President’s Message
Wendy Looker, NC ACDA President

I hope this issue of the Carolina Caroler finds you healthy, safe and full of hope for 2021. I find it nothing short of remarkable to look back on 2020 and realize the ways in which we have struggled, adapted, and persevered as a global pandemic continues to rage around us. We made it through the fall semester, and we’re still not out of the woods! While you may not have felt like your best–teaching –self last semester, I hope you’ve each taken a moment to appreciate how resilient you are, how resilient our singers are, and how deeply music touches us all. I may or may not have attended my virtual holiday concert in yoga pants, but I was just as proud of the ways in which my students contributed to our musical projects, and I am grateful for having exercised my creativity in new ways. I know that when I am able to be in the same room again with my singers, listening to their waveforms live, waving my arms around freely without a mic and PPE strapped to my head, I will be all the more grateful for the ease with which humans can sing together in community.

The NC ACDA Summer/Fall Virtual Conference Series was successful beyond our expectations. So many of you contributed to conference sessions, planning and execution. Thanks to our conference planning committee, all of the R&R chairs, all of our board members, and our webmaster, Chris Chaffin. President-elect Jeremy Tucker has been an amazing copilot throughout, and he is already leading the planning process for our 2021 fall conference. I also want to acknowledge Beth Philemon and Choir Baton for a generous donation to NC ACDA during uncertain times. We are grateful.

Over a hundred choral practitioners from over ten states received a valuable introduction to the art of creating virtual choirs during our free “Virtual Choir Bootcamp” with Laura Sam. Quite fittingly, the Lara Hoggard Award was presented to none other than Laura Sam at the close of our virtual conference series. Laura donated countless hours to NC ACDA by sharing her newly-acquired expertise in virtual choir production, but her legacy of service to the choral art precedes her exceptional display of leadership during the pandemic. Laura Sam has been a quiet source of support and mentorship for music educators in North Carolina for decades. She is quick to volunteer, modestly referring to herself as a “worker bee.” I know you will join me in congratulating Laura for her exceptional performance on the stage, in the classroom, and most recently, behind the scenes on her computer.

President-elect Candidates

Check your inbox for your electronic ballot! The election period for the next NC ACDA President–elect ends January 25. We are fortunate to have two fantastic candidates, both with a long history of service to ACDA. Dr. José Rivera currently
serves on the Conference Planning Committee as well as the Diversity Initiatives Committee. Dr. Aaron Jackson is currently R&R Area Coordinator for Lifelong Singing as well as the Interest Sessions Chair. You'll find headshots and biographies in the pages that follow. Please vote – the process is quick and easy.

**Board Changes**

I want to thank Dr. Melodie Galloway for her years of leadership as Reading Sessions Chair. Dr. Galloway concluded her service by moderating an excellent virtual reading session with a focus on composers of color. We welcome Micah Brewer as our next Reading Sessions Chair. We also thank Dr. William Southerland for his service as R&R Chair for Community Choirs. William has also served on the Diversity Initiatives Committee and the Conference Planning Committee, sharing his significant tech savvy through interest sessions and in supporting the execution of our virtual conference series. William is moving to Chicago to become the artistic director of Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire. While we are sad to see William leave North Carolina, we wish him the very best in what is sure to be an exciting new chapter of his career in a fantastic city.

**Diversity in Music: Be Inspired, Be Rejuvenated, Be Encouraged**

As you've probably heard, the national conference, previously scheduled to be held in Dallas, is now slated to be fully online. #ACDA2021 includes a three-day agenda packed with information, choral artistry of the highest level, and opportunities to connect with colleagues from around the country. I cannot imagine a time when we need to share, support and learn from each other more than right now. Register for Diversity in Music before January 27 in order to receive the discounted rate, which is a $40 savings for members and a $20 savings for student and retired members. The conference includes:

- **37 Performances**: children’s, youth, worship, college/university, community, international, and GALA choruses
- **42 Interest Sessions**: varied topics serving the needs of choral musicians in every context
- **Reading Sessions, Virtual Exhibits, and Composer Exhibition**: Resources for now and the future
- **Social Networking**: Alumni receptions, R&R forums

**Student Conducting Masterclasses**

An exciting addition to the national conference is the National Student Leadership Academy (NSLA). This is a separate conference track for pre-registered students in grades 8-12. All sessions and concerts are presented through Pathable virtual event platform. Participation will require a laptop or tablet. Middle and High School teachers – please consider bringing your students – all of the necessary information is posted along with other conference details at [ACDA.org](http://ACDA.org).

The national conference is an opportunity for us to be inspired by innovative performances and stories of perseverance during extraordinary times. I’m not sure exactly how the invited and auditioned choir performances will work in this virtual format, but I can’t wait to find out. We know from our state conference that virtual reading sessions and interest sessions can work just as well as in-person sessions, and while we will can never replace sharing a meal or catching up with old friends at a reception, we will cherish that time all the more when it becomes possible to gather again in person. Until then, we will seek encouragement and inspiration in solidarity with our choral community in the virtual realm. I hope to see you online March 18–20 to “celebrate the richness of our diverse choral communities.”

**R&R Chairs**

- **Boychoirs**
  - Jeremy Tucker
  - Raleigh Boychoir
  - jeremytuckertucker@gmail.com

- **Children’s Choirs**
  - Dena Byers
  - Durham Children’s Choir
  - denabyers@durhamchildrenschoir.org

- **College/University Choirs**
  - James Franklin
  - East Carolina University
  - franklinchoir@gmail.com

- **Community Choirs**
  - William Southerland
  - TPPA Men’s & Women’s Chorus
  - UNC-Greensboro
  - williamsoutherland@gmail.com

- **World Musics and Culture**
  - Gerald Knight
  - Elon University
  - gknight2@elon.edu

**Jazz Choirs**

- **STEPHEN FUTRELL**
  - Elon University
  - sfutrell@elon.edu

- **Junior High/Middle School Choirs & MiddleFest Coordinator**
  - Catie Hitzigrath
  - Lexington Middle School
  - catie.hitzigrath@gmail.com

- **Men’s/TTBB Choirs**
  - Jeremy Nabors
  - Vox Virorum Men’s Chorus
  - njabors@chccs.k12.nc.us

- **Music in Worship**
  - Karrie Rushing
  - First Presbyterian Church
  - Rushing.Karrie@gmail.com

- **High School Choirs**
  - Dareion Malone
  - Marvin Ridge High School
  - Waxhaw
  - dareion.malone@ucps.k12.nc.us
ACDA VIRTUAL CONFERENCE
March 18-20, 2021

Join us and be Inspired, Rejuvenated and Encouraged with over 37 performances, 42 interest sessions, a virtual exhibit show and much, much more.

REGISTER NOW AT ACDA.ORG
Candidates for NC ACDA President-elect

**DR. JOSÉ RIVERA** serves as an Associate Professor of Choral Music, Coordinator of Music Education, and conducts the University Chorale at the University of North Carolina, Pembroke. He has conducted senior and junior high honor choirs at the district, state, and regional levels and conducted and presented sessions at state, division, and national music conferences of the American Choral Directors Association and the National Association for Music Educators. This year, Dr. Rivera conducted Cantaré (a Latin-American Honor Choir) at the ACDA Southern Region Conference.

Dr. Rivera received his Ph.D. in Music Education and Conducting from Florida State University. During his tenure in Florida, he taught music for fourteen years at the elementary and high school levels. Rivera just completed serving a six-year term as ACDA National Chair for Ethnic-Multicultural Music and currently serves on the NCMEA Board as Teacher Education chair. He really enjoys preparing future music educators in North Carolina.

**DR. AARON R. JACKSON** is the Associate Pastor of Worship and Arts at Christ Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC. In this capacity, he oversees a comprehensive music ministry, which includes both choral and instrumental ensembles. He also serves as Director of Fine Arts at Friendship Christian School in Raleigh, NC. Additionally, he is an adjunct professor of music at Campbell University.

In addition to ministry and teaching responsibilities, Dr. Jackson appears regularly as a guest conductor and maintains an active schedule as a local and regional choral clinician and adjudicator. He also holds leadership roles in both NC ACDA and Southern Region ACDA.

Dr. Jackson holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a Master of Church Music degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Campbell University. He and his wife Laura, daughter Julia, and son Barnabas live in Raleigh.
President-elect’s Message
Jeremy Tucker, NC ACDA President-elect

I have learned almost all that is positive and good in my life, such as relationships and friendships, people, community, and things that unify and bring joy, through music.

—Bob Chilcott

Many of you have been leading your choirs virtually over the past months. Quickly we have learned new strategies to help our choirs, colleagues, and profession keep singing and stay connected. Congratulations to President Wendy Looker on her quick pivot in conference direction in response to the global pandemic and her remarkable leadership and collaboration with our conference committee to plan multiple relevant and engaging virtual conference experiences for NC ACDA members. Your feedback is important to the conference committee as we start to plan our next conference. Please complete this survey if you attended at least one session of our 2020 Virtual Conference Series: Equip, Imagine, Immerse, Connect.

2021 NC ACDA CONFERENCE
We Rise, We Sing: Our Vision Unfolding
October 8-9, 2021 | Meredith College, Raleigh

Planning has already started for our 2021 NC ACDA conference which will be held over two days at Meredith College, October 8-9. Our headline clinician Eugene Rogers is the new Artistic Director of The Washington Chorus and has led the choral community nationally in virtual performing. He also serves as the Director of Choirs at the University of Michigan. In the summer, he serves as Dean for the Chorus America Conducting Academy on the UM campus in Ann Arbor. Upon receiving the Sphinx Medal of Excellence in 2017, Eugene founded EXIGENCE, a professional vocal ensemble highlighting artistry within Black and Latinx communities. EXIGENCE celebrates the power of community and expression through choral music. Composed of vocal artists including solo performers, educators, conductors, and composers, EXIGENCE falls under the umbrella of the national organization, Sphinx.

The conference committee is planning for both in-person and hybrid options for attendees during our Fall Conference. Shannon Gravelle will welcome us back to Meredith College’s beautiful campus. Meg Stohlmann is redesigning audition requirements for performing choirs. Micah Brewer is re-imagining our reading sessions for both in-person and virtual experience and Nana Wolfe-Hill will introduce the NC ACDA 2021 Undergraduate Conducting Competition in this issue of the Carolina Caroler. The conference planning committee will convene in January and continue its innovative planning. We look forward to sharing with our membership the many opportunities that will provide access for NC conductors, choirs, and students to this year’s NC ACDA conference.

2022 ACDA SOUTHERN REGION CONFERENCE
Tune Your Hearts
February 23-26, 2022 | Raleigh

The 2022 ACDA Southern Region Conference “Tune Your Hearts” will be hosted right here in our home state–North Carolina. Plan now to converge with choral directors from across our Southern region in downtown Raleigh, February 23-26, 2022. Performance venue sites will include Meymandi Concert Hall, Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts, Fletcher Theatre, and the Raleigh Convention Center. Many NC ACDA members have joined the Southern Region conference planning committee. Updated information about the upcoming conference will be shared and can be found at http://acdasouthern.org.
“I Can’t! I Have Rehearsal!”
Tips for a Successful Rehearsal

Heidi Hickox-Gordon, NC ACDA Show Choirs Chair

The “show business” elements and unique qualities of show choirs and pop a cappella choirs of today are not often found in the traditional choral experience and therefore require some distinctly different rehearsal techniques. As with all choirs, developing an ideal, healthy tone is a primary concern and should be a consistent area of reinforcement when rehearsing and producing a quality performance set. In order to avoid damaging the voice, the director should choose repertoire that fits the practical ranges of the performers, and healthy vocal production should be habitually practiced, especially when adding choreography.

The “we’ve got plenty of time” mentality produces poor time management habits.

Show choirs must practice and clean choreography, while pop a cappella choirs must add visual elements to a highly stylized sound. However, as with other choirs, members will benefit from rehearsing in a manner consistent with their planned performance or performance “season.” The creation of a master schedule that includes achievement goals and student assessments will help to assess pacing and progress. With most students I have worked with, early memorization definitely helps with the choreographic process and overall retention of lyrics and steps. It is likely that many rehearsals will be spent addressing core elements of the music—dynamics and diction to name a few, however, once these are in place the choreography and other tech elements will need to be added quickly. The saying of today goes, “perfect practice makes perfect”—this “perfect” practice should go beyond rehearsing music and choreography like it should be performed. I am always coaching my kids to envision their audience in rehearsals, and “sing it like they mean it!” We often use mirrors and video record rehearsals. This reflection and reinforcement also helps to encourage and maintain the vocal stamina that is required today of show choir and a cappella performers.

The more that can be accomplished sooner, the better. For show and a cappella choirs, and even musical theatre productions, the more common scenario I’ve seen is that of long, high-stress rehearsals that attempt to resolve problems that could have been addressed much earlier. The “we’ve got plenty of time” mentality produces poor time management habits and inefficient use of rehearsal time, thus adding unneeded stress to all involved. If the show will involve costume changes, audio equipment (wireless or corded microphones), platform risers, live instrumentalists, timed transitions, etc., then all of these things should be a part of the rehearsal process. Especially where young performers are concerned, the sooner these elements are introduced to the rehearsal process, the more natural they will become a part of the performance. The performers will learn how to address technical problems as they arise, but they must be given time to experience the conflicts that may occur in order to develop solutions to them. I have personally never found this strategy to be a waste of time.

Because of this last minute “panic”, and even distractions on all of the tech aspects of the “show,” it has been my observation that this is where directors then overlook the “choir” in the show—i.e. quality vocals go out the window as the “show” product, becomes the first priority. So, let’s pause for a moment and get back to the singing!
Compared to classical singing, vocal pop music artists frequently use a “brighter” tone, focusing more on mouth resonance—less on head resonance. While this is not always the case, singers will likely need to employ a different concept of tone, and even more diligence with engaging proper breath support when singing in this style—especially while doing more extensive choreography. Pop music tends to explore a wide range of dynamics and register. In particular, men are commonly expected to sing loud in their upper range, and women are expected to sing loud, or “belt” in their lower register. This, in combination with the shift in tone quality and the implementation of choreography, can produce unhealthy results. If healthy singing production cannot be achieved due to physically intensive choreography, then the choreography should be changed or cut, period. “If in doubt, take it out!” Any trending competitive scoring sheet should reflect that vocal production is weighted more than the “show”—if not, for me personally this is not a competition I would choose for my group. Even aside from the competitive venue, the “show” should never take over the value of healthy singers and beautiful singing!

Let’s keep the choir in “show choir!”

Happy, healthy rehearsing!

**Bibliography**


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**NC Arts Education Leadership Coalition (NC AELC) Report**

Anne M. Saxon, NC ACDA Executive Director

This group of arts education leaders has been busy working collectively on a myriad of concerns for everything “arts” in education, which includes our music and chorus leaders across our state. One of the top priorities since last March has been to provide the most up-to-date information and guidelines on how COVID19 has been affecting each of our arts disciplines. This has been shared with school boards and top administrators on how we can all move forward to the safest extent possible, providing an advocacy platform to draw upon for everyone. Here is the link for more information: [https://www.nfhs.org/articles/third-round-of-performing-arts-aerosol-study-produces-more-scientific-data-for-return-to-activities/](https://www.nfhs.org/articles/third-round-of-performing-arts-aerosol-study-produces-more-scientific-data-for-return-to-activities/).

Also, a **Cultural Arts Live** event was held virtually last December and sponsored by the Governor’s Office for all arts and humanities teachers and their students. NC ACDA sponsored a panel of collegiate choral directors to discuss the following:

- What choral experiences are available for interested students
  - Music Majors
  - Non-Music Majors
  - Levels of Choirs & Choral Offerings
  - Audition process for choirs
- Other singing experiences offered, i.e., musical theater, acapella, etc.
- Choir Scholarships Available
- Ended with a Q&A from the audience

Many thanks to these folks who led our panel:

- **Dr. Shannon Gravelle**, Meredith College
- **Dr. Wendy Looker**, Guilford College
- **Dr. José Rivera**, UNC Pembroke
- **Dr. Meg Stohlmann**, Appalachian State University
- **Prof. Ginger Wyrick**, UNC Charlotte, Panel Moderator
- **Dr. Welborn Young**, UNC Greensboro
Together When Apart: Building and Sustaining Choral Connections During COVID

Aaron Jackson, NC ACDA Lifelong Coordinator and Interest Sessions Chair

For the past eight months and for the foreseeable future, the way in which singers and conductors build and maintain connection looks very different than in previous years. However, the need to do so has never been more important. In a time when physical distance is a key to safety and health, finding ways to create closeness is a top priority for choral organizations of every ilk. The following is a summary of the interest session, “Maintaining Connections with Your Singers During COVID,” presented virtually at last year’s NC ACDA conference. This session highlighted specific ways in which connectivity was prioritized in the worship and arts ministry of Christ Baptist Church (CBC) where I am the musical director. This article concludes with a review of the NC Master Chorale Christmas recording project, used to build community and offer a beautiful musical concert for patrons.

Staying Connected Internally

During the onset and subsequent shutdown of the pandemic, the CBC worship and arts ministry had one umbrella goal: maintain various levels of community and musical engagement with our choral and orchestral participants. We significantly increased our use of social media platforms and other technological forms of communication to keep everyone informed and updated. In the very early days of COVID, each choral and orchestral member had the option to sign up for an individual zoom call, facetime, or telephone call with me. Many took advantage of this small gesture and positively commented on the value in sustaining a sense of community. Again, the goal was to offer ongoing means of engagement and to build momentum using new online formats.

Another way we promoted internal connectivity and community was through developing and expanding the roles of our choral and orchestral leaders. We have always depended upon the help of our Section and Shepherd Leaders but this year the need for their assistance was even greater. These individuals can lead musically and pastorally. During the course of a week, they may lead a sectional rehearsal, facilitate and manage prayer requests, and coordinate a meal drop off for someone in need. Giving these individuals more authority and leadership options greatly increased internal connections between the leaders themselves and the individual sections of the choir and orchestra. Furthermore, as things were sometimes changing daily, leaning on these helped me stay focused on important matters that needed my direct attention.

Staying connected musically was also an important facet of maintaining engagement. Prior to having rehearsals in any format, we assigned choir “homework” each week. Several anthems and corresponding recordings were sent to singers electronically with specific rehearsals instructions and goals. As safety protocols were developed and observed (masking, temperature measurements, physical distancing, air movers, limited rehearsal times), we began to facilitate hybrid rehearsals where singers could join in person or on a tech platform. With a large worship space, we strategically placed 50 singers in a 1200- seat auditorium where we also livestreamed the rehearsals so that online participants could stay engaged. We maintained various musical goals including preparing for Sunday worship leadership and virtual concerts. Our choir was split into two (2) smaller choirs so that we had no more than 20-25 singers in our 130-seat choir loft leading worship on a given Sunday. All of these elements more significantly aided our connectedness and continued musical growth.
Staying Connected Externally
If there are any positive consequences of the pandemic, slowing down and having time to think, reimagine, and recreate would be some of them. Many arts organizations heavily depend on the support of patrons. Leadership boards have had to proactively develop avenues whereby patrons and arts supporters stay engaged and connected to the organization. The following are simple but impactful ways that community members and arts constituents can connect with your arts organization:

- **Collect:** Collect feedback from your supporters about any number of topics ranging from COVID assistance to recruiting and programming. Seeking input shows an interest in their thoughts, shows concern for their well-being, and can be the impetus for new and exciting initiatives.
- **Share:** Take this opportunity to share fun and relevant content. Sending helpful resources and member-created content enhances and strengthens the connection between your individual membership and the patron body.
- **Communicate:** Keep your constituents updated. Communication is more important ever.
- **Invite:** Include patrons in key activities throughout the year. Find creative ways to let them see, hear and connect with your group.
- **Give:** Give them the music. Keep their spirits high by bringing music right into their lives.

Connecting on “Back-Burner” Projects
As groups take time to innovate in their various arts area, revisiting back-burner projects can significantly propel the organization in a positive trajectory so when groups are able to function in a more comprehensive manner, the organization is focused, efficient, and confident to move forward with a clear and thoughtful purpose.

- **Revisit:** Take time to revisit mission, vision, values, and brand. Ask hard questions to help clarify and focus purpose and structure.
- **Build:** Now is the time to strategically plan for growth. Elements of the pandemic will last, perhaps indefinitely, and preparing thoughtfully, considering residual practices is necessary.
- **Start:** Develop and adopt contingency and succession plans for future leadership, growth, retention and engagement.
- **Streamline:** Find opportunities to streamline operations and implement efficient systems.

A Brief Review of Creative Connection
In November of 2020, the North Carolina Master Chorale (NCMC) and their conductor, Dr. Al Sturgis, requested the use of Christ Baptist Church facilities for the purpose of recording a large segment of their 2020 Christmas concert, “Joy of the Season.” The NCMC is a large, multigenerational performing ensemble which historically hosts numerous concerts servicing thousands of constituents across North Carolina. Following safety protocols and using the large worship center to safely distance, the group strategically performed and recorded using various sub-group combinations which represented the entire group and created a fantastic musical experience for participants and audience alike. The recordings were layered in such a way that the entire NCMC was heard and seen. This process created energy, enthusiasm, and ongoing connections within the ensemble and with the patrons. Furthermore, it was inspirational and refreshing to observe the choir and facilitators diligently working to create beautiful music during a difficult time. I briefly interviewed Dr. Sturgis following the concert recording and asked him the following questions. His answers are below:

Q. What was the overall experience like?
A. It worked probably better than we expected from a technical standpoint, somewhat rushed and no margin for error, however.

Q. What where the main challenges both logistically and musically?
A. The challenges were numerous: limiting each group to 25 max (balancing and casting w/ strengths and abilities in mind), limiting time in the space to 30 mins per group, spacing singers so far apart from one another, keeping singers masked while singing, syncing each group to the initial live brass and organ track, then having an engineer who could stack the four separate ensembles together into one.

Q. Do you think it was “worth the effort?”
A. This may be a guess at this point...I would say so. The carols that we recorded at CBC will end up being about a third of our final “Joy of the Season” virtual concert that will also include a 16-voice chamber choir and a guest artist. But I was determined to find a way to represent a large ensemble in the final production as that is so important to the identity of the NC Master Chorale.

Q. What were the reactions/attitudes of your singers/ players?
A. The singers who elected to participate were happy and excited to be singing together. There were just as many in our group however who were not willing to undergo the risk. The players were pleased to get the work. I did have one player politely decline for safety reasons. We did do
temperature checks and require a COVID-19 screening form from each participant.

Q. Did this experience affect your repertoire selections? If so, how?
A. The rep had to be accessible, familiar, not overly complex (basically homophonic and not too rhythmic). There was no corporate rehearsal for this recording. The singers had the opportunity to sing through their parts individually and get markings via zoom prior to the recording.

Final Connections
Regardless of the artistic context, connection is a priority. Being separated physically does not prevent other connective options that will enhance our communities and musical endeavors. Connecting will take effort, imagination, and intentionality. If, however, we take advantage of this unique opportunity, the benefits will be evidenced in significant ways and could have a lasting impact on your organization.

Undergrad Conducting Competition 2021

Nana Wolfe-Hill, NC ACDA Women’s/SSA Choirs Chair

Undergraduate ACDA student members are invited to submit applications for the North Carolina ACDA State Conference Student Conducting Competition and Masterclass to be held in Raleigh, NC on October 8-9, 2021 at Meredith College. The application videos will be viewed by out-of-state judges and a maximum of 9 semi-finalists will be selected to participate in the competition at the convention.

Semi-finalists will conduct two pre-selected contrasting works in front of a panel of judges and NCACDA participants. Select finalists from the semi-final round will participate in a masterclass with Dr. Eugene Rogers as the clinician. Semi-finalists and finalists will conduct an octet of professional singers.

Selection Criteria
The selection committee will be guided in their acceptance process by the following criteria:

- Conducting gesture
- Style and articulation
- Interpretation and expression
- Overall effectiveness

Application Requirements
Student applicants must submit a front-facing video link (video cannot exceed 6 minutes). Please submit videos in MP4 format, not to exceed 100 MB. If needed, applicants may submit two separate videos each 100 MB or less. Please ensure the student name or institution name does not appear in the name of the file. The title of the video can be the composition name and composer.

The choir may be a live choir, piano only, or a high quality recording of a choir. If a recording is used, conduct as if the choir were live (e.g., eye contact). The work can be SATB, SSA, or TTB. The recording should not be in rehearsal format, but rather conducting a run-through of each piece. The video should not identify the student, institution, or major professor in any way (background or apparel).

COVID Precautions for the Conference
The quartet of professional singers, semi-finalists, judges, and clinicians will have their temperatures taken upon arrival, sign a COVID form regarding exposure and symptoms, be appropriately socially distanced and masked (except the semi-finalist when conducting). Semi-final and final rounds will be held in a large indoor space and split into 30 minute sessions to give time for air circulation in between sessions. NCACDA participant observers will be socially distanced and masked or view the competition via live stream.

Application Date Range: February 1 – June 1, 2021
Application Fee: $25/applicant
Semi-finalists notified: September 1, 2021
Application link will be on the NCACDA website by February 1

The 2021 NC ACDA Undergraduate Competition is generously sponsored by:

William Carroll • Don Coleman • Marta Force

Questions?
Contact Nana Wolfe-Hill at n.wolfehill@wingate.edu.
Hoggard Award Winner Laura Sam

Anne M. Saxon, NC ACDA Executive Director

I am pleased to announce that our 2020 recipient for the prestigious Lara Hoggard Award for Distinguished Service in Choral Music in North Carolina is Laura Sam. Many thanks to Sam Doyle for his outstanding leadership as the committee chair of this prestigious award.

North Carolina native Laura Sam has been a choral conductor and music educator for the past 36 years, directing choruses at Walter M. Williams High School, Meredith College, NC State University, Cary Academy, NC Governor’s School East, and Front Street United Methodist Church. Laura conducted both the NC High School All-State Women’s Choir and NC Middle School All-State Mixed Chorus, and frequently conducts festival choruses at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. She has led numerous choral tours throughout Italy, Austria, and the US. In 2007, Laura was honored as the NC Music Educators (NCMEA) High School Choral Director of the Year, and in 2018 was inducted into the NCMEA High School Choral Section Hall of Fame.

Laura received a Bachelor of Music in Music Education degree from UNC Greensboro, where she studied with Dr. Richard Cox, Ellen Poindexter, and Dr. Barbara Bair. She was among the first music educators in the nation to earn the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification in Music. Recognized for her expertise, she is called upon to design and lead professional development for choral music educators. Her impact is felt in classrooms across North Carolina and beyond, as former students and student teachers nurture the next generation of choral musicians. She is an active member of both NC ACDA and NCMEA.

A passionate advocate for the representation of women’s voices, Laura has commissioned new works such as I Sing That My Voice May Be Heard, by NC composer, Gwen McLeod Hall. Inspired by the life of Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai, this composition was premiered by the NC Governor’s School East Chorus under Laura’s direction. She led the NC Governor’s School Foundation to participate as a whole-movement consortium member in the commissioning of Appalachian Love Songs: Women’s Reflections on Love, Loss, and Strength by Minnesota composer, Linda Tutas Haugen.

Laura is currently immersed in creating virtual choirs and leading virtual choral rehearsals, and frequently teaches audio/video editing workshops for choral music colleagues.

She serves as the director of the NC Governor’s School East, leading a summer residential program for high school students. Laura enjoys traveling, hiking, kayaking, and volunteering with the Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail. She and her husband of 36 years, Andrew, make their home in Haw River, NC.

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**NC ACDA Hoggard Award Recipients**

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<td>J. Don Coleman</td>
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<td>Marta Force</td>
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<td>Barbara Bair</td>
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“We Rise, We Sing, Our Vision Unfolding:” Performing Choirs at Fall Conference

Meg Stohlmann, NC ACDA Auditions Chair

“We Rise, We Sing, Our Vision Unfolding” is the theme for our Fall 2021 conference. As I reflected on those three sentiments this past semester, I often wanted to do anything but rise up and sing. I am not ashamed to say that there were many days when I wanted to give up and throw in the towel, trying to find creative and engaging ways to rehearse both my college and youth choirs online. It felt like my first year of teaching all over again. But, like that first year, I did the best I could and I showed up. I showed up for my singers and I want to assure all of you that in many ways, that is the best gift we can give to our singers: our presence and undivided attention on them. I realized that the online format forced me to focus on the people like I never had before: individually. I consider myself a people first ensemble director, but online choir forced me to hyperfocus on who we were as a group of individuals making music together. After taking time to reflect on this past semester, and after the dust had settled on the virtual choir video productions, I realized what a gift that was to me. I bet I am not alone in finding that I learned more about my singers and their voices this semester than ever before.

Our vision unfolding for ACDA and the choral profession these next few years is sure to be different than years past. Therefore, we must take a step back to reflect and evaluate our traditions and practices. The inclusion of performing choirs at conferences is an important one. It provides a great opportunity for us to learn and grow from each other, and is also a wonderful experience for our singers. But we’ve made music differently this year. We’ve had to be creative, define goals differently, and perhaps make new traditions. So as you reflect on your own successes this past year, we invite you to celebrate and share your community with us! We are re-imagining the performing choir and audition process. Specific details will be forthcoming but think about multimedia opportunities, live-streaming your group into the conference, pre-recording a set in your home performing space; the sky is literally the limit. If money has been a deterrent in the past because of travel costs, that is no longer a barrier. If putting together a set of 25 minutes of music was a tall order for the beginning of the semester, that is no longer a barrier. If you never felt like you were quite ready or good enough to submit your choir to perform at a conference, throw that out the window! We want to learn about who you are as an ensemble and what makes your community unique, special, and more than just a polished choral tone. We MUST continue showing up and making music together, no matter the barriers. We must rise, sing and encourage others to join us. That is our vision unfolding.

Show Choirs
HEIDI HICKOX-GORDON
William A. Hough High School
Cornellus
heidi11.hickox@cms.k12.nc.us

Women’s/SSAA Choirs
NANA WOLFE-HILL
Wingate University
n.wolfewhill@wingate.edu

Youth & Student Activities
ANDREA VANDEUSEN
Eastern Carolina University
vandeusen17@ecu.edu

Specially-Appointed Officers (Ex-Officio)
Auditions Chair
MEG STOHLMANN
Appalachian State University
stohlmannmm@appstate.edu

Reading Sessions Chair
MELODIE GALLOWAY
UNC-Asheville
mgallowa@unca.edu

Interest Sessions Chair
AARON JACKSON
Christ Baptist Church Raleigh
arjackson821@gmail.com

Conference Site Host
SHANNON GRAVELLE
Meredith College
smgravelle@meredith.edu

Fall Luncheon Chair
ANNE SAXON
Winston-Salem Girls Chorus
midpatch@aol.com

Historian
MARTA FORCE
Greensboro
mforce@triad.rr.com

Lara Haggard Award Chair
SAM DOYLE
Greensboro
Sam2ann63@gmail.com

NC Sings! Chair
DENA BYERS
Durham Children’s Choir
denabyers@durhamchildrenschoir.org

Exhibits Chair and Music Industry Representative
MICAH BREWER
Winston-Salem
mbrewer@jwpepper.com
Interview with Composer Sherry Blevins

Dena Byers, NC ACDA Children's Choirs and NC Sings Chair

Those of us who have conducted children's choirs have our go-to composers that we know write quality music for young singers. What you may not know is that North Carolina's own Sherry Blevins should be on your list as well. Sherry has had a long career as a music educator and is currently supervising student teachers at Appalachian State University. As a relatively new composer, she has already won several awards and has her own series with Hinshaw music. Here’s some of what she had to share about her musical experiences.

What made you decide to start composing?
I’ve always admired composers and wished that I had that ability. Over the years, I’ve enjoyed helping my students develop composing skills, but never imagined that I had what it takes to do it myself. Then in 2015 I was asked to conduct the Durham Public Schools All-County Chorus. I’m not sure what possessed me at the time. Maybe I was feeling brave or maybe there’s something about being in your forties that makes you realize you should stop wishing and start doing, but I offered to compose a song for the choir at no extra charge. That piece called “If You Heard My Voice” was my first published piece and I’ve been composing ever since.

What are the most important skills and lessons you have learned in your development as a composer?
I’ve learned so much from so many people that it’s hard to narrow it down! I will say that my editor, James Green with Hinshaw taught me an important one early on and that is to trust my instincts. I’ve also learned a great deal about the publishing industry from William Carroll and my publisher, Steve Back.

Probably the most important lesson I’ve learned is from my loved ones and that is to not compare myself to other composers. There are so many amazing composers in the world that you can quickly lose confidence if you spend any time wishing you had what someone else has. I have to remind myself of that a lot.

Who has had the most influence on your career as a music educator, conductor, and composer?
It would be impossible to name just one! My first music teacher in elementary school was Sonja Sepúlveda. (She was just a baby when she started teaching, by the way), but she was the first person to make me feel like I had a special gift in music. She laid such a strong foundation for me in elementary school and then when I was in middle school, she transitioned to the high school program where I was lucky enough to have her as my teacher again.

My biggest influences as a conductor have been Hilary Apfelstadt, William Carroll, the late Robert Gutter, and James Anderson. I feel so fortunate to have had both choral and instrumental conducting teachers. I feel like I’m better able to serve the student teachers I supervise because I’ve had so many varied conducting experiences from such wonderful teachers!

The most influential person on my composing career is definitely Maribeth Yoder-White. She was the one who looked at my first piece and told me it should be published. She was also my professor and student-teaching supervisor at UNC-G when I was working on my bachelor’s degree and she has remained a mentor to me ever since. Any time I’ve needed guidance, encouragement, or a nudge, she has been there for me. I don’t think I’d be where I am today without her or any of the others I’ve mentioned.

What is your favorite age group to work with? Why?
I might get in trouble with my college students for this one, but my favorite is 4th through 6th grade. I just love how they are old enough to understand more
sophisticated musical concepts, but still young enough to find joy in learning new things. I also find that it is much easier to get a unified sound out of that age range. They’re so malleable and still want to please the teacher. I’m still a big kid at heart myself, so they seem to get my goofy sense of humor too!

What does your writing process entail? Take us through a little bit of that.
I’ve had the pleasure of doing composing workshops with many choirs. When I teach others to create, I’ve narrowed it to twelve steps. The first and most important is to not judge what comes out as it’s coming out. Nothing is more stifling to the creative process than judgment. As ideas come to you, record everything and write down everything. You can always go back and edit later, but if you judge and cross things out as you work, you will lose your creative momentum.

It’s also important to have a clear vision for what you want to say and who you want to say it—well, sing it. I compose my own lyrics, so it makes keeping the message pure much easier. I also find that the better I know the ensemble I’m writing for, the more successful the writing is. Luckily, I’ve conducted ensembles ranging from kindergarten through older adults, so it’s usually easy to imagine what any group might need and what they might relate to.

I’m sure each composer has their own unique process, but I tend to start with lyrics since the lyrics determine so much about the music itself. Words have a natural rhythm and there are always more important and less important words that should be stressed or not stressed. If you honor the text—whether it’s yours or someone else’s—your music will flow more naturally and even be more singable. When I’m composing, the melodies just seem to come to me. They always have.

I’ve always assumed that happened to everyone, but since I’ve started talking about my process with others, they’ve assured me that that’s not typical for most people. If they’re right, then I’m very grateful for that!

If you could give any piece of advice to a young choral director, what would it be?
I feel like the most important part of being a choral director is to remember that you are an artist first. The best lessons I’ve ever learned are the ones where I felt inspired or moved. Music is an amazing vehicle for both of those things! So, don’t just let your rehearsals be about the notes. Let them be about hope, love, truth, and making the world a better place. Share with your singers what inspires you and ask what inspires them. Model your love of the music and be brazenly joyful as you share the experience of making music with them. If you do those things, you won’t just have a job, you’ll have a career that feeds your soul and the souls of many others for years to come!

For more information about Sherry and to explore her compositions, please visit her website
This year has been different for everyone and yet chorus has still been the best class ever. Even though we couldn’t sing together as a whole choir, we still got to learn together. I have learned so much about note names and how to tell which note is which, which is important for singing. Every choir teacher is doing their absolute best to make sure every student can still enjoy music class without singing.

—Emma (8th Grade)

If there is one thing that I have learned in the past few months it is that music doesn’t discriminate. Music is a form of connection between souls that creates a bond which cannot be broken. With everything changing around us and what some would consider falling apart, music is one of the few things that keeps me positive. It doesn’t matter whose mouth or what person it is coming from, music and singing are beautiful things and no pandemic, election, or movement can change that.

—Garren Hudson (12th Grade)

When I look back to one year ago I think about the new semester I was starting, the plans I was making for MPA and the end of the year concert. I was anxious about teaching students music for upcoming events like MiddleFest, and struggling to coordinate dates with elementary principals for our annual spring recruitment performances. When I stop to consider the obstacles I face at school now, all of my past worries seem trivial, and easy to overcome.

As music educators we have had a rough year. It’s likely that there have been days you have felt overwhelmed, anxious, inadequate or even angry. It’s also possible you’ve felt all of these things just today. When deciding what would be best to contribute to this edition of the Carolina Caroler, I made the choice that it wasn’t me you needed to hear from. I can remind you that we will get through this, or tell you not to let this year convince you that you’re not a good teacher. It won’t matter though because I am not the one you feel like you’re letting down. I am not one of the students in your classroom that you think you’re disappointing. Luckily I was able to reach out to some of those students, and they are telling a very different story than you might have guessed.

As we continue to push through this school year and all of its uncertainty, my hope is that you’ll remember the words of these students. Maybe they’ll inspire new ideas for your own classroom, or help validate the work you’re already doing. Maybe you’ll decide to reach out to your own students and reflect on their responses so you can make the second half of the year even stronger. Whatever your next steps may be, I hope that you’re able to find joy in each and every day and that you continue to lean on your friends and colleagues for support and collaboration. It may not feel like it sometimes, but there will be a time when we are able to gather, take a deep breath, and sing together again.

—Wesley H. (8th Grade)
Even though we have to be six feet away, we still get to play [percussion] instruments. At the end of each class, we get to listen to a new album and listen for the message, instruments, and music. On online school days, we are able to use computer programs to learn how to play music. On the program we learn the sounds of each note and how to count the beats. Even though it is a struggle to learn remotely, we have been able to adapt and use technology.

—Madelyn C. (6th Grade)

This year in chorus so far, I have enjoyed learning more about key signatures and the way music is written in general. I feel like the fact that we can’t sing has made us focus more on the fundamentals. It’s not as if we hadn’t been before but I think we are putting more focus into it. This overall will affect the way we learn new music and the speed at which it takes to finish learning a new song. Chorus during a pandemic is a little less fun because we can’t sing but I still find it very enjoyable. I am glad I got the opportunity to write a song of my own because I felt like I could be creative with the words and how I sang it. In retrospect, I feel as though chorus has been as great as it was before the pandemic.

—Gracie (8th Grade)

As we all know, when school was shut down, our activities were limited. We could no longer sing together, we couldn’t all get direction and it just felt wrong. The concert has always been my favorite thing in choir because we are able to show off our hard work and melodic voices. This year, although we didn’t get a physical concert, I got to experience a virtual choir. As different as it was, and no I was not used to it at all, it brought back that small special feeling. I got that closeness to others without being around them. As strange as it may sound, it was like a normal concert to me. From the warm-ups to the actual singing. I was able to experience that small but definite happiness. When I thought I wouldn’t have the chance to sing with my friends, I got it back in a new way. The change was challenging but definitely rewarding.

—Rebekah (10th Grade)

Trying to live a regular life in the midst of a pandemic can definitely be challenging but there are some things everyone can look forward too. For example for me it would be things like swim and electives since I get the choice of what to do. Chorus has been my first choice elective of 7th grade and I am glad to say that I have enjoyed it and learned plenty of things that will help me in the future. I have gotten the privilege of being able to express my creativity through songs and be in a very friendly environment even if it happens to be through a screen the majority of the time. I have learned my limits but also discovered how far I can go and exceeded what I thought my abilities were. So you could definitely say that I enjoyed chorus this semester despite being in the midst of a pandemic and not being able to go to school in person and communicate and sing face to face.

—Anastasia (7th Grade)
IN MEMORIAM: Richard G. Cox

By John Cox and Anna Cox Trude

Richard G. Cox left this world in peace, surrounded by his family and by the sounds of his favorite music, on the night of December 25. He was 92 years old.

A native North Carolinian with degrees from UNC-Chapel Hill and a diploma in Voice from the Paris Conservatory, he completed the PhD in music history and literature from Northwestern University, where he met his future wife Mary Alicia.

Having taught at High Point University for five years, Richard joined the faculty of UNC-Greensboro, where he remained from 1960-2002. Under his leadership, the School of Music developed a national reputation in the choral arena. As conductor of the UNCG Women's Choir and Chorale, he led performances at a national ACDA convention in 1973 as well as five Southern Region conventions. From 1963-2013, he served as choirmaster at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church.

Richard edited choral works and wrote three books related to vocal and choral music, Singers' Manual of German and French Diction (Schirmer Books, 1970), Singing in English (ACDA, 1990) and The Choral Music of Benjamin Britten (Hinshaw Music, Inc., 2011).

Richard founded and directed the Bel Canto Company (1982-1987) and for many years guided choral preparation for the Greensboro Opera Company. He was President of the Southern Division of the ACDA from 1967-71 and the NC chapter from 1984-86, and for decades served on the National Committee on Research and Publications. Awards include NC ACDA's Lara Hoggard Award, the Choral Excellence Award (Southern Region) and induction into the North Carolina Music Educators Association Hall of Fame.

Never truly “retiring,” Richard remained active, attending ACDA conventions, volunteering at his church and elsewhere, advocating for human rights causes, and visiting his children and grandchildren.

Richard profoundly influenced several generations of students, colleagues, and friends. “A fitting tribute to Richard Cox” wrote by Welborn Young, current conductor of the Bel Canto Company, would be “to strive to learn more, teach with compassion, make beautiful music from the heart, and, most importantly, strive to be a better person by loving more fully with a respect for all people with whom we share this brief journey.”
“Whether looking down from the choir or into the orchestra pit, it was astounding to see Dr. Cox perform magic with his baton.”
~ Alice Garrett Brown, ’65 ~

Dr. Richard Cox Tribute

Honoring the legacy of a great man who has empowered generations to question the status quo, to break down barriers, and to strive to make the world a better place through music.

UNCG School of Music
Recital Hall
Saturday, June 2, 2018
3:30 pm
The Craft of Choral Conducting:
A Brief Overview

Part 3 in a Series by RICHARD COX

It is the responsibility of the conductor to show:

• Beat
• Style
• Shape, structure, and significant events in the score:
  • Important voices
  • Phrases, sections, and other structural parts
  • Climactic points and dynamic shape
  • Interrelationships of all kinds
  • Details, especially rhythmic
• Enough willpower to elicit a response to all of the above

The BEAT, obviously, must be shown clearly in terms of the standard conducting patterns. What is of most importance here is to show upbeats and downbeats. Unless there is rhythmic activity on the other beats, it’s not always necessary to show them. Even if an orchestra isn’t playing (in recitative, for example, or during a cadenza), it needs to know when downbeats happen, or at least how many have passed. Choral conductors should base their gestures on the standard beat patterns, not on showing syllables or something else deviant. Choral conductors who don’t are seldom able to conduct instrumental ensembles or even anyone else’s chorus; more serious, their choruses are unable to sing for real conductors.

The beat is normally described as consisting of two elements, the ictus and the rebound. The ictus is that part of the beat which defines the moment of impact itself; the rebound is the gesture from ictus to ictus. It is my firm conviction that the ictus should be defined by a downward click of the wrist (except for the marcato upbeat). Choral conductors, for whatever reason, often establish the habit of using an upward or outward gesture for the ictus itself. It’s possible this is a reaction to singers who are placing consonants on the beat instead of vowels. Whatever the reason, the result seems to me to be a severe limitation on the variety of things a conductor can show with the rebound because the space required for the rebound has been usurped by the ictus. It is especially damaging to the strength of the downbeat if the conductor has used all the up-space for the ictus and rebounds toward the downbeat. The upbeat can be much more expressive, and the downbeat stronger, if the ictus for the upbeat moves down to the left and the rebound moves up, so that the downbeat starts from the top of the pattern, not from halfway down.

“Click of the wrist” means that the beat is defined by a sharp gesture in the wrist itself. Other joints are available to the conductor, and I’ve seen choral conductors use all simultaneously—knuckles, wrist, elbow, and shoulder. The advantage of the wrist over these other joints is that its action can be more precise if made deftly and quickly. The arm, of course, should function as a unit. It helps to think of the arm as beginning in the middle of the back and extending to the tip of the baton. The action of the wrist guides...
and focuses the whole arm. The rest of the arm follows, rather than doing its own thing by being segmented at the elbow or the shoulder. The extent to which the rest of the arm is used controls the dynamic level — the more the upper arm is used, the larger the gesture and the louder the effect. Whether the arm is used slightly or extensively, however, it should be relaxed and should feel that it is following the wrist, not acting independently. Excessive tension in the arm not only gives mixed signals to the performers, but it also causes the conductor to feel tired and even sore, and could cause singers to sing with tension. Conductors would do well to learn to conduct with a baton even if they plan to do most of their conducting barehanded. The baton focuses the gesture in a way that is helpful in preventing the floppy-handed style sometimes adopted by batonless conductors.

**Excessive tension in the arm not only gives mixed signals to the performers, but it also causes the conductor to feel tired and even sore and could cause singers to sing with tension.**

Three cautions are in order with regard to wrist and arm action:

- **Keep the wrist flexible.** With a baton, sometimes a conductor will mash the thumb, causing connecting muscles to stiffen the wrist. The thumb should curve outward.

- **The action of the wrist must be very quick,** even in slow tempi and in legato style. A slow rollover of the wrist will not generate precise ensemble. Bouncing a tennis ball so that it returns about halfway is a good exercise. Obviously the wrist must have a downward thrust. If its action is too slow, the ball loses its spring; if too violent, the ball bounces too high.

- **Whatever the style, the rebound must be a steady, single gesture,** not a series of fits and starts. In general, the conductor should resist any temptation to show rhythmic details by segmenting the rebound. The arm must also avoid undue tension, although moderate tension distributed evenly throughout the arm may help to show a controlled legato.

**STYLE can be shown by the speed and control of the rebound.** The slower and steadier the rebound, the more legato the style. Again, this depends on having space for the rebound not used up by a misplaced ictus. In a really marcato beat pattern when there is no rebound, the ictus must go up on the upbeat. Otherwise, let the rebound show the upward part of the pattern. Many conductors have trouble combining a clear, precise, quick ictus with a steady, slow rebound. This is a matter of coordination. The wrist action is sharp and quick while the rest of the arm continues its slow steady motion. This mirrors exactly what we want singers to provide in legato singing: quick precise consonants and steady sustained vowel sounds. The trick for the singer is not to stop for the consonant; the trick for the conductor is not to stop for the ictus.

Variation of style occurs not only from piece to piece, of course, but often within a piece or even from measure to measure. It’s essential for a conductor to be able to respond sensitively to this kind of variation.

**Probably the most important responsibility of the conductor is conveying his or her PERCEPTION OF THE SCORE.** Many great conductors have not been great technicians but have had deep understanding of the music and the ability to communicate this to the performers. This is a dichotomy which affects all musicians; probably a conductor can succeed less on technique alone and more without major technical skills than other musicians. A lot of this we can’t even really talk about effectively; it comes from deep musical sensitivity combined with years of perceptive listening and thoughtful study. Here are a few things we can talk about:
• **Cue**, not only to let people know when to come in, but also to let them know how to come in and to highlight important events in the score. Cuing may be done with the baton or with the left hand* but is not very effective in the absence of eye contact. When cuing with the baton, be careful to stay in the style of the music. When cuing with the left hand, be careful to make it look inviting, not threatening or tense. This consideration may be more important for singers than for other musicians since there’s no doubt that tense gestures from the conductor elicit vocal tensions.

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### The action of the wrist must be very quick, even in slow tempi and in legato style.

- A conductor shows **structural details** in the score by shaping phrases and sections, sometimes by tempo adjustments, but more often by dynamic variation. A phrase should have a beginning, a focal point, and perhaps more important, an end. A conductor shows these mostly by slight variations in the beat size. If in a 4-bar phrase, for example, the downbeat of the third bar seems to be the focal point, the conductor must make sure that this downbeat is the biggest one in the phrase. The left hand may participate as well, by showing the slight dynamic adjustments that delineate the phrase.

- **Larger structural units** need likewise to be shown by determining the climactic points and being careful that the strongest left-hand gestures and the largest beat patterns are reserved for these. Some tempo adjustments too may accompany the delineation of large segments. Certainly, in most music, it is not inappropriate to mark major cadences by a relaxing of tempo.

- In using the left hand to show **dynamics**, care must be taken with singers not to overdo tensions. The traditional left-hand gesture to show louder dynamics is to turn the palm up and lift the arm. When a certain point is reached, it is no longer effective to raise the arm, and a further increase in dynamics may be shown by increasing tension in the left hand. A choral conductor must plan his gestures, however, so that the most energetic ones, reserved for climactic points in the score, do not elicit faulty vocal production.

- **Interrelationships in the score** must be shown by making sure that parallel passages in the music produce parallel gestures from the conductor. As melodic material recurs, whether as fugal subjects, as themes in a song-form of some kind, or as melodic ideas in a sonata structure, the conductor needs to be sure to highlight this recurrence by using the same phrasing, the same style, and the same tempo each time, unless something else is specifically called for in the score. Interrelationships among voices may at any given moment call for different dynamics shown simultaneously, either by combining a strong beat pattern directed toward one section with a suppressing left-hand to another or vice-versa.

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### As with the right hand, the most effective gesture for [the] left-hand cutoff is a simple click of the wrist.

- **Showing different styles** to different groups of performers at the same time can be trickier yet. Sometimes it may be necessary to show a legato phrase to one section while another enters with accents of various kinds. This may call for a legato conducting pattern combined with sharp left-hand gestures or for a non-legato pattern combined with smooth, connected left-hand gestures, depending on whether the legato performers are on the right or on the left.

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*Throughout I am assuming that the baton will be held in the right hand, or if there is no baton, the right hand will show the beat. I have known many left-handed conductors who conduct with the right hand.*
• Details of rhythm and meter may require special conducting techniques. Some kinds of details, such as hemiola, may require strengthening inner beats and weakening the downbeat. This is done simply by making sure that the accented beat is bigger and more forceful than the unaccented. Afterbeat entries or rhythmic syncopations may call for what Elizabeth Green calls the “Gesture of Syncopation.” This is a two-beat gesture involving a suppression of rebound on the first followed by a sudden sharp gesture, also without rebound, on the second.

• Sometimes rhythmic details will call for a distinction between active and passive gestures. Often it is necessary to let a chorus know time is passing without suggesting they should respond in any way. This is especially true of extra preparatory beats. If there is ever a necessity to show more than one or 1½ beats before an entry, be sure the extra gestures are passive. Conducting recitative always requires passive beats, showing the orchestra where the singer is without inciting them to play. When there is a change of tempo, try to show a preparatory beat in the new tempo.

• Cutoffs are a big source of worry to choral conductors. There are several kinds:
  • **Group cutoffs after long notes.** These are the easiest, especially if they occur on strong downbeats or at the end of the piece. They are also the most important for a conductor to show. Here the left hand is normally used for the sustaining and joins the baton in the cutoff. As with the right hand, the most effective gesture for that left-hand cutoff is a simple click of the wrist. When the cutoff isn’t preceded by sustaining, it’s awkward to add the left hand unless it’s raised for some other purpose.
  • **Phrasal cutoffs, often between beats.** I really don’t recommend showing every breath, since it seems to me gestures may become so fussy that the continuity of the music suffers. Ultimately, it seems better to teach singers how to count, when to apply final consonants, and exactly how long a rest should be.
  • **Cutoffs involving one or two sections at a time,** which often need to be shown in order to achieve unanimity, especially after a sustained tone or following a noisy final consonant.

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**Conducting involves imposing the conductor’s particular vision of how a piece should go to everyone else.**

Finally (but really initially), a conductor must show enough strength of will to make all this happen. Conducting involves imposing the conductor’s particular vision of how a piece should go to everyone else. *This is always a triumph of will.* You must know that you know more about the piece than any of the performers, at least while in the act of conducting. Once you stop to rehearse and talk, on the other hand, you should be ready to consider that you might improve your conducting or that someone in the ensemble might have a valid opinion. But while you’re conducting, it has to be your tempo, your dynamic level, your style. A lot of this simply comes from within, but it can be improved by developing the technical skills to convey your will clearly and convincingly and by thorough preparation of the score before the first rehearsal. This preparation should include analysis of phrases, tonalities, contrapuntal activities, text setting, and whatever else is important about an individual piece so that your choices are fully informed.

The exercise of will starts with the preparatory beat, which must be in tempo and which must be compelling enough to elicit a response. Most important is to look at the performers perhaps even raising the eyebrows. A slight upswing at the end of the preparatory, even if it isn’t an upbeat, will often help. It helps too to inhale with the singers, and doing so also seems to help wind players. If you do this, do it easily and evenly, not as though you were suddenly startled. The facial expression must convey, “Come in now!” Facial expression is of course important throughout, perhaps more to a choral conductor since singers can give more of their undivided attention than instrumentalists are able to do. The facial expression should reveal your response to the words and the music.
Treasurer’s Report
Beverly Alt, NC ACDA Treasurer

Beg. Bal. (10/24/2020): $40,394.15

INCOME (July—September 2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Conference Regis. &amp; Donations</td>
<td>$2,140.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$460.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly Allotment from National</td>
<td>$1,107.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1,107.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income (July—November 2020)</td>
<td>$4,855.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subtotal $45,249.65

EXPENSES (July—November 2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoom: Extra Space for Conference</td>
<td>$253.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams Printing (Caroler/Conf.)</td>
<td>$1,337.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MiddleFest/NC Sings/JW Pepper Credit</td>
<td>$52.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clever Web</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Fees</td>
<td>$298.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinicians</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lara Hoggard Award Plaque</td>
<td>$57.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCMEA Magazine Conference Ad</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>$3,149.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bal. Fwd. (11/30/2020)  $42,099.78

The Carolina Caroler is the official newsletter of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association. Articles and advertisements may be submitted to Carl Ashley at carolinacaroler@gmail.com. Articles must be submitted via email as Word documents using Times New Roman at 12 point. Please do not double space after periods, hyphenate, abbreviate, or include any formatting. Pictures should be electronically attached separately, preferably in the .png format. NC ACDA reserves the right to edit all submissions.

Advertising Rates
The Carolina Caroler accepts advertising at the following rates:

- Full page: $150.00 (approx. 7.5” x 10”)
- Half page: $100.00 (approx. 7.5” x 4.5”)
- Quarter page: $50.00 (approx. 3.75” x 4.5”)

Discounts are available on multiple ads of the same design. Rates listed are for digital .jpg or .pdf files. A check made payable to “North Carolina ACDA” must accompany the order. Invoices sent upon request. Copy will not run without advance payment. Advertising copy is subject to editorial approval. The editor reserves the right to head and/or box any advertisement as deemed necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>DEADLINE</th>
<th>PUBLICATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>July 15</td>
<td>Aug. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Nov. 15</td>
<td>Dec. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>April 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NC ACDA R&R Coordinators

Youth Coordinator
CATIE HITZIGRATH
Lexington Middle School
catie.hitzigrath@gmail.com

Lifelong Coordinator
AARON JACKSON
Christ Baptist Church, Raleigh
ajackson878@gmail.com

Repertoire Specific Coordinator
STEPHEN FUTURELL
Elon University
sfutrell@elon.edu

College/University Coordinator
JAMES FRANKLIN
East Carolina University
franklinchoir@gmail.com

Name That Excerpt!

“Kyrie eleison” from Requiem, Op. 48 by Gabriel Faure

Answer to previous issue’s excerpt: