

IL-ACDA Board Reports

June 2018

Webmaster, Jason Hawkins

Recent successes & challenges:

- General website maintenance, ReTreat registration, and updates
- Facebook feed widget on the website stopped working due to changes in the way Facebook authorizes group pages. Still searching for a solution since people like the feed

Activities in progress:

- Need dates and details for all events for the new school year from chairs...
 - Summer ReTreat 2018
 - Fall Convention
 - Treble Choir Festival
 - Join Voices, Chicago
 - Honors Show Choir
 - 2-Year College Choir Festival
 - Collegiate Choral Festival

Future plans & goals:

- Update Repertoire page... has become out of date

Podium Editor, Monica Bertrand

Recent success & challenges

- I will be sending notices as Podiums are issued online next year

Future plans

- If you know of something interesting happening write about it and send it to me! It doesn't have to be your time for an article
- If your title or job has changed please e-mail it to be updated. I'm not always sure when people's jobs/titles change

Membership Chair, Jessica Palmisano

Recent successes & challenges:

- With the new chapter dashboard, it is way easier to find the contacts of the new members and lapsed members. The challenge has been emailing everyone without it taking days at a time. I also would just like to know what people want more of with membership

Activities in progress:

- We are in the process of figuring out an emailing system

Future plans & goals:

- I would like to buy an emailing subscription so we could send out organized emails to large quantities of people

(Membership cont'd)

- I would like to get together for social events outside of the normal three events for singing and bonding. I think we as choir directors miss singing and any opportunity to hang out with colleagues would be a great opportunity

Choral Composition Contest Committee Chair, Philip Spencer

Recent successes & challenges:

- Early in 2018, I assembled a committee of four contest judges in addition to myself: Beth Best (retired, District #204), Jeremy Landig (Lewis University), Sean Newman (District 7 Chair and W. J. Murphy Elementary School), and Holly Schmidt (Waubensee Community College)
- When only three entries were received by the original April 1 deadline, the deadline was extended to April 15. A total of ten submissions were received by the new deadline: seven pieces for treble voices and three for male voices
- For the first time this year, all submissions were required to be in electronic format. All entries were forwarded anonymously to each of the judges, with a deadline of May 6 for naming their "top three", together with explanatory remarks concerning their decisions

Activities in progress:

- The 2018 contest winner is *Rain Music* for SSAA voices by Robert Applebaum, formerly of Chicago, now living in Menlo Park, California. Mr. Applebaum has been notified of the committee's decision, and he will be present for the presentation of his \$1,000 award and the performance and recording of *Rain Music* at the ReTreat on Thursday, June 28

Future plans & goals:

- At the conclusion of the ReTreat, notice of the 2018 contest winner will be posted on the IL-ACDA website and also sent to ChoralNet
- My sincere thanks to the members of this year's contest committee for all their time and effort in service to IL-ACDA and the important cause of encouraging new choral composition!

Youth R&R Chair, Ron Korbitz

Recent Successes and Challenges:

- This position has been filled and I have been in contact with some of the R and S chairs that fall under the overview of this position.
- The challenge to date is defining the role of this position within the context of the IL-ACDA board. President Kesselman and I have had some communication on this and look to talk further

Activities in Progress:

- None at this time

Future Plans and Goals:

- Clearly outline the role of this position on the board and actively begin initiatives based on that stated role

Lifetime R&R Chair and Music in Worship, Michele Hecht

Recent successes & challenges:

- In the spring, I posted a few questions to the Facebook group to initiate conversation between members involved in worship music - a few people shared favorite anthems for Lent, etc.

Activities in progress:

- I have been working with Sean Newman (District 7) to plan a Music in Worship festival for District 7 in the fall. It will take place on Saturday, October 27 at First Congregational Church in Crystal Lake. ACDA members in District 7 who are involved in worship music are invited to bring singers to form a massed choir. Jeff Hunt is the guest conductor, and he has selected four anthems for the participants to prepare in advance and polish for performance in an afternoon concert. I prepared registration materials and Sean sent them out in May.
- I also worked with Jessica Palmisano (membership) to set up direct email account for IL-ACDA through Constant Contact. We hope to use this to more efficiently and effectively send out messages to the entire membership or sub-groups

Future plans & goals:

- I plan to continue reaching out to members and potential members through social media to engage in sharing ideas and resources

Repertoire and Resource Chair and Female Choirs, Aubrey Prince

Recent successes & challenges:

- 5th Annual Treble Ensemble Sing and Share Festival
 - Huge success!
 - Largest number of participants
 - Featured collegiate ensemble
 - Next year's date Thursday, January 31

Activities in progress:

- 6th Annual Sing and Share Festival Registration

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Future plans & goals:

- Illinois Female Choirs Repertoire List for IL-ACDA Website
- Higher and more consistent Social Media Presence for Female Choirs on IL-ACDA Facebook Page

College and University, Andrea Solya

Activities in progress:

We are planning to have a day-long meeting on the 27th of October at the UIUC School of Music. Please reserve that day for this exciting event. There will be something for everyone but the final program will depend on the budget approved by the Board during this meeting. We are counting on having college students and their conductors attend the meeting. It would be excellent to plan something like this every other year

Vocal Jazz R&S, Jennifer Seiler

Recent successes & challenges:

- Continuing the ongoing process of keeping an up-to-date list of available VJ combo players throughout the state, using collegiate and semi-professional musicians
 - Created Google Form for VJ combo players - still need to send to website chair
- Reached out to some smaller schools that are hoping to start a VJ program at their school and offered ways to help (colleagues to lean on, repertoire choices, challenge of no combo available, etc.)

Activities in progress:

- Continuing the process of creating a mass calendar with all VJ competitions, festivals, and interest sessions available throughout the state
- Currently in contact with other state VJ R&S chairs to find suggestions on how to better promote and advocate for the VJ side of ACDA
 - Collaborating with the divisional rep on suggestions for my position as well

Future plans & goals:

- Posting the full calendar (mentioned above) on the IL-ACDA website
- Inclusion of a state-wide ACDA Honor Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Middle/Jr. High Choirs, Puja Ramaswamy

Recent successes & challenges:

- Participated in a Junior High Choir Festival sponsored by Andy Jeffrey at Glenbard West HS. 4 schools participated and it was a great success!

Activities in progress:

- Planning repertoire for a Choral Reading Session at the ILMEA District 1 Festival in November
- Planning a new Digital Music curriculum for students who are 1:1 on Chromebooks. This is for my own school, but I could see how other teachers could find this useful for their own programs

Future plans & goals:

- After speaking with some directors in my area, I think it would be great to have more resources available for Middle/Jr. High directors interested in starting contemporary a cappella choirs. This could eventually turn into an ACDA sponsored annual festival focused on student workshops and performances

Men's R and S, Andy Jeffrey

Activities in progress:

- Still working on planning a men's festival for fall or spring. I have been in contact with Matt Begale about working on this together
- I have also been brainstorming on possible ways we can encourage men to come to a festival when many schools don't have a men's ensemble. Our district does a yearly men's festival with our junior high feeders for a morning of singing and all music is learned on the day of the event. I am considering something more in this vein mid-year to really get people excited about singing in a really difficult time of the year. I am open to any suggestions or input please!

Community Choruses, Eric Esparza

Recent successes & challenges:

- Successful contact with Artistic Directors
- Success discovering IL state resources for community choruses
- Challenge matching the needs of community choruses with IL-ACDA offerings

Activities in progress:

- Sharing IL state resources with Artistic Directors
- Contacting choruses regarding Holiday 2018 cross promotion
- Discerning which ACDA offerings are most meaningful to choruses of various sizes

Future plans & goals:

- Continue cumulative list of IL community choruses of all sizes
- Distill incentive language for choruses of various sizes
- Continue to evaluate usefulness of initiatives such as:
 - Shared visits of Master Teachers
 - Sheet Music Borrowing
 - equipment sharing
 - cross-advertising
 - community outreach
 - diversity & inclusivity training

Children's Choirs, Renee De Jager

Recent successes & challenges:

- Successes: Continuing to connect with directors of choirs in grades 5-8 in both private choral or public school settings
 - Brainstorming ideas with them and encouraging attendance at Retreat. A good number of potential first time attendees expressed interest in Retreat this year.
 - Discussions mainly revolve around gauging their interest in future festivals, choral clinics, best time of year, and challenges they face in preparing students for any ACDA events
- Challenges: Many of the elementary public-school directors I have spoken to express frustration in that their choirs are not part of the school day, but rather are before school or during recess and/or "seasonal". This affects their ability to enter students in various ACDA events. This is more of an issue for the upper elementary directors than those with middle school age students

Activities in progress:

- Talking with elementary music teachers in District 205 and other schools to see if they would be interested in any choral opportunities for their elementary and middle school students

Future plans & goals:

- Create a recurring IL-ACDA children's choir festival apart from a conference for Spring 2020 and then run it annually or bi-annually, thereafter. The objective is to broaden choral opportunities for the youngest choristers and their directors, and not detract from involvement in any fall conference or winter national/regional choirs

Two Year Colleges, Jeff DeLay

Recent successes & challenges:

- The Annual Two-Year College Choral Festival was held on Saturday, April 14, graciously hosted by Dr. Thomas J. Stauch and Harper College. This is the premier annual IL-ACDA event focused on two-year colleges
- The festival featured choral ensembles from Harper College, Waubensee Community College, Highland Community College, McHenry County College, and Joliet Junior College.
- Each institution's choir(s) presented about 25 minutes of music, and the event concluded with the combined performance of Joseph Martin's "The Awakening" by all participating choirs. The festival demonstrated the commitment of our two-year college choral programs to quality and variety of repertoire and to the needs and skills of our various ensembles

Future plans & goals

- The 2019 Two-Year College Choral Festival is scheduled for April 6, again at Harper College
- As always, the challenge is to solicit participation by more two-year college choral programs in this and other ACDA/IL-ACDA events and initiatives. Sparse participation may be explained by the fact that, for some directors, choral work is but one of several simultaneous career activities, and thus ACDA membership may be seen as an excessive commitment. Other directors may simply be unaware of all that we do. In either case, the opportunity for directors to attend just one or two conference activities or other events has a powerful potential to gain "buy in" on the part of Two-Year colleges

District 1 Representative, Richard Nunley, Jr.

Recent Successes

- Students from eight CPS high schools participated in the 2018 ACDA Central and North Central Divisions Combined Regional Conference in February. Directors prepared students for participation in the newly formed Chicago High School Honor Chorus. The Honor Chorus performed the world premiere of “Kumbaya” composed by Stacey Gibbs. The formation and preparation of the Chorus all took place in record time due to circumstances. However, the teachers and students worked hard to prepare the piece prior to rehearsal with the composer. Students and directors had the brief opportunity to work with Mr. Gibbs just prior to the performance. After the performance, Mr. Gibb offered to send each student a personally autographed pre-published copy of his piece
- The CPS High School Choral Festival sponsored by the CPS Department of Arts Education was held on April 28. This year’s Festival included approximately 800 students.
- ACDA member Casey Fuess (Lindblom HS) had his choir perform at the May, 2018 CPS Board of Education monthly meeting. After his performance, he presented a paper citing some of the major concerns of CPS choral directors, which led to a brief meeting with CPS CEO, Janice K. Jackson

Recent Challenges

- Directors are currently collaborating to investigate the problem of students not being able to take choir classes throughout their high school experience
- The issues concerning students being assigned additional AP, PE and Computer Science classes have prevented many students who would like to take choir from doing so.
- These important issues must be addressed because they affect the student numbers in choral classes, thus scheduling, and ultimately choral positions. Most high school choir, band and orchestra teachers in the CPS system and many others throughout the CPS system and the state are affected

Activities in Progress

- A small group of CPS choral directors have taken on the responsibility of starting a Google Group for CPS elementary and high school choir teachers. Currently, there is a similar group in place from the CPS Department of Arts. However, the directors feel it is not meeting their needs. The plans are to have a group specifically for choral directors that will hopefully first help to determine who they are and what position they are currently in, and then to provide a forum where they can address specific needs and concerns for others in the profession

Future Plans & Goals

- After the experience at the 2018 Regional Conference, some CPS directors have discussed the idea of producing a recording that features choral students from several/most of the CPS high schools. The principal purpose of doing the recording is to bring attention (in a big way) to the issues concerning students who are not able to take choir throughout their high school experience. The plans are for the recording to share a positive message to all stakeholders

District 3 Representative, Ben Luginbuhl

Recent successes & challenges:

- Contacted my district about ACDA activities
- Only challenge I have is figuring out who actually lives/works in my district. If I hadn't been involved in ILMEA leadership, I would have no idea. Is there a way we can make this easier? I sorted the list by zip code even though my district spreads from 609 to 618. Maybe add a "County" option on the registration form?

District 4 Representative, Josh Spear

Recent successes & challenges:

- Was able to coordinate with ILMEA District 4 Rep. to send out information on the Summer ReTreat to all of the District 4 Choral Directors. Hoping for increased representation from our district
- Have not yet been able to coordinate an ACDA combined festival/clinic event with a choir from another district (previously tossed around this idea with Ben L)
- Though not specifically an ACDA event, this past Spring I had a wonderful combined performance with my HS choir and Illinois College in Jacksonville. We performed separate sets for each other and sang a combined piece. It was a wonderful experience for the students and parents in attendance
- For second year in a row our church conference is the exact same dates as the Summer ReTreat and I cannot attend (very bummed- I miss ReTreat!) I want to be more involved and (District 4 Cont'd)
- supportive of ACDA even when my family schedule restricts my physical attendance. I very much welcome ideas on what I can do behind the scenes to benefit IL-ACDA more when I am unable to physically attend as often as I'd like in this season of life

Activities in progress:

- A new semi-professional chamber choir was formed in District 4 this summer called **Spero Chamber Chorale**, made up of area directors, church musicians, and other music professionals. I am singing in the ensemble, and Dr. Abby Musgrove of Illinois College in Jacksonville is directing. I'm not sure if there is a way for ACDA to support or partner with this new group, but I figured it was worth mentioning

Future plans & goals:

- Continue to promote ACDA events and involvement in my District through my connections as past ILMEA District Rep, and promote the national convention in KC.
- Invite students apply for the 2019 ACDA National Convention Honor Choirs
- Get to ReTreat finally again next summer

District 6 Rep, Andy Jensen

Activities in progress

- none

Future plans & goals

- Below you can read what I submitted at the last two board meetings, yet I have taken no action and don't foresee that changing in the near future. I am clearly not fulfilling my role as District 6 Rep. As such I am requesting that a replacement be found ASAP in the hope that IL-ACDA will more successfully engage with the choral community in my region
 - I would like to develop an IL-ACDA sponsored professional development/musical experience for District 6 choral conductors (K-12 teachers, church musicians, community choir directors, etc.) designed to energize and encourage. Maybe a director's chorus day with an active IL-ACDA member volunteering as guest conductor. It doesn't have to cost a lot of money, but my vision is to offer something totally free (no registration fee).
 - Not many choral professionals in District 6 participate in ACDA, so maybe offering services first will motivate people to join and begin participating in state, regional and national events. I will work to have a proposal by the January or June 2018 meeting

District 7 Representative, Sean Newman

Recent successes & challenges:

- Coordinating the Music in Worship Choir Festival on Saturday, October 27th, 2018 (8:30am-5pm). Budget/plan cleared with Lee:
- Visited First Congregational Church of Crystal Lake with Michele Hecht on Monday, March 5th to scope out Music in Worship Choir Festival host site. Also visited Honey Baked Ham (for catering lunch at the fest). Both went very well
- Jeff Hunt will be guest conductor for festival
- Michael Soto (Organist/Music Director, St. John's Episcopal Church, Flossmoor and Accompanist, Adult & Children's Choirs - Grande Prairie Choral Arts Society) will be accompanist for festival

Activities in progress:

- Invited churches via e-mail in District 7 area to festival - included registration form & flyer
- Michele is collecting payments & registration forms from churches that have been invited

Future plans & goals:

- Continuing to promote event & get churches to participate

District 8 Representative, Drayton Eggleston

Recent successes & challenges:

- Challenge - Was not able to obtain ILMEA District 8 Records in one unified document. Looking to use the RNS Website for manual documentation of schools within the District 8 boundary

Activities in progress:

- Have begun the process of manually identifying schools and choral personnel from the ILMEA District 8 Website RNS system

Future plans & goals:

- Create a central meeting gathering for Choral Directors in District 8 that is feasible for most directors to come to for a round table discussion about the needs of District 8

District 9 Representative, Bryan Kunstman

Recent successes & challenges:

- An e-mail reminder was sent to encourage directors to attend the summer retreat prior to the end of the year. I also gave a reminder about the national honors choirs and gave the link to the procedures that were available at the time
- Challenge – I still haven't been able to update my lists based on the latest membership list. Is there a way to transfer the formulas that Andy input in the past Google Forms so that the members can be sorted by district once again?

Future plans & goals:

- Continue to reach out to our directors, support ACDA events in any way possible, and try to increase the involvement of District 9 directors in our state events