

Illinois-ACDA BOARD REPORTS – September 2024

NOTE: The Treasurer's detailed financial Reports are in separate files.

President Elect, Amy Branahl

Recent successes & challenges:

- Working on building a committee for the Summer Re-treat! Let me know if you're interested in helping with the planning!!
- Working with Andy Bruhn to provide Grad credit from ISU for the summer Re-Treat.
- Working with the ISU Campus to provide subsidized housing for college students and members who are not attending the Summer Re-Treat due to financial barriers.
- Continue to meet with Paul & Ben as needed.

Activities in progress:

- Thank you so much for helping trying your best to fill out your position information. If you haven't taken time to add to your position, I will send a reminder email so we can know how best to support you and the organization.
- Planning promotional ideas to promote

Future plans & goals:

- Plan the Re-Treat and also get headliners lined up for Summer ReTreat 2026.

Past President, Laura Coster

Recent successes & challenges:

The IL-ACDA Partnership Award was created to show appreciation to organizations that support our organization. This new award will be offered in 2025. One nomination and one recommendation letter are required. See the website for details if you would like to nominate an organization.

Written guidelines for the Decker Award are being refined for this year's selection committee. I reached out to two former Decker Committee members in past years to help write the guidelines:

- Special thanks to Dennis Morrissey and Brett Goad, two past ILACDA Presidents for creating guidelines for the the Decker selection committee in future years
- Specific guidelines will allow the anonymous committee to function smoothly and consistently from year to year
- The Immediate Past President will continue to select the anonymous committee with recommendations from the board, former Decker Award recipients, and Past-Presidents
- The Immediate Past-President has the task to run the Decker Committee but will continue to be a non-voting member in the selection of the Decker nominations that will be presented to the board for the final vote
- District chairs are encouraged to nominate IL-ACDA members for the Decker Award and other awards so members from different districts will receive IL-ACDA awards

- Encourage others to nominate conductors who work with many different ages of singers including elementary, middle school, high school, college, and professional.

Activities in progress:

- Encourage board members to nominate a business or organization for our Outstanding Partnership Award to be given in 2025
- Continue to support the Decker Award process so that we have excellent candidates nominated from different areas of the state and conductors who direct choirs at any level from elementary through professional
- Continue to encourage the membership to nominate members for the Young Director Award from all areas of the state
- Assist the board in tasks, as needed, and be a listening ear to the exec team

Future Plans and Goals

- Continue to help others run events well. If you are running a large or small event for the first time, feel free to reach out to me!
 - Learn how to create a balanced, reasonable budget
 - Learn ways to save money by choosing the right location and more
 - Learn how to create a schedule that balances learning, experiences, and time to build relationships with colleagues
 - Learn how to delegate and create a strong team to run the event
 - Build future chairs for events by giving others leadership opportunities

Secretary, Puja Ramaswamy

Recent successes & challenges:

- Wrote an article for the Podium
- Created a template for Board Reports

Activities in progress:

- Developing a Secretary checklist for each meeting so nothing is forgotten! Checklist will include places we've used for Food Orders - IMEC and Summer ReTreat

IL-ACDA Membership Chair, Kayley Smetana

Recent successes & challenges:

Successes:

- Increasing outreach across the state through not only constant contact, but through emails directly from district reps and membership chairs.
- Increasing engagement and visibility at events like IMEC and trying to connect with younger teachers to get them into ACDA
- New initiatives like tags for content area/age group, gold lanyards for board members, etc

Challenges:

- Currently looking for another co-chair

- Trying to increase buy-in for membership - a lot of directors know about ACDA, know what we do, and even attend events like our reading session or reception, but still don't see the value in spending the money for membership. Similarly, many directors can "only justify" one professional organization membership, and they prioritize ILMEA either because of student participation or events like IMEC.

Activities in progress:

- Fall membership drive upcoming
- (hopefully) advertising open positions soon

Future plans & goals:

- hold more events at IMEC and/or have presence at the expo
- Find a way to host a young/new teacher event to create a support system and get teachers to buy into ACDA early on in their career?

IL-ACDA Children's Choir Repertory Chair, Marianna Kosaya

Recent successes & challenges:

- The choir piece for IMEC has been chosen and submitted.
- Festival Outreach: I contacted several community children's choirs to participate in the IL-ACDA Children's Choir Festival, "Restoring the Broken Glass.":
- Two choirs have responded positively and expressed interest in participating.
- Challenges in contacts within certain choirs have complicated the outreach process, requiring repeated follow-ups and updates.

Activities in progress:

- Awaiting responses from three other choirs.
- Following up with choirs that have not yet responded.
- Continuing efforts to reach more choirs and obtain contact information.

Future plans & goals:

- Expand Outreach: Reach out to more choirs, ensuring we have a diverse lineup for the festival.
- Set Registration Deadline: Create a firm deadline for choir sign-ups to ensure timely event organization.
- Program Discussions: Begin discussions on the performance program with choirs that have confirmed their participation.
- New Composition: Start working with the composer on the theme of a choir piece to be composed specifically for the festival, aligning with the theme, "Restoring the Broken Glass."

IL-ACDA Community Choirs, Christopher Windle

Recent successes & challenges:

- none at this time

Activities in progress:

- Continuing to work on publicizing and now adjudicating composition award applicants

Future plans & goals:

- Community choir survey across state
 - Goal: living resource for people to find choirs across Illinois

Diversity Initiatives Committee Chair, Kate Lee

Recent successes & challenges:

- Join Voices will be on Friday, October 18, 2024. Thank you to Paul Laprade and the exec board for helping to secure funding for this year. We have created an M.O.U. between the newly-forming Join Voices Committee and IL-ACDA to create a plan for sustaining the event through partnership in the coming years.

Activities in progress:

- BIPOC Mentorship Program will kick-off in the fall. The goal is to connect pre-service and early career choral directors who identify as BIPOC with those with more years of experience. Mentorship program will culminate in an in-person reception held at Summer ReTreat 2025.

Future plans & goals:

- We welcome Liza Calisesi-Maidens as a new member of the DIC!
- We are excited to announce Nythia Martinez as the next DIC Chair! Transition timeline to be determined.

IL-ACDA Middle School/Junior High R&R, Carol Munn

Recent successes & challenges:

1. Junior Choral Festival clinician and piano accompanist hired!
2. Junior Choral Festival registration posted
3. Podium article has been submitted
4. Three IMEC song selections have been submitted

Activities in progress:

- Registration for the Sept 28th Junior Choral Festival is now open

Future plans & goals:

- Sept 28th IL-ACDA Junior Choral Festival will be held at ISU with guest clinician Tim Fredstrom!

R&R Treble Choirs, Ali Kordelewski

Recent successes & challenges:

- Secured College of Dupage for our Treble North Festival

Activities in progress:

- Treble North - February 7th

- Plan to meet with Lara and Ben to see how we can best support and promote the Treble Central Festival
- Plan to send out information for the Treble North Festival and secure clinicians

Future plans & goals:

- Create a list of treble rep for choir directors to have access to with various voicings

Tenor Bass Rep, Brian Birch

Recent successes & challenges:

- I've had a number of people reach out to me regarding a tenor bass festival. There is a lot of interest in something like this.
- I will tailor the costs and fees to something similar to the Middle School festival.

Activities in progress:

- Tenor Bass Festival
- I've secured a host site at Aurora University with Dr. Fredenburg.
- Right now it is scheduled for January 24.
- I'm working on connecting with some colleagues about making sure we have at least four schools on board.
- This is open for all High School and college tenors and basses.
- I will look at securing a clinician soon after.

Senior High School Choirs: Ben Luginbuhl

Recent successes & challenges:

- Submitted pieces for IMEC reading session

Activities in progress:

- 9/10 festival...haven't done anything since the summer but will be contacting Roland and Ali to help however I can.

Future plans & goals:

- Nothing to report at this time

Repertoire and Standards Chair for Show Choir, Sean Hoffmann

Recent successes & challenges:

- Auditions are underway with good turnout for Honors Show Choir
- Lacking increased school involvement, same amount of schools last year

Activities in progress:

- Auditions are being processed and judged this weekend
- Students and directors will be notified Monday of student acceptance Future

plans & goals:

- Increase number of school participants/auditionees

IL-ACDA Board Music and Worship Chair, Dr. Keith Hampton

- Nothing to report at this time

Composition Competition Chair - Donald Fraser

Recent successes & challenges:

- We received 23 submissions for this year's Composer Award Competition. By far the most in a long time, maybe a record number. This could be as a result of the new format. ie: instead of giving the award to a single winning composition we have developed to giving a commission to the winning composer. Composers being able to submit a range of compositions as opposed to writing a specific piece appear to have responded favorably. It also seems to have been a good idea to expand the competition to the region as composers from several state have submitted.

Activities in progress:

- All submitted scores are now with the adjudicating panel (all of which, as the previous several years wish to remain anonymous). In the event of a tie breaker I have a fourth judge standing by for a casting vote if necessary. Result will be declared on October 15.

Future plans & goals:

- If we all remain pleased with this new format then that may well be the best way forward to accomplish the original goal of encouraging the creation of new choral music.

Activities in progress:

- Deadline for the Composer Award is Sunday, September 15
- 23 total submissions

Collegiate & Lifelong Chair, Randy Haldeman

Recent Successes & Challenges:

Over the past few weeks, we successfully launched our Illinois ACDA Chapter Student Membership Scholarship Initiative with an initial round of outreach to collegiate faculty across the state. Email letters were sent to all identified faculty contacts who work with collegiate choral students, providing information about the scholarship, a revised application form, and a brochure designed to help students understand this opportunity. Despite this effort, we have yet to receive any applications. While this lack of response poses a challenge, it also highlights the need for continued outreach and more targeted communication. A follow-up paper mailing to 68 identified collegiate contacts is scheduled for next week. We anticipate that this additional touchpoint will generate the desired engagement and that applications will begin arriving shortly.

Activities in Progress

- Follow-up Mailing: A follow-up paper mailing will be sent to the same 68 collegiate contacts in the coming week to reiterate the scholarship opportunity. This mailing will include another copy of the application form and brochure, serving as a tangible reminder to encourage students to apply.
- Application Review Process: We expect to begin receiving applications by the first week of October. Once we receive them, they will be distributed to the

membership committee for evaluation and approval. Upon their recommendations, we plan to issue award letters shortly thereafter.

Future Plans & Goals:

- Streamlining the Application Process: One of the primary goals moving forward is to refine and streamline the application procedure for future years. By making the process more efficient, we aim to start outreach earlier in the fall and avoid delays. This will ensure ample time for faculty and students to respond.
- Collegiate Events and Engagement: We plan to establish dedicated collegiate events, both at ACDA conferences and as standalone gatherings throughout the state. These events will provide valuable opportunities for students to engage with ACDA, network with peers and mentors, and experience the benefits of membership firsthand. Augustana has already volunteered to host one of these events, and we hope to organize additional gatherings in other regions.
- Expanding Collegiate Contacts: Another key goal is expanding our list of faculty and institutional contacts, especially in underrepresented geographical areas and constituencies. This will help us reach more students who could benefit from the scholarship and further promote diversity and inclusivity within IL-ACDA.

By addressing the challenges encountered so far and continuing our efforts to engage faculty and students, we are laying a strong foundation for the scholarship's success in future years. We remain committed to promoting student involvement, fostering diversity, and growing the next generation of choral music leaders in Illinois.

IL-ACDA Student Representative, Maggie Meyers

Recent successes & challenges:

- Successes: I have connected with Mr. Randy Hadleman to discuss goals and possible activities to promote collegiate involvement.
- Challenges: Trying to reach out to students who may not have access to an IL-ACDA chapter of their own but could benefit or wish to participate in one.

Activities in progress:

- Taking inventory of current student ACDA chapters and their advisor as a point of communication

Future plans & goals:

- Increase Awareness and Engagement Among College Chapters (i.e. implementing college specific events such as mixers, IL collegiate chapter meeting, round table discussions, etc)

District 1 Representative, Nythia Martinez

Recent successes & challenges:

- DIC
 - monthly meetings

- agenda items (multi-district membership)
 - Mission Statement
 - Brainstorming community building, recruitment, and continuing education
 - Plans for collegiate mentorship

Activities in progress:

- Join Voices Chicago
 - future reorganization
 - ACDA funding - THANK YOU!
 - **Building the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) for Join Voices Chicago (Completed 9/8/24)**

Future plans & goals:

- Continued celebration of diversity in IL-ACDA and ACDA
 - Interested in creating more entry points for ensemble-singing appeal
 - Plans for contemporary a cappella featured in ACDA initiatives?
 - Increasing collaboration between DIC and executive board
 - **addressed in the MOU**
- Increasing District 1 Membership

IL-ACDA District 3, Andy Bruhn

Recent successes & challenges:

- Successful 2023 ILMEA D3 Choral Audition Prep Day at ISU

Activities in progress:

- 2024 ILMEA D3 Choral Audition Prep Day at ISU while this Zoom meeting is happening!

Future plans & goals:

- Continue providing this free audition prep day for our district!

District 7 Representative, Roland Hatcher

Recent successes & challenges:

- Supporting various schools and teachers amid ILMEA season - creating additional resources and attempting to help ILMEA D7 Rep with various aspects of audition season
- Planned a concert for Stevenson w/4 D7 schools at Ravinia this April - explore more ways to bring various schools together.

Activities in progress:

- Slated to assist Amy, Ben and Ali with Honor Choir experience
- Examine D7 Membership - trends appear neutral/positive at this time
- Working on "All Stars of Music" tour w/Guardian Travel - hoping to engage

w/middle school teachers throughout region, and also engage them in ACDA happenings

Future plans & goals:

- Become more involved in DIC work
- Find more ways to highlight/celebrate/share the work of D7 teachers
- Make more frequent contact with membership

District 8 Representative, Abby Risner

Recent successes & challenges:

- Sent out a google form questionnaire to D8 members to try and get to know individuals
- Received little to no response

Activities in progress:

- Brainstorm more outreach ideas to connect D8. I learned that most of D8 is collegiate based on our handy spreadsheets :). I would like to think of ways to specifically help collegiate members feel connected so they continue membership when they become in-service teachers.

Future plans & goals:

- Poll or research reasons why in-service teachers are opting out of ACDA membership in D8

IL-ACDA Board District 9 Representative, Jennifer Whiting

Recent successes & challenges:

- Identified colleges and universities in District 9 that offer composition classes and/or degrees and shared them with Don Fraser for the composer award.
- I'm seeking tools or existing materials to use when inviting choral directors to consider new membership in ACDA. Trina Kopacka wrote, "Unfortunately, we do not have any printed promotional materials; however, you can point potential members to our website and forward information from our newsletters... I'm sorry not to be more helpful. If I think of anything else, I'll let you know. Thanks for spreading the ACDA cheer!"

Activities in progress:

- Received 15 responses to "Getting to Know You" form for District 9. I'll continue to pursue members in other ways.

Future plans & goals:

- I would like to help develop a very brief "elevator pitch" (available in print, PDF, and email formats) for the express purpose of inviting conductors who have never been members of ACDA.
 - What ACDA can do for you
 - Why you might consider membership in ACDA
 - How ACDA benefits you at each stage of your career
 - Why ACDA is worth the cost of membership
- I recall that ACDA at one time had a helpful document about advocating for institutions to cover the cost of membership. Does anyone remember this, or

know where I could find it?

IL-ACDA R&R College/University - Liza Calisesi Maidens

Future plans & goals:

- Nothing to report, as I am looking forward to transitioning from R&R College/Univ. to DIC committee member.