becky regularly reached out to friends to share rooms and meals at conferences. The Rebecca Tyree "Bring a Friend" Memorial Fund has been established to continue Becky's work and inspiration among us. Members and friends are encouraged to make donations to honor Becky, or to remember/honor others who have guided and inspired.

Recipients of this award will be nominated by a current member of ACDA. Scholarship winners will receive conference registration fees and hotel expenses for two nights. If the recipient has not already joined ACDA, they will also receive a complimentary membership from their home state during the National ACDA fall membership drive. Awards will be announced before the Early Bird registration deadline for Voices United.

Donations may be made through the Voices United website, www.acdavoicesunited.org, or by visiting the Virginia ACDA page (www.vaacda.org) or the Delaware ACDA page (www.deacda.org). Or, contact Voices United conference chair, Pam McDermott at pmcdermott@vaacda.org for information on how to mail a check.

A list of those honored through a donation to the Rebecca Tyree "Bring a Friend" Memorial Fund will be printed in Voices United Conference Brochure and Concert Program each year. Thank you for helping us continue Becky's legacy and for supporting choral excellence through Voices United!



www.acdavoicesunited.org



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Dear VA ACDA members,

We are here for each other! I feel very blessed to have you all in our “tribe.” I have found that the ACDA community is always willing to share what works, and we all are going to have to figure out what works now more than ever!

Since the end of ACDA Southern Region Conference in Mobile, we have begun a new chapter in our lives. I have read a lot of things in an effort to figure out “What Now?” One of the things that has helped me the most was the story of how Admiral James Stockdale as a prisoner of war in Vietnam for seven years made it through that time. He said, "You must never confuse faith that you will prevail in the end — which you can never afford to lose — with the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be."

He went on to say that those who despaired were the ones who set deadlines for getting out, only to see those deadlines come and go. We don't know when normalcy will return, but we can and must help each other and our singers through this time.

I am praying for all of us, and I am here if you want to talk and trade some ideas.

I have a few...

Jane DeLoach Morison
Membership Chair, VA-ACDA

From your President: Amy Moir

Virginia Representation in Mobile, AL

The ACDA Southern Region Conference was held March 11-14, 2020 in Mobile, AL. Virginia represented well at the conference. It was a joy to see so many successes from our membership! The Roanoke Valley Children's Chorus, directed by Kimberly Davidson, had a stunning and energetic performance. The Marsteller Middle School Men's Select Choir, directed by Philip Keirstead, brought energy and charisma to their performance. Laura Lazarevich led a group through an informative and diverse reading session of high school choral literature followed by a review of literature available on CPDL. A poster board showcased the *Sentimental Journey Singers* directed by Dr. Maryann East. It highlighted their work with singers affected by Alzheimer's and dementia. In addition to the active choral directors at the conference, we also had a great contingency of college students from VCU and Longwood University attending the conference and absorbing information. Despite the then-pending pandemic, we shared a great experience and celebrated the many talents of our membership.





From your Instrumental to Vocal R&R Chair: Harlan Zackery

I sincerely hope that each of you is happy and well during this time of global pandemic. While I am sure that you, too, are missing your choristers, I am grateful for an opportunity for deeper study and reflection on this wonderful craft of choral music. As I made mental preparations for my article for this edition, I thought it would be helpful to share a few print resources that might help those who will be or have transitioned into a choral position from an instrumental role. These four resources have been invaluable to me, and I hope they will be of some assistance to you as well.

***Diction for Singers, 2nd Edition* by Joan Wall, Robert Caldwell, Tracy Gavilanes, and Sheila Allen. Celumbra, LLC., 2009.**

Although the sight or mention of this book may illicit groans from many former and current voice majors, it does, no doubt, contain a wealth of information. As the subtitle states, it is a “concise reference for English, Italian, Latin, German, French, and Spanish pronunciation.” Each chapter, except that which is devoted to English, contains a list of basic sounds for the language, along with IPA and sample words. For each language, every letter is explained with all its respective variations, rules, and exceptions.

***Directing the Choral Music Program* by Kenneth H. Phillips. Oxford University Press, 2016.**

This resource addresses all aspects of the choral music program, including administration, rehearsal and performance, pedagogy, and career building. I find the chapters on vocal development, sight-singing skills, and rehearsal techniques to be particularly useful to those new to choral directing and the choral rehearsal setting. This book’s delivery is aimed at the choral music educator but can also be applied to almost any choral setting.

***Evoking Sound -- The Choral Rehearsal, Vol. 1: Techniques and Procedures* by James Jordan. GIA Publications, Inc., 2007.**

James Jordan has numerous publications addressing the musical and spiritual journey of the singer/musician/conductor. This resource specifically addresses the rehearsal process, complete with exercises and strategies to maintain a welcoming, free, and productive environment for singing. As a former band director, I gleaned much understanding from this volume on the inherent mental and emotional differences of choral and instrumental rehearsals.

***Excellence in Singing* by Robert Caldwell and Joan Wall. Caldwell Publishing Company, 2001.**

Excellence in Singing is a multivolume powerhouse of information, applicable to the novice director, experienced professional conductor, singer, voice teacher, or vocal coach. The volumes include: 1.) Beginning the Process, 2.) Mastering the Fundamentals, 3.) Advancing the Technique, 4.) Becoming an Artist, and 5.) Managing Vocal Health. For every vocal dilemma addressed, the authors present several useful and interesting exercises, along with a thorough but easy-to-understand pedagogical explanation for each. I have used this resource almost daily for warm-up and voice building exercises for my students and ensembles. The index of exercises makes it quite convenient to find needed information without having to fully search each volume.

***From your Multicultural/Ethnic Music R&R Chair:
Daniel Jackson***

We may not be “essential,” but we are unequiVOCAL!



A picture of my chorus room the evening our Indianapolis trip was canceled. We were supposed to leave that night.

It was the last time I would enter the room for the 2020 school year.

It's 7:50AM. It has been a day and a half since the sobering COVID-19 webinar sent shockwaves through the vocal music world without a clear resolution. I am in my "office" -- the downstairs playroom -- watching ESPN while preparing for next week's "lesson." It is a *Spirit Week* that I am calling #stonebridgechoircares. We will encourage students and families to show support and appreciation to local businesses, nurses, hunger relief groups, and essential workers.

I have been watching "*Get Up!*" on ESPN. I love sports. Before I began pretending to be a member of the R&B group New Edition, I pretended to be the head coach of the Los Angeles Lakers. I loved, played, and studied basketball and other sports. Sports provided me with a physical and emotional release. Sports cultivated life skills that I believe were critical to my development as a human being and CHORAL DIRECTOR. These skills include teamwork; respect for others; an intense, tunnel vision-like focus on a goal; flexibility and the ability to adjust quickly to new obstacles; crisis management; keeping cool under pressure; dealing with jerks and still finding ways to learn from them; developing a thick skin; and a decent sense of humor. Most importantly, sports seemed fair. (Well, mostly.) If you are good enough, you will play. (Well, mostly.) If you play better than your opponent, you will win. (Well, most of the time.) Your gender or race had no place on the blacktops, sandlots, or open fields where I stayed in "*Lower-to-Middle Class, Minority-Dominated Apartment to Low Income Housing/Essential Worker, USA.*" Your race did not matter. If you could ball, "You could BALL!" We were trying to win games! If my fastest competition in track was Rachel Jones from Tangelo Park, then good for her. I was trying to smoke her just like any other person in the starting blocks. If she beat me, then I needed to learn her secret! Sports were, and still are, a diversion from the foul, inequitable, and unjust nature of our society. It also inspires people to strive for greater things. Maybe that is why the NFL is releasing their full season schedule with no delay.

Wait. What? They are going to develop health and safety protocols, but they want the players to play on the field? AGAINST EACH OTHER? But what about the yelling, grunting, overactive respiration function within close, personal proximity? WOW! I just saw that they are playing professional baseball in Korea! The players have no masks, all grouped in dugouts. There are singers and dancers performing for an announced capacity crowd of zero! Even college football, with unpaid student athletes, are considering WHEN they will return for the upcoming season.

I suspect there are many reasons why some professional and amateur athletics are trying to push forward. Although financial considerations are playing a strong role in their decisions, it is not the only catalyst. With so many athletes being multi-millionaire, social media “influencers,” surviving one year without a paycheck could be difficult, yet feasible. Their organizations have dealt with strikes many times before and survived. College players may worry about losing time to build a resumé for pro scouts, but the likelihood is that most young men and women that show professional, athletic potential have been vetted since middle school. And, with social media improving their brand while reminding others of their abilities, one year is not going to knock them off the radar. So, why do so many student athletes WANT to start practicing as soon as protocols help to provide them with SOME IDEA of safety?

PLEASE BE ADVISED: I am not a doctor or psychologist. I have no verifiable data to support my opinion. I believe that society’s need for a *diversion from foul, inequitable, and unjust social norms*; and the inspiration, joy, and community pride that comes with *the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat* is much stronger than we are all willing to admit. Athletes are not essential workers, but they seem to be unequivocally important to our communities, states, and nations.

Ladies and gentlemen, during this time of uncertainty it is important to advocate for how unequiVOCALLY important vocal music education programs are to our communities.

You are great at dealing with crisis management, and there is no doubt that we are in a crisis. Trust me when I say that parents are becoming very aware of how great you are at working with their kids! (LOL!) Let us be flexible, creative, and willing to adjust. Let us work together with a singular goal to increase our ability to offer viable, team-oriented vocal music education programs that divert our society’s attention from the foul, inequitable, and unjust social norms we currently face. Music is a way of bridging the gaps of inequity and inequality in our nation. The introduction of more technology cannot replace the wonderful authenticity and communion of in-person classrooms/rehearsals, but it can expand your ability to use music as an instrument of change. You can reach out to communities and cultures unlike your own. You can foster growth and understanding through activities that explore forms of vocal communication in ways different than your own. You can teach students how to use recorded self-assessments to gain a better understanding of their vocal and emotional interpretations.

The possibilities are limitless, but WE MUST ADVOCATE for ourselves. We must let the nation know that we are here to serve and that what we do is *#unequiVOCALLY* important. Be patient. Be purposeful. Be passionate. The world still needs us. Education still needs us. Remember those professional development days when administrators would speak to the faculty about the “new curriculum initiative to help students learn” and it was stuff that WE ALREADY DO (e.g., differentiated instruction, allow for student voice and creativity, team-based learning, direct instruction, Marzano, etc.)? As usual, we will need to lead the pack without receiving the credit for blazing the trail. **Be unequiVOCAL!**

From VA ACDA member: Jacob Lash

Choir is an ensemble art. Impossible to do alone. BUT, there is so much we still *can* do. Follow links for websites & playlists. ENJOY!

1) Eight Great Choirs/Groups to Listen to

Ansan City Choir - [YouTube](#)
Choral Scholars of University of College Dublin - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
King Singers - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Pentatonix - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Salt Lake Choral Artists - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Soweto Gospel Choir - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
St. Olaf Choir - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Voces8 - [YouTube/Spotify](#)

2) Music Theory Lessons and Exercises

<https://www.musictheory.net/> - interactive lessons, customizable practice exercises
[YouTube playlist of theory tutorials and ear training](#)

3) Sight-Singing Practice

[Playlist of SS tutorials & practice videos](#)
[Folder of SS examples](#)

4) Vocal Technique/Voice Lessons

[Voice Lessons to the World](#)
This is a YouTube playlist of 5-15 min videos, each taking a topic of vocal technique I've watched every video. This guy does a great job teaching technique.

5) Watch past GCC concerts

Get comfy and reminisce, or if you're new, get a glimpse of our past rep!
[YouTube playlists](#)

6) Explore a new genre of vocal music (and there are so many more!)

Broadway - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Bluegrass - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
English Hymns & Anthems - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
German Chorales - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Gospel - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Korean Traditional - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Latin Jazz/Bossa Nova - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Middle Eastern & Arab - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Native American - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
R&B a cappella - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Rock & Pop - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Spirituals - [YouTube/Spotify](#)
Vocal Jazz - [YouTube/Spotify](#)

7) Listen Through the History of Vocal/Choral Music

Early/Medieval Music ([Gregorian chant](#), [organum](#))

Renaissance ([Palestrina](#), [Tallis](#), [motets](#), [madrigals](#))

Baroque ([Bach](#), [Handel](#))

Classical ([Mozart](#), [Haydn](#))

Romantic ([Mendelssohn](#), [Brahms](#))

20th Century ([Rutter](#), [Lauridsen](#), [Arvo Part](#), [Misc.](#))

21st Century ([Whitacre](#), [Forrest](#), [Esenvalds](#), [Gjeilo](#), [Misc.](#))

[The Most Beautiful Choral Music Ever Written playlist](#)

8) A Topic That May Blow Your Mind

[Overtone Singing](#)

You can also find these useful links on the Gainesville Community Choir website at:

<https://gainesvillecommunitychoirdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2020/03/8-great-ways-to-do-choir-stuck-at-home.pdf>



From your Newsletter editor: Matthew Russell

Virginia Harmony



COVID-19 July 2020 Special Edition

The VA-ACDA leadership team and I would like to invite all of you to contribute your articles and ideas for our COVID-19, *July 2020 Special Edition of Virginia Harmony*. As your choruses and institutions make decisions regarding how to move forward over the next months, it would be wonderful to hear from you. Please feel free to share about innovative, “remote”/online platforms for effective vocal instruction, successful models of practice, lesson plans and resources, and any other ways that you have been able to keep your choirs and audiences engaged and connected.

Article due date: July 1, 2020

Publication date: July 15, 2020

Send to: mnr10707@gmail.com

VA-ACDA LEADERSHIP TEAM DIRECTORY

Amy Moir
President
W.T. Woodson High School
amoir@vaacda.org

Borwy Tynch
President-Elect
Fairfax Choral Society
borwy.tynch@gmail.com

Pam McDermott
Vice President
Longwood University
pmcdermott@vaacda.org

Margie Woods
Treasurer
Luther Jackson Middle School
mamwoods@gmail.com

Jane Morison
Membership Chair
Mountain Empire Children's Choral
Academy
janemorison1@gmail.com

Hannah Wunsch Ryan
Communications Director
University of Virginia
College at Wise
hannah.wunsch.ryan@gmail.com

Matthew Russell
Newsletter Editor &
Southeastern Region Coordinator
Norfolk State University
mnr10707@gmail.com

Jane Waldrop
Social Media Coordinator
Clearview Elementary School
jwaldrop23@yahoo.com

Purev Arslanbaatar
Webmaster
Foe Middle School
purevarslan@gmail.com

Leslie Dripps
Children's Choir R&R Chair
City Singers Youth Choirs
lesliedripps@gmail.com

Susan Dommer
Junior High/Middle School R&R
Chair
Stonewall Middle School
dommersw@pwcs.edu

Megan Cartwright
High School R&R Chair
megan.cartwright1@gmail.com

Michael Slon
Community Choir R&R Chair
University of Virginia
ms9ec@virginia.edu

Jessica Irish
Music and Worship R&R Chair
Messiah United Methodist Church
jessica.irish@gmail.com

Joey Trivette
Two Year College Chair
Southwest Virginia Community
College
Joseph.Trivette@sw.edu

Shane Lynch
Four Year College Chair
Washington & Lee University
lynchs@wlu.edu

Kerry Wilkerson
Tenor/Bass Choir R&R Chair
George Mason University
kerry.wilkerson@gmail.com

Sherlee Glomb
Soprano/Alto Choir R&R Chair
Glomb Music Studios
glombstudios@gmail.com

Daniel Jackson
Multicultural/Ethnic Music R&R
Chair
Stone Bridge High School
daniel.jackson@lcps.org

Darden Purcell
Vocal Jazz R&R Chair
George Mason University
dpurcel2@gmu.edu

Vera Crouse
Contemporary/Commercial Music
R&R Chair
Chalkley Elementary & Greater
Richmond Chorus
sassysingervmc@gmail.com

Harlan Zackery
Instrumental to Vocal R&R Chair
Norfolk State University
h Zackery@nsu.edu

Annabella Mills
Middle School Honor Choir Chair
Loudon County
anabelle.mills@lcps.org

Meredith Bowen
Student Activity R&R Chair
Radford University
mbowen@vaacda.org

Nichole Wright
Student Chapter Representative
Radford University
jwright242@radford.edu