



Tempo!

SPECIAL EDITION: MICHIGAN MUSIC CONFERENCE

Congratulations Mandy Scott 2024 Teacher of the Year!



Mandy Mikita Scott is in her 21st year of teaching, and her sixteenth at her alma mater, Rockford High School (Rockford, Michigan), where she is Director of Choirs and teaches around 125 students daily in four ensembles. She feels privileged to be on a team with her husband, Jed Scott, who directs the Rockford Aces and volunteers much of his time to support the choir program.

Mandy studied at Western Michigan University with Joe Miller and Steve Zegree and received her Master of Music in Choral Conducting from the University of Miami with Jo-Michael Scheibe. She is grateful that her choirs have had the opportunity to perform in Carnegie Hall, the National Cathedral, the World Choir Games in Riga, Latvia

(where they earned Gold Medals in their categories), and St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Italy. Most recently, in 2023 she conducted a concert tour of Spain with the Rockford Choirs with sold-out concerts in Barcelona, Valencia, and Madrid.

Her choirs have also performed at both the ACDA-Michigan Fall Conference and the Michigan Music Conference. She has conducted an ensemble at the MSVMA All-State Ensemble Recital eight times.

The Rockford Choirs actively commission new choral works, and under her direction, the choirs have commissioned over 30 compositions and arrangements, including works from Z. Randall Stroope, Alice Parker, Andrea Ramsey, Michael McGlynn, Anders Edenroth, and many others.

Mandy was the Michigan High School SSAA State Honors Choir conductor in 2014, and has served terms on both the MSVMA Full Board as High School Repertoire chair and Board of Directors as the Director of Sight Reading and Music Selection. She has also served on the ACDA-Michigan Board.

Mandy was recognized as Eric Whitacre's Teacher of the Week in December 2019. She is humbled to have four times been named as a finalist for MSVMA Teacher of the Year. She is proudest that her former students continue to make music and breathe kindness into the world.

Most of all, Mandy has had fabulous choral opportunities in her career thanks to her incredible husband and family. Together they have spent time with legendary choral composer Alice Parker on her farm in Massachusetts, hosted The Real Group in Rockford, and written poetry with her youngest, Daniella, for an Andrea Ramsey composition. Mandy and Jed have three children, Owen, Julian, and Daniella (who were all singing in MSVMA Honors Choirs this year at MMC!)



Mandy Scott and President Sarah Stockton



Mandy and Jed Scott with their children Daniella, Julian, and Owen

That's a wrap...2024 Michigan Music Conference MSVMA Members Shine, Inform and Inspire

The excitement of friends and colleagues getting together at the 2024 Michigan Music Conference rang throughout the hallways of the Amway Grand Plaza, DeVos Place, and JW Marriott last week. Led by *Dr. Pearl Shangkaun*, MSVMA focused on *Effective, Efficient, and Enjoyable Choral Rehearsal Techniques*, and provided opportunities to connect through informative interest sessions as well as inspirational performances.



The conference began on Thursday with attendees refining their skills as conductors at the Choral Conducting Symposium with *Dr. Brandon Waddles*. The 6-7-8-9 Honors Choirs, under the direction of *Kristina Vidal, Jeffrey Cobb, and Samara Valla*, did not disappoint with their delightful performances bringing students together from around the state of Michigan. It was very exciting to have so many MSVMA members come together during the networking sessions on Thursday afternoon. The first Meet and Greet occurred with the purpose of bringing our MSVMA Mentors and Mentees together through our Partner Program. An opportunity to ask questions and share ideas around "Recruitment, Retention and Rigor" was led by *Amy Blevins, Thomas Blue, Thomas Kaiser, and Rob Stow*. The final session focused on "Turning Your Classroom Into a Classroom: How to integrate assignments and assessments into your rehearsals" presented by *Amy Schroeder*. Special thank you to *Brian Leduc* who guided the discussions and logistics of the Thursday afternoon sessions with his infectious enthusiasm for MSVMA.

Friday and Saturday were filled with interest sessions that gave us food for thought as well as practical tips to use in our classrooms. A huge THANK YOU to presenters *Joel Moore, Erin Colwitz, Gabriela Hristova, Saleel Menon, Karen Salvador, Xander Greene, Catherine Bennett, Alta Boover, Jeremy Nichols, Alan Gumm, Kristin Clark, Christopher Mason, Jacob Berglin, Sarah Stockton, Jenna Braaksma, Elizabeth Fausone, and Karen Ambbs* for sharing your passion and knowledge with us.

There are many people involved in helping and planning to make sure everything runs as smoothly as possible. Once again, MSVMA members stepped up and offered their time and talents. Special thanks to the following who assisted by presiding over the interest sessions and performances: *Sarah Stockton, Gail Worden, Eric Cadena, Julia Holt, Pamela Pierson, Erik Jacobson, Brian Leduc, Ryan Dawley, Zach Everly, Kathryn Becksvoort, Andrew Hathikhanavala, Brian Wyman, Crystal Sherd-Chew, David Gailey, Jed Scott and Megan Sinclair*. We also appreciate all the state supervisors and coordinators who have spent time throughout the fall overseeing activities that culminate in final performances and experiences at

MMC.

Friday and Saturday were also filled with inspiring performances in the MSVMA Choral Hours and the High School Honors Choirs. Congratulations to *James Cumings*, *Ashley Cumings*, and the Jackson Northwest Middle School Honors Choir, *Matthew Callaghan* and the Haslett High School Chorale, *Erin L. Stier* and the West Ottawa Select Women's Ensemble, and *Meghan Eldred-Woolsey* and the DeWitt High School Chamber Choir who performed in the Friday MSVMA Choral Hour. Saturday's Specialized Choral Hour featured musical theater intensive soloists Braeden Davis from Loy Norrix High School, director *Marisa Bergh* and Carly Koch from Portage Northern, and director *Denene Mulay Koch*. Also featured were ensembles Skyline Blues under the direction of *Lindsay CieChanski*, Northern Singers, and their director *Michael Wheaton*. High School singing musicians were taken on a musical journey under the conductors of our Honors Choirs and All-State Jazz Ensemble. *Dr. Kate Reid* led the All-State Jazz Ensemble, the SSAA Honors Choir under the direction of *Katherine Rohwer*, *Matthew T. Snell* conducted the TTBB Honors Choir, and the SATB Honors Choir under the direction of *Jim Watson*.

Thank you to all who attended MMC 2024. We hope you found new techniques to use in your classrooms. We also hope you experienced beautiful music that spoke to you so you can continue to inspire your students in the wonderful world of choral music.

We ask for your feedback on your conference experience by [completing a short survey](#). This information is used directly to improve next year's conference. Did the MMC leave you feeling inspired with new ideas? Submit a session proposal to be considered to present at the 2024 MMC. **Deadline is Friday, April 26th.**

Submitted by Wendee Wolf-Schlarf, Choral Music Educator, Traverse City Central High School and Traverse City West Senior High School

**Michigan Music Conference Board of Directors
MSVMA Representatives**
Erik Jacobson and Gail Worden

**Michigan Music Conference Planning Committee
MSVMA Representatives**
Sarah Stockton, Eric Cadena, and Wendee Wolf-Schlarf

Congratulations to the Emeriti



Joel Moore



Jennifer Orkisz



Regina Schlaff



Theresa Williams-Johnson

President-Elect Eric Cadena presented personal mementos.

Emeriti Catherine Kintner and Ronald Weiler were unable to attend the reception.

**Friends, what an amazing several days of learning,
networking, friendship, and collaboration!**

Our College Sessions at MMC were well attended and full of so many wonderful conversation. Sessions included:

- Partner Program Meet & Greet, coupled with a brainstorming session for our Student Advisory Board (SAB)
- Recruitment, Retention, & Rigor in the Choral Classroom; special thanks to our amazing "expert panel" members Thomas Blue, Thomas Kaiser, Rob Stow, and Megan Sinclair.
- Turning Your Classroom Into a "Classroom" presented by Amy Schroeder

A huge thank you to so many collegiate members who are trusting MSVMA with their development as vocal music educators! If you are a collegiate member and are interested in having a voice on the Student Advisory Board, please contact me at brianleduc@msvma.org and I'll be sure to include you on the exciting upcoming events.

The purpose of the MSVMA Partner Program is to connect and support vocal music educators on their teaching journey. We're so excited to see this type of collaboration and are looking forward to even more connections!

If you'd like to learn more, visit the [Partner Program](#) page. Ready to sign up, use this direct link to [register](#).

MSVMA is truly fostering collaboration and inclusivity across the board and it is so exciting to be a part of it!

Submitted by Brian Leduc, Board of Directors Member-At-Large

2024 Honors Choirs



6-7-8 SA Honors Choir

Kristina Vidal, Director

Brian Leduc, Accompanist

Anne Lawrence, SA State Coordinator



7-8-9 SSA Honors Choir

Samara Valla, Director

Stephanie Gerwitz, Accompanist

Christopher Knapp, SSA State Coordinator



7-8-9 TTB Honors Choir

Jeffrey Cobb, Director

David Husser, Accompanist

Tim Peterson, TTB State Coordinator



High School SSAA Honors Choir
Katherine Rohwer, Director
Kellie Meyer, Accompanist
Candice Sytsma, SSAA State Coordinator



High School TTBB Honors Choir
Matthew Snell, Director
Jen Youngman, Accompanist
Jaylon Sims, TTBB State Coordinator



High School SATB Honors Choir
Jim Watson, Director
Hannah Watson, Accompanist
Maxwell Wagner, SATB Coordinator



6-7-8-9 Coordinators
Left to right: Anne Lawrence, Tim Peterson,
and Christopher Knapp



High School Coordinators
Left to right: Sydney Ogren, Maxwell Wagner,
Jaylon Sims, and Candice Sytsma

Choral Hour



**Jackson Northwest
Middle School Honors Choir**
James Cummings, Director



Haslett High School Chorale
Matthew Callaghan, Director



**West Ottawa High School
Women's Select Ensemble**
Erin L. Stier, Director



DeWitt High School Chamber Choir
Meghan Eldred-Woolsey, Director

Specialized and Jazz Choral Hour



Northern Singers
Michael Wheaton, Director



Carly Koch
Portage Central High School
Musical Theatre Intensive Soloist

Ann Arbor Skyline Blues
Lindsay CieChanski, Director



Braeden Davis
Loy Norrix High School
Musical Theatre Intensive Soloist



All-State Jazz Choir
Dr. Kate Reid, Director
Grayson Nye, Collaborative Pianist
Fred Knapp, Drum Set
Jordan Richards, Bass
Jed Scott, Coordinator

All-State Musical Theatre Ensemble Rehearsal



Members of the All-State Musical Theatre ensemble rehearsed on January 24 in preparation for a performance at the All-State Gala Concert on May 9 at Fairchild Theatre.

Mike Hancey, Director
Dr. Joseph Daniel-Hosta, Pianist
Lyn CieChanski, Coordinator

Congratulations to the 2025 Honors Choir Directors

Andrea Gay, 6-7-8 SA
Kyle Cain, 7-8-9 TTBB
Jacob Berglin, 7-8-9 SSA
Matthew Smith, HS TTBB
Ashley Ward, HS SSAA
James Borst, HS SATB

And the Winners are...



MSVMA Booth with President-Elect Eric Cadena and Treasurer Julia Holt

Visitors to the MSVMA's booth at the MMC Exhibit Hall could register to win professional development opportunities and fun organization activities.

CSLC Coordinator Wendee Wolf-Schlarf is pleased to announce that Tammy Chmielewski, Roscommon Area High School, won the complimentary student attendance at the Choral Student Leadership Conference to be held June 20 at Central Michigan University and featuring Headliner Derrick Fox, Professor of Choral Music Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Creative Endeavors at Michigan State University.

We are pleased to congratulate Carolyn Carrano, Roscommon Area Middle and High School, for winning a complimentary registration to Summer Conference to be held at The Lansing Center July 31 - August 1 and featuring Headliner Dr. Jeffrey Allen Murdock, Director of Choral Activities, Professor of Music, and Founding Director of the Arkansas Center for Black Music at the University of Arkansas.

Congratulations to Brandon Deike for winning Detroit Tigers tickets for MSVMA's participation in "Nonprofit of the Night" on June 24 including singing of the National Anthem.

Congratulations to Amon Eady, Director of Choral Activities at Central Michigan University who was the lucky winner of 25% off a foursome registration for the 1st Annual Eagles for Education Golf Outing to be held June 26 at the Brookshire Golf Club in Williamston. Proceeds from Outing will support the programs and activities of MSVMA.

Thank you to everyone who stopped by our booth and entered our drawings!

MSVMA Adjudication Conference

Director of Adjudication Pam Pierson, Director of Choral Activities, Eastern Michigan University Dr. Brandon Johnson and Vocal Music Director, Okemos High School and Chippewa Middle School Jessica Nieuwkoop presented an Adjudication Conference at MMC on January 25. Topics included the use of junior high/middle school and high school choral performance rubrics and the opportunity for practical application with the Pinewood Middle School 8th Grade Choir, Director Kristina Vidal and the Varsity Voices, Director Carrie Hoeksema. Discussion opportunities enhanced the understanding of each topic. 4.25 SCECH credits were available for participants.

Thank you to Director Vidal and Director Hoeksema and their students for their performances as part of this Conference..



Varsity Voices
Kentwood Public Schools
Carrie Hoeksema, Director



Pinewood Middle School 8th Grade Choir
Kentwood Public Schools
Kristina Vidal, Director

Save the Date for Michigan Music Conference
January 23-25, 2025

Thank you to our MSVMA Sponsors

The Michigan School Vocal Music Association is proud to be supported by the Michigan Arts and Culture Council (MACC) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).



Thank you to the corporate and organizational sponsors who help ensure our continued success in delivering the highest quality vocal music programming to our students and their teachers.



To become an MSVMA sponsor, please contact Executive Director Erik Jacobson at erikjacobson@msvma.org.



MSVMA | P.O. Box 1131, Big Rapids, MI 49307

[Unsubscribe debrajacks@msvma.org](mailto:debrajacks@msvma.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by info@msvma.ccsend.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!