

icda NOTATIONS

a publication of the
Indiana Choral Directors Association



winter 2023

CHOOSING COLLABORATION

pg. 8

Are you choosing isolation without realizing it? ICDA is a community. We are stronger with each other. We are better together.

ALL-STATE JAZZ CHOIR

pg. 3

ICDA announces the 2023 All-State Jazz Choir conductor. Learn all about audition details for this great program!



TROUBLE PICKING REPERTOIRE?

pg. 7

Dan Borns discusses his tips and tricks for choosing quality repertoire. From how to get the most out of your reading session, to looking for music online; get some great ideas on how to pick music that suits you and your groups.

Better
Together

YOU'RE INVITED

Event: ICDA Summer Conference

When: June 26th-28th

Where: Marian University

What to Bring: A Friend or
Colleague

Special Guests:



Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt



Laura Farnell

**REGISTRATION OPENS
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15TH**

If you are interested in presenting an
interest session, please use the link
below to submit your proposal.

Proposals are due by Wednesday, March 1st

<https://forms.gle/BGZKKoLZtdLkGAXG6>

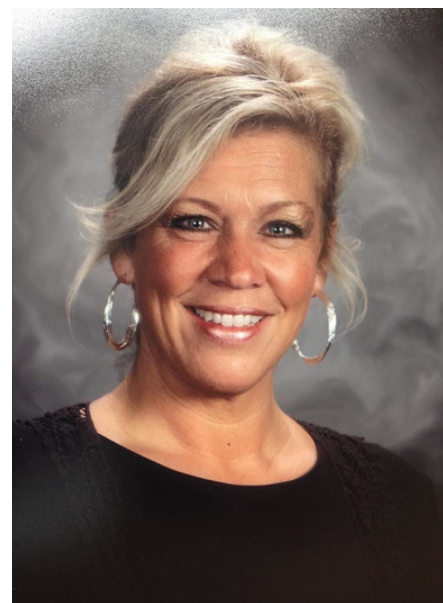
2023 ALL-STATE JAZZ CHOIR

The 2022 Indiana All-State Jazz Choir was a **huge** success last summer! Thank you to all of the directors who are presenting this opportunity to their students. It is an outstanding two-day adventure in vocal jazz!

The 2023 Indiana All-State Jazz Choir will be June 26-27th at Marian University in Indianapolis. More specific information regarding auditions will be uploaded to the ICDA website in

early February (www.in-acda.org) or feel free to email Brenda Buchanan at one of the emails provided to have an audition packet emailed directly to you, or with any questions. All auditions are completed online.

Auditions are open to any high school choir student in Indiana, even those that graduate next May. No previous vocal jazz experience required! This is an amazing opportunity for Indiana's high school choral students!



by Brenda Buchanan

All-State Jazz Choir Coordinator

Brenda Buchanan is the choral director at Northview High School in Brazil, Indiana. She has previously taught middle school and high school choir in Fort Wayne and Elkhart. buchananbr@clay.k12.in.us bbuck413@icloud.com

2023 All-State Jazz Choir Conductor MATT FALKER



Matt Falker is a jazz and gospel pianist, vocalist, arranger and clinician. As a full time professor at MiraCosta College, Matt directs the Downbeat award-winning *Frequency* vocal jazz program, and is founder and director of the Oceanside Jazz Festival, a non-competitive vocal jazz festival hosted at MiraCosta.

As a prominent vocal jazz arranger, Matt now distributes his music through his publishing company, Anchor Music Publications (formerly Sound Music Publications founded by Frank DeMiero in 1988), as well as the music of dozens of other arrangers and composers in the vocal jazz community. Anchor Music also runs a series of one-day vocal jazz workshops around the United States and Canada for teachers and students called the Vocal Jazz Academy, and hosts an Educator Support community for hundreds of educators on Facebook.

As a vocalist and pianist, he has presented featured sets at events

such as the Jazz Education Network (JEN) Conference. In 2019, he presented a performance of his singing, playing, and arranging at the International Jazz Voice Conference in Helsinki, Finland. Matt has also served as the guest conductor for many All-State Vocal Jazz Ensembles, and as a featured clinician or performer at prominent educational jazz festivals. Matt also arranged and scored a new musical based on the life and music of Nat 'King' Cole, which was premiered at Morgan State University in Baltimore.

**anchormusic.com
oceansidejazzfestival.com
vocaljazzacademy.com**

What *comes* NEXT?

As ensemble directors, we are always thinking ahead. Whose entrance is next? What do the tenors need from me in four measures? What piece do I need to complete my concert set at the end of March? We're always a step ahead.

Sometimes one of the most awkward conversations to have with yourself is, "What's next after me?" What happens for my singers or students after they move on from me? Do they move on to high school or college study? Are they going in to a career of performance? Are my students ready for the director coming in after my retirement?



by Stephen Dean

Notations Editor

Stephen Dean is the choral director at Col. John Wheeler Middle School in Crown Point, Indiana. Additionally, he is the Area I Representative for the Indiana Music Education Association. icda.notations@gmail.com

In this way, we have all been in the situation of passing things on. As I left my first teaching job, I prepared a rather thick binder of information for the new director. School traditions, processes on ordering buses, successful performances and fundraisers, and so on. All this so that the director and the students would have as seamless and successful a transition as possible.

Poring over all these details, I began asking myself "Why did we do it this way again?" "Did this accomplish what I wanted?" and applied this lens to my philosophy of teaching. What are we leaving behind? Is our goal to create students who are expert sight-singers? Is our goal to give students as many state championship rings as possible? Do our students keep singing after they move on?

The gauge I have for myself of giving my students a meaningful choral experience is a combination of these things. What do my students need in order to be able to move on? They need to be able to read. They need to be exposed to quality and varied literature. They need to feel successful. They need to realize that the key to a fulfilling choral experience is not me. I want to be the facilitator, not the guru. I hope they are motivated and confident to continue being musical

long after they have left my classroom for the final time.

In a more practical way, I am applying this same thinking for my work on this publication. **I have established a new *Notations* email - icda.notations@gmail.com.** The goal for this address is that it can seamlessly be passed on and on to future editors without the need for a massive transfer of files, email forwarding, and logistical gymnastics. Going forward, please send any inquiries, article submissions or suggestions to this address.

As we consider other changes to this publication as a means of making it more impactful, efficient, and effective for our membership, the goal is always to keep the "What comes next?" philosophy in mind.

Are we being good caretakers? Are we serving membership in a thoughtful way? Are we setting the organization up for success for five, ten, twenty-five years down the line?

As always, please use *Notations* as a resource to stay engaged and informed about ICDA programs, and happenings. Please feel free to send me article submissions or article suggestions that you value and about which you are passionate. Stay tuned on in-acda.org and our Facebook page for information about our summer conference at Marian University. We hope to see you there!

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DON'T SETTLE for LESS

How does some published music ever get to be published? I have sifted through music on the publisher websites to put together reading sessions for the better part of the last decade, and I ask myself this question fairly often. I guess the answer is because someone will buy it, but to me there is just too much great music out there to ever consider purchasing something that is of low quality. I have a few considerations that I use when picking music for reading sessions and for my groups. Hopefully sharing a few ideas on this topic will help you in picking music for your choirs.

I sit in reading sessions and look at new music and consider my first impressions of the music. Is the piece something that I would ever really use? I think about the choirs that I have that I am currently directing and wonder where the piece would fit the best. I also have a personal 1 to 5 rating system that I use to rate the pieces. Basically, if it is a definite home run in my mind I rate it with a 5. I have historically rated pieces as 3.5 or a 4 if I kind of liked them but thought they could fit a certain programming idea. I have rated some pieces as 4.5, which means that are worth considering at some point, but didn't seem like immediate winners to me. After doing this for several years, I have come to the conclusion that life is too short to do anything less than 5's. If there are pieces that fit a

certain program idea that I don't really love, it is better to change the program idea than to use that music.

When looking at new music for consideration, I also think about what I am going to be able to teach with the music. Does it have something new and different that will be challenging and appropriate? Time signatures, rhythmic patterns, meaningful lyrics, and melodic moments for all parts of the choir are part of the thought process. Not every piece in a concert has to be heavy duty with thoughtful poetry, but it is good to have at least one piece like this included if you can.

Picking music within a certain theme is something that some directors try to do for concerts. I think it makes sense to visit different styles of music with that framework if possible. Can you find a good arrangement of a folk song set in a jazz style? Is it possible to sing a French carol in the original language? Keep in mind that you don't want to limit yourself from being able to pick great music because you are wanting to follow some theme.

There are a few composers that are composing new music right now that seem to continually publish "can't go wrong" music. If you find a particular piece that you like, it only takes a quick web search to



by Dan Borns

Youth Repertoire & Resources Coordinator

Dan Borns works as the choral director at Batesville Middle/High Schools in Batesville, Indiana. He has previously taught middle and high school choir in Fort Wayne, Greensburg, and Greenwood. He is also the principal choral director for the Indiana Ambassadors of Music.

find more music by that composer. When we put together reading sessions, we are just curating a list of music by composers that we believe are writing and arranging quality music. You can be proactive to find more music by composers that you enjoy.

As I have mentioned, you have to think about the people that you currently have or are going to have in your choir. It makes no sense to pick a piece with a big tenor solo feature if you don't have a singer to fill that role. I think that this is where people tend to have some issues. You can't pick a piece just because you like it, It also has to fit the singers in your choir. In larger schools with big programs this is a much different consideration than in smaller schools. I have been talking to a few smaller school

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ISOLATION or

For most of us these are unsettled times. We are facing difficult choices in our profession and too often we find ourselves making due with less. It has never been more important for our profession to be exceptionally good at what we do. We need to be more effective educators. We need to be more communicative musicians. We need to be opportunistic advocates. We need to be more united in our desire to see choral music flourish. But what is holding us back?

I was recently filling out a form for my school to request permission to attend the National ACDA Conference in February in Cincinnati. Near the end of the form, I was asked to provide a rationale, and I found myself writing ‘to grow through collaboration and inspiration and to prevent continued isolation.’ Indeed, I am isolated: the only choral director in my school. I am not the only choral conductor in my district nor the only music teacher in my building, but I am indeed the only person who teaches the kind of courses I teach.

Maybe the same goes for you. Yes, there are pluses to being on your own island: no one is noisy in your office

except you, your work spaces can be as neat/messy as you want, you are autonomous. But that’s the problem, too—there’s no one to tell you what to do on those days you can’t figure out why the soprano tone is so shrill, or why the tenors can’t learn a certain passage, or what piece to close with for your winter concert.

When working in isolation, perspective can be hard to keep and the resource well that is just **you** is not always replenishing. Maybe our isolation is intentional because we feel our work is not good enough or is **so much** better than what’s going on somewhere else, or that no situation is just like the one you face. Those premises may be true, but are based on being alone and isolated. I hope that you have friends, trusted colleagues—perhaps mentors from earlier days, teachers that you used to work with, kindred choral spirits you’ve found along the way in a class or at a conference or somewhere.

People who can help break your isolation, who can provide another ear. When I meet other choral people and we talk about our work, I find that there are aspects to our work that we really take pride in, and that

collaboration



by Michael Hummel

President

Michael Hummel serves as the choral director at Plainfield High School in Plainfield, Indiana. He also serves as Choral Division Chair of the Indiana Music Education Association.

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icda.notations@gmail.com

we struggle with many of the same issues. I gain tools when we share strategies, and find that we have much to offer each other. There is a sigh of relief, a flash of recognition, an expansion of spirit that comes from breaking out of the solitary confinement of which I have become unknowingly weary.

Recently, I have found more enjoyment over having someone to talk with, share and bounce ideas off of than ever before. Finding those that are truly excited, passionate and share the same values and goals is a refreshing and powerful catalyst to growing and flourishing as a choral director. I have found myself truly enjoying sharing and learning with others in this collaborative manner. I have had so many opportunities to find these exchanges through my involvement in ICDA, whether in attending sessions, conferences, getting involved more directly, and, now, providing leadership. This all goes to say that it is my personal hope as president of ICDA that this organization can provide opportunities for you to break free from your isolation so that we all can find encouragement, inspiration, and community in meeting each other, sharing our ideas, getting to know the work each of us does, and in being part of the larger music-making choral community that is ICDA. Choose collaboration!

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MONEY MATTERS

Most of the All-State Choir income has been collected and we are ready to begin paying the bills. Thanks to the excellent planning of Anissa Bradley and Brian Adcock, we should finish with a comfortable margin.

We have \$87,694.30 in our ICDA checking account. This is a bit higher than our totals last year at this time, but we have most of our All-State Choir bills still to pay. Yes, we are a non-profit organization, but with the expenses involved in our two big events each year, All-State Choir and Summer Conference, it is a good idea to have a cushion to cover unforeseen expenses. Due to exorbitant fees per transaction, our savings account was closed, and we operate all from checking.

Make plans now to register for the Summer Conference 2023 at Marian University. You may register and pay by credit card or you may choose to pay by personal or school check beginning in early April.

When your school or church secretary pays your dues for you, please ask them to send your membership renewal card with the check directly to the ACDA National Headquarters in Oklahoma City. You may also renew your membership online with a credit card. The ACDA website is www.acda.org. This will renew your national membership as well as your Indiana membership. If you are wondering why you haven't received your mailings, it could be that you



by Paula Alles
Treasurer

Paula Alles is Director of Music at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Jasper, Indiana.

forgot to update your change of address. You may do this online also.

If you have any questions about your membership, please feel free to contact me. My home e-mail is best: alles.paula@gmail.com or call 812-631-2625. You may also contact the ACDA national membership chair at membership@acda.org.

My church choir is enjoying singing in our newly remodeled St. Joseph Church. We dedicated our new altar on December 10 a Dedication Mass and Opening of the Church. After 18 months of renovations, it was definitely good to be back. We sang several arrangements of psalms by Janet Sullivan Whitaker and ended with "From Living Stones" by Joseph M. Martin. Look up [saintjosephjasper](https://www.facebook.com/saintjosephjasper) on Facebook for some beautiful photos. Better yet, come tour in person if you are in the area. The building is over 150 years old and is looking spectacular.

ICDA Accounts	Checking Balance	Savings Balance
Winter '22	\$6,779.25	\$67,891.62
Spring '22	\$12,143.56	\$33,967.71
Fall '22	\$27,185.96	\$20,155.41
Winter '23	\$87,694.30	account closed



AUDITIONS DATES:

Music and Musical Theatre
Feb. 17, Feb. 20, & March 3

Dance
Oct. 28, Feb. 17, & March 3

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Step 1: Submit an AU admission application
anderson.edu/apply

Step 2: Submit an audition application
anderson.edu/my-audition

QUESTIONS?

Contact Michelle Holmes:
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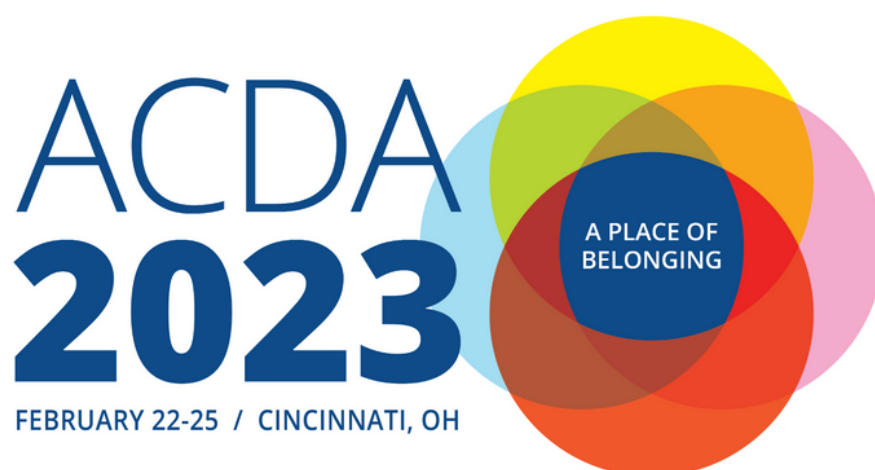


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Belonging is fundamental to being human. In our choirs, within our institutions, and as members of the greater chorus of humanity, belonging to a community means that each member is heard, understood, seen, and valued.

The 2023 National Conference in Cincinnati welcomes us all back in person to a place where we can celebrate our diversity and affinities, eliminate barriers, and inspire each other towards collective action ensuring that everyone feels they belong to our shared journey.

HEADLINE CHOIRS

- The **May Festival Chorus & Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra**, (Juanjo Mena, conductor) featuring a world premiere by James Lee III
- **The Jason Max Ferdinand Singers**
- **The Crossing** (Donald Nally, conductor) featuring the premier of the Brock Commission by Jennifer Higdon

NATIONAL HONOR CHOIRS

- **Elementary**, conducted by Fernando Malvar-Ruiz
- **MS/JH Mixed**, conducted by Andrea Ramsey
- **HS SATB**, conducted by Eugene Rogers
- **HS SSAA**, conducted by Pearl Shangkuan

CONFERENCE ATTENDEE IMMERSION CHOIRS

- **Latinoamérica**: Maria Guinand, conductor
- **Black Diaspora**: Donald Dumpson, conductor
- **Indigenous People's**: Jace Saplan, conductor
- **Jazz**: Matt Falker, conductor

plus

- **Dozens of Auditioned Choirs**
- **Scores of Interest and Insight Choir Sessions**
- **National Collegiate Conductor's Institute**, featuring Graduate & Undergraduate student masterclasses and conducting pedagogy sessions
- **Music in Worship: *How Good and Pleasant: the Song of Belonging***, an interfaith event presented in partnership with, and within, the magnificent Plum Street Temple
- **Composers Fair** and dedicated *Composer Room* to network with your favorite composers
- **Pre-Conference Welcome Concert: *Your Hand and Mine***, featuring the Cincinnati Youth Choir (Robyn Reeves Lana, conductor), the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Chamber Choir (Joe Miller, conductor), and combined Cincinnati-area high school choirs (Henry Leck, conductor)

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Duke Energy Convention Center for all interest sessions, exhibits, and publisher showcases

DON'T SETTLE *for* LESS

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directors lately, who have 20 or less students in their entire high school program. How do you select music for a choir of 18 girls and 2 boys, where 5 or 6 kids are advanced and the other 15 are beginners? No high school group should be spending the majority of their time just singing in unison, so look to still have part-singing in your music selections. Look to find festival or honor choir opportunities for your advanced students, and keep them challenged by doing this. And lastly, never stop recruiting! Getting a few more voices in the program will really open up music

selection opportunities.

One more thing to consider when selecting music is if you can spend the time that it takes to learn something new and still enjoy it. Does the music have enough substance to still be challenging and fun after rehearsing it for 6 to 8 weeks? You should also consider whether or not the choir members will feel that way also. You don't need to make every piece about what your students will like, but it doesn't hurt to have a balance between pieces you picked for them and pieces you picked for yourself. This keeps everyone happy, and if you're playing your cards right the ones that you picked for them can also be

something you like... a win - win.

It all boils down to selecting music that fits your program and that fits your personal taste. Don't pick every piece based on whether or not it is Editor's Choice, or because it is on some list. However, don't discount popular pieces just because you don't want to be a follower. Just because other schools are doing a particular popular piece doesn't mean that you should stay away from it. Your students don't know any better! It's okay to like something that everyone else likes. If it is cheesy and cringeworthy but still popular, please just use your better judgment. Don't settle for anything but the best!

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