

ICDA District Representative Candidate Biographies

District II - Allen, DeKalb, Elkhart, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, St. Joseph counties

Jeff Cramer has been the Director of Vocal Music at NorthWood High School for 10 years. He attended Bethel College (IN) and served two years as president of the Bethel College Concert Choir, and was a 5 year member of the *a cappella* group Voices of Triumph. Jeff graduated *summa cum laude* from Bethel in 2001 with degrees in Music Education and Vocal Performance. He was a 3-year finalist in the National Association of Teachers of Singing competition. He continues to maintain an active schedule as a guest vocalist. At NorthWood, Cramer currently leads a program of approximately 135 students in four ensembles. His ensembles have consistently received superior ratings at state and regional contests. During his tenure, NorthWood has appeared at Carnegie Hall, the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame, Conesco Fieldhouse, for the University of Notre Dame, and alongside the rock band Foreigner. He also serves as assistant director for the spring musical. In addition, Cramer is active in the music ministry at Nappanee Missionary Church. Jeff has been a guest conductor for the ACSI Music Festival. He is a member of the American Choral Directors Association, as well as the National Association for Music Education (formerly MENC).



Dr. **Aaron Mitchell** is Director of Choral Studies at Indiana University-Purdue University in Fort Wayne. He was previously the Director of Choral Activities at the University of Regina in Saskatchewan, Canada. Recent performances include the 2010 national convention of the Association of Canadian Choral Conductors, a session at the 2010 Indiana Music Educators Association conference, and in March his choirs will perform at the Central Division ACDA conference. Mitchell holds a doctoral degree from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, where his thesis was nominated for ACDA's Julius Herford award. Recent guest conducting engagements include the 2011 Three Rivers Choral Festival with The King's Singers, the 2011 International Music Camp, the 2010 Northern Montana District Honor Choir, the 2009 Saskatchewan All-Province Honor Choir, and in spring 2012 he will lead elementary and middle school festivals in Indiana and high school honor choir in Montana. He received a Tangeman research award to study the choral works of Heitor Villa-Lobos in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and has published articles on Ariel Ramírez's *Misa Criolla* in *Choral Journal*. Mitchell has served on the board of directors of the Saskatchewan Choral Federation and is Facilities Co-Chair for ACDA's 2012 Central Division Conference. He previously taught grades 4-12 in the Connecticut Public Schools. www.aaronpmitchell.com

District IV - Adams, Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Hamilton, Huntington, Jay, Kosciusko, Madison, Wabash, and Whitley counties

Jennifer L. Boone is currently in her third year as being the choral director for the Hamilton Heights School Corporation in Arcadia. She conducts four choirs, two each at the corporation's middle school and high school: a volunteer 6th grade ensemble, a combined 7th & 8th grade ensemble, a combined beginning/intermediate ensemble, and an advanced ensemble. Her advanced high school ensemble, known as the Esprit Singers, has become the premiere performing ensemble in their community. Additional teaching responsibilities include class piano at the high school and 6th grade general music at the middle school. Ms. Boone is a 2008 Indiana State University graduate with a Bachelor of Music Education – Choral/General and a Certificate of Piano Pedagogy, having student taught at



the Tri-West Middle & High Schools of the Northwest Hendricks County School Corporation in Lizton. She also student taught at LaSalle Intermediate Academy and Madison Primary of the South Bend Community School Corporation in South Bend. Prior to completing her undergraduate studies, Ms. Boone held the position of music director and pianist at Prairieton United Methodist Church in Prairieton, IN. Aside from the wonderful world of choral music, she still loves to play French horn (or mellophone!) when the opportunity arises.



Brenda Iacocca holds a B.S. in Music Ed. at the College of St. Rose in Albany, NY, certification in Orff Schulwerk (Levels 1, 2 & 3) and is a Level 1 Certificated Music Together Instructor. Brenda has owned and operated her own traveling music business Preschool Music Plus for 27 years and has taught in NY, PA & IN. She has taught all level of music from infancy to adult and teaches voice and beginning guitar in her home studio. She is a Preschool Music Specialist and has been a Children's Choir Director in PA and at the International School in IN. Brenda plays flute, guitar and piano, and sings in two Indianapolis groups: VOCE – a semi-professional group under the direction of Charles Goehring and VOX HUMANA – an *a cappella* quartet specializing in Renaissance church music. She has also been a member of Cantabile (under the direction of Michael Davidson), Indianapolis Arts Chorale/Encore Vocal Arts (under the direction of Chris Ludwa), sings at wedding, funerals, plays for children's birthday parties, church soloist, director/producer of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church Madrigal Dinner. Brenda credits ACDA with keeping her educated and always learning about vocal and choral technique!

District VI - Fayette, Hancock, Henry, Marion, Randolph, Union, and Wayne counties

Tara Cody graduated from Indiana State University in 2010. While at Indiana State, Tara sang with the ISU Concert Choir, Sycamore Singers, Women's Chorale, and Opera Workshop, and was a recipient of the Paul W. Hagan Concerto Audition Prize. She was a founder of the ISU chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing and served as its president for two years. She is currently an educator at Creston Intermediate Academy in Warren Township, where she teaches general music to fifth and sixth graders as well as directs an after-school choir. She also enjoys singing in the choirs at North United Methodist Church.



Roger Tyler graduated from Southern Illinois University in 1983 with a double Bachelor of Arts degree in music education and piano performance. He received his Master of Arts degree in piano performance from the University of Iowa in 1987. Since then, he has done post graduate work in choral conducting at Ball State University. For the past 20 years, Roger has been teaching in the Fayette County School system and is currently the Choir Director at Connersville High School, where he has spent the last 12 years. Prior to the high school position, he taught 3 years at Connersville Middle School and 5 years at Everton Elementary School. He also operated a private teaching studio where he has taught piano, voice and violin lessons 20 years. There are approximately 180 students involved in choral music at Connersville High School. His groups have received superior marks at ISSMA Choral Organizational Contest and the ISSMA Solo & Ensemble Contest & during the last two years, CHS has had at least one choral group that earned a spot in the ISSMA State Finals.

District VIII - Bartholomew, Brown, Clark, Dearborn, Decatur, Floyd, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Ohio, Ripley, Rush, Scott, Shelby, Switzerland, Washington counties



Daniel E. Borns is in his ninth year as the choral director at North Decatur Jr.-Sr. High School in Greensburg. Previously, he taught at Fort Wayne Northrop High School and served as a graduate assistant in the choral department at Bowling Green State University. Borns is a graduate of IPFW (Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne), where he received his degree in Music Education. At North Decatur, he directs several ensembles, including two junior high choirs and four high school groups. Performers under his direction have consistently received gold ratings at district and state solo/ensemble contest, as well as receiving high marks at organizational contest. North Decatur choirs have also performed with great success in clinics and festivals during tours across the United States and Canada. Dan has been a member of ACDA for the past 15 years, serving as vice president of his collegiate chapter for two years and as the current District VIII representative. He has also been a member of NAFME during this time, also serving as treasurer while in college. Borns hopes to find a way for all students in the state to have a fulfilling music education no matter where they attend school.

Heather Simpson is in her 12th year of teaching choral music. After spending the first seven years of her career at various schools throughout Indiana, she has established Greensburg as her home. She is the head choral director at both Greensburg Jr. High and High School, where she teaches upwards of 200 students in grades 6 through 12. Heather maintains an active program by participating in many choral activities such as producing musicals at both the junior high and senior high schools, annual concerts, community performances with her show choir, Elite Edition, ISSMA Solo & Ensemble and Organizational contests, Circle the State with Song, and many other choral festivals.

