

Tempo!

Tempo! is published by the Michigan School Vocal Music Association to provide programming and activity information to its members monthly.

NOVEMBER 2023

Upcoming Events and Deadlines

November 17 | All-State Jazz Choir Registration Deadline
November 17 | Musical Theatre Honors Ensemble Online Auditions Open
November 18 | 6789 Honors Choirs Rehearsal
November 18 | Musical Theatre S&E Festival West
December 2 | All-State Jazz Choir Rehearsal, Notes and Rhythms
December 2 | High School Regional Honors Choir State Auditions
December 8 | High School State Honors Choir Registration Deadline
December 8 | Musical Theatre Honors Ensemble Online Auditions Deadline
December 22 | Musical Theatre Honors Ensemble Registration Deadline



Another successful Chamber Choir Festival was held at Oakland University on Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

Choirs listed below each performed selections to a very full and newly renovated Varner Hall on the campus of Oakland University.

Dakota High School - Tyler Dargis, Director,
Lake Orion High School – Matthew Smith, Director,
West Bloomfield High School – Sheryl Hauk, Director
Marine City High School – Erin Kurtz, Director

The evening's festival concluded with the Oakland University Chorale and the Oakords under the direction of Dr. Michael Mitchell. The choral repertoire for the event consisted of music by the following composers: *Riggs, Simms, Cook, Pottle, Viadana, Clausen, Wittig, Hagenberg, Kallman, Ticheli, Shaw, Ramsey, Powell, and Esmail*. The program was full of beautiful choral music.



Pictured: Oakland University Chorale with Michael Mitchell, Director

A special thank you to the Oakland University Varner Hall Staff for hosting, Dr. Michael Mitchell for setting up the event last spring and reserving the Oakland University facilities. Megan Sinclair for sending the choir information, repertoire, and scheduling. The high school directors for their continued support of this special MSVMA event and to all the students for their willingness to perform and share their music so artistically. The music was excellent, challenging, and well performed by each choir and the choirs were very supportive of one another. Each choir had a wonderful opportunity, and a great variety of music to listen to and learn from, and the high school students especially enjoyed the Oakland University ensembles.

Submitted by Thomas Blue, Chamber Choir East Coordinator

District Events Spotlight



District 1 is Thankful for Mass Choral Festival and Erik Jacobson!

One of District 1's most cherished events is our annual Mass Choral Festival, which was led by MSVMA Executive Director, Erik Jacobson this year.

Mass Choral Festival was well attended, including students from every school member of District 1:
Big Rapids Public Schools, Amy Schroeder, Director
Cadillac Area Public Schools, Amy Swanson, Director
Ludington Public Schools, Elliot Plummer, Director
Manistee Area Public Schools, Amanda Feyen, Director
Manton Public Schools, Michelle Nuffer, Director
Mason County Central Public Schools, Caleb Schultz, Director
Pine River Area Public Schools, Jessica Gardner, Director
Shelby Public Schools, Gustavo Morales, Director

Participation included over 300 students who sang with the purpose of having fun and experiencing unity among District 1 schools. Students were assured that the festival was to gather together to support one another and enjoy singing together with no pressure or stress. Parents were invited for the day or to enjoy the mini-concert at the conclusion of the day.

As clinician for the day, Erik Jacobson offered students and directors many techniques for creating musicality and artistry within each piece of music, while also giving them warm-ups, tools, and ideas to take back to the classroom. The kids especially enjoyed a layering activity that included beat-boxing, and an open fifth ostinato and was based upon the round "Old Abram Brown". It was definitely fun to put together with hundreds of singers! Another exercise in steady beat and tempo consistency involved multiple rounds on numbered scales with transitional claps. Everyone was wide awake and ready to sing with rhythmic accuracy after that test of focus!

Mass Choral Festival was held on Wednesday, October 25 at Big Rapids High School.

This year's repertoire was:

SATB: The Storm is Passing Over - Tindley / arr. Baker

SATB: Al Shlosha D'varim - Naplan

SSA: Sea Fever - Brinsmead

TTB: When You are Old - Martin

Thank you to all of the District 1 directors and students for participating in this wonderful day, to Amy Schroeder and Big Rapids High School students and admin for hosting, and to Erik Jacobson for sharing your time and talents with us!

Reflections from Elliot Plummer, Director, Ludington Public School

"My students, and I, look forward to Mass Choir Festival every year. Our district has cultivated an event whose atmosphere is relational, and a rich rewarding experience. The comradery, beautiful singing, and time spent with friends celebrating the joy of singing are unmatched across MSVMA."

Submitted by Katie McInnis, District 1 Manager



District 6 and Tenor-Bass Men's Vocal Invitational

On Thursday, November 2, MSVMA District 6 was lucky enough to host Western Michigan University Collegiate Singers – Amphion (TTBB) and Dr. Jacob Berglin for our 2023 Tenor-Bass Men's Vocal Invitational.

Hosted by Carrie VanDenburgh at the Howard Performing Arts Center of Andrew University (Berrien Springs, MI), the gathered tenor and bass singers shared a day of singing, companionship, and performance.

Western Michigan University Choral Education Director, Dr. Berglin chose music both accessible and challenging, picking pieces from around the globe: Serbia, South Africa, United States, and more. The TTBB vocal group Amphion also performed with the District 6 singers, and sang for them in the form of selections from their own repertoire. Participation included 60 students who sang from over eight area high schools and middle schools.

A big thank you to Dr. Berglin, Amphion, Carrie VanDenburgh, and Andrews University for making the experience possible. It was a great day that finished with a fantastic concert!

Submitted by David Gailey, District 6 Manager

Register now for 2024 Michigan Music Conference



Register to attend the 2024 Michigan Music Conference today!

**Early Bird Rate for Friday/Saturday - \$110 and after December 16 - \$140
If you can only attend ONE DAY of the conference - \$80 Early Rate; \$105 after December 16**

While MMC 2024 is packed with inspiring sessions on Friday and Saturday, the fun starts early with valuable interest sessions being presented on Thursday, January 25. Check out the offerings and plan to attend.

Pre-Conference Opportunities - Thursday, January 25

MSVMA Choral Conducting Symposium

Dr. Brandon Waddles, Headliner
Assistant Professor Wayne State University

9 AM – 11 AM

**Additional fee for this session; fee does not include lunch
\$40 - Conducting Member; \$20 - Observer Member**

20-minute sessions with six participant conductors, focusing on conducting and rehearsal techniques. This pre-conference event will allow participants to conduct traditional choral repertoire with Wayne State Concert Chorale, and receive live feedback and instruction from a guest clinician Dr. Brandon Waddles. Teachers have the opportunity to apply as either a Conductor or as an Observer. College students may apply as an Observer. Both new and experienced choral conductors can benefit from observing or conducting.

MSVMA Collegiate Networking Sessions

4 PM - 7 PM in the Imperial Ballroom

Three interest sessions are being offered on Thursday. These sessions are open to anyone and there is no additional charge to attend. Collegiate members as well as professionals who are just getting started in their education career are encouraged to attend.

4 PM - MSVMA Partner Program Meet and Greet - Brian Leduc, Rochester High School

5 PM - Recruitment, Retention, and Rigor in the Choral Classroom -

MSVMA Members Panel Discussion

6 PM: Turning Your Classroom Into A "Classroom" - Amy Schroeder, Big Rapids High School

MSVMA Adjudication Conference

8 AM - 1 PM in the Imperial Ballroom
Register for the Adjudication Conference at MMC here
SCECH credits are available.

If you have considered being an adjudicator for MSVMA, check the process out by attending the second Adjudication Conference of the year on Thursday, January 25 in the Imperial Ballroom.

Dr. Brandon Johnson from Eastern Michigan University is our headliner and Jessica Nieuwkoop will be our sight-reading clinician. If you are a new teacher, you are welcome to attend as well. Attending the adjudication clinic is a great way to learn about the process and educational goals of the festival experience.

Hope to see you there!

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

Register Now!

Join us for the 1st Annual MSVMA Eagles for Education!

The graphic is a promotional flyer for a golf outing. It features a logo at the top left showing a golf ball on a green with a flag on a pole, and the letters 'MSVMA' next to it. The background is a photograph of a large, modern wooden building with a gabled roof, surrounded by greenery and a clear blue sky. The text is arranged in columns, providing details about the event, registration, and location.

**EAGLES FOR EDUCATION
GOLF OUTING**

Wednesday, June 26
8:30 AM Registration
9:30 AM Shotgun Start
\$400 per team (\$100 per player)

Registration includes:
18 holes of golf with a cart
Coffee at registration
Lunch at the turn (hot dog and chips)
Taco Bar

First Aid Kits and Raffle Tickets available for purchase.
Prizes for winners, longest drive, and closest to the pin
Hole-in-One Contest

Brookshire Golf Club
205 W. Church Street
Williamston, MI 48895

All proceeds from Eagles for Education Golf Outing will support The Michigan School Vocal Music Association and help to reach over 60,000 students each year through vocal music programming.

Brookshire offers a beautifully maintained course that lends itself to golfers of all abilities to enjoy. Our golf course is 6,300 yards of beautiful greens, grass swales, mounded bunkers, and plenty of water.

Click Here to Register Your Team!

Contact Debra Jacks at debrajacks@msvma.org to become a sponsor!

[Click to download Sponsorship One-Sheet](#)

Membership Feedback and Proposals

Submitting ideas and asking questions is now easier than ever! Visit the newly consolidated **Membership Feedback & Proposals** tab on the MSVMA website.

The **Membership Feedback Form** is submitted directly to the State Office and will be periodically presented to the Board for review. This is one way to submit implementation suggestions, discuss any issues with festivals, the website, email, reimbursements, scheduling, etc.

The **Proposal Submission Form** is submitted to the President (Sarah Stockton) and presented to the Board for discussion and decision. Proposals may be made by any member, at any time. If applicable, the proposal will be sent to the appropriate subcommittee for their consideration and recommendation. Changes in policy and budget will be addressed for the following school and fiscal year. All proposals may be viewed on the **Pending Proposal Spreadsheet**.

All State Office, Board Members, District Managers, Supervisors, and Coordinators value your input. Reach out via email, or attend a board meeting to stay informed. Let us help you receive the maximum benefit from your MSVMA membership for you and your students!



Thankfulness.

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving with family and friends, our thoughts go to those people and organizations that enhance our lives and make our experiences meaningful. We trust that your involvement in MSVMA events and activities bring enriched learning opportunities to you and your students. The generational membership appreciation that supports our organizational values is encouraging to all of us. We gratefully observe veteran teachers celebrating the success of those they have mentored - officially as supervising teachers or as colleagues extending their assistance and support. The MSVMA Discussion Group is a real-time example of how we help each other with the day to day challenges of striving to offer the finest opportunities in vocal music education to our students.

Consider making a gift to MSVMA to honor someone who has made a difference in your life and career. Did you have an exceptional student teaching experience? Remind your supervising teacher that their guidance and attention to your development helped you by making a gift in their honor. Have someone who you discuss all things programming or classroom management or technology who always shares great ideas and makes helpful suggestions? Say thank you by making a gift in their honor. And that person who cheers you on when you need it and applauds your successes with enthusiasm, express your gratitude by making a gift to honor your appreciation of their support.

Make a charitable gift to MSVMA.

Gift designation options include:

- General Fund which can be designated to the honors choir program, specialized festivals, state level festivals or other specific programs and activities
- Education Endowment (Grant & Scholarship Programs)
- Professional development including the Clinician/Consultant Program
- Carolyn F. Leep Scholarship
- Carolyn F. Leep Endowment

Consider a monthly gift of \$10.

Your generosity will provide ongoing support to help meet the increasing costs of our programming. We do our best to keep membership fees and event registration costs as low as possible. You can be part of achieving this goal.

These giving opportunities are available to you at MSVMA.org by clicking the [donate](#) button.

Create a lasting legacy by including MSVMA in your will.

There are a number of ways to make a planned gift through your will which can include tax advantages to you and your family.

- Designate MSVMA as a beneficiary in your estate plan by a bequest.
- Name MSVMA as a beneficiary of an IRA.
- Name MSVMA as a beneficiary of a retirement plan.
- Name MSVMA as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy.
- Transfer ownership of a life insurance policy to MSVMA.

If you would like assistance or information about making a gift to MSVMA, please contact Executive Director Erik Jacobson (erikjacobson@msvma.org), or Director of Operations Debra Jacks (debrajacks@msvma.org) or by phone at 231.592.9344.

Volunteer Spotlight

Jan Boswell

ANCHOR BAY HIGH SCHOOL
& MIDDLE SCHOOL SOUTH

How long have you volunteered for MSVMA?

For at least 11 years!



What is your favorite memory surrounding an MSVMA event?

I don't really have a favorite memory, I just know that I will take all of the camaraderie shared at the conferences and in our district meetings! I have met so many amazingly talented people who have inspired me to both be proud of what I do and strive to be better.

Who has been your musical or professional inspiration?

As a musician, my folks I think. They were the first to really instill a love for music and encouraged me to follow that dream. As a choir member, I loved being in the Rackham Symphony Choir under Suzanne Acton, She is just amazing! My predecessor, Catherine Russman was also a wonderful director! She saw the talent and goodness in each of her students and I try to model that as well.

What do you like to do with your free time outside of changing lives through music education?

I hang out with my grandkids!! They are the joy of my heart!

Meet your District Managers



Anthony Funaro
DISTRICT 8 MANAGER

Favorite Food: Grilled porkchop with asparagus

Fun Fact: I love to cook! Before I became a teacher, I was working at two restaurants as a chef.

Hobbies: I really enjoy traveling, walking, and reading a good book.

Favorite TV Show/Movie: Bones is my favorite TV show ever. I enjoy the Marvel movies.

Favorite Book: I am currently reading a series of books called the Sigma Series by James Rollins and enjoying them very much!

Your #1 song that gets replayed (or song that you'll sing your heart out to): I love singing songs at home that I have NO business singing! Especially musical theater songs. It is just so much fun!

Festival Code of Ethics

Communications regarding events are to be between MSVMA members and event supervisors only. Parents and students are not to contact event supervisors. Event applications and adjudication forms are to be completed only by directors.

Announcements

Musical Events of Interest

Rackham Choir - Too Hot To Handel | January 12

Verdi Opera Theatre of Michigan Deadline for Entries | February 17



After a four-year absence, Detroit favorite Too Hot To Handel will return with a special 90-minute performance for students on January 12, 2024, at 11 AM at the Detroit Opera House. The Rackham Choir's 20th production of this exuberant, uplifting jazz-gospel take on George Frideric Handel's Messiah takes place the Friday before the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, making it ideal for celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. King. Too Hot to Handel incorporates several musical styles and scriptural messages of hope and inclusion that echo Dr. King's words of hope for peace and justice.

In addition to the Rackham Choir, the performance will feature the Detroit Opera Orchestra; tenor Rodrick Dixon, soprano Alfreda Burke, and alto Karen Marie Richardson; and the Too Hot to Handel Trio, featuring Detroit classical, gospel, and jazz musicians Marion Hayden (acoustic bass), Alvin Waddles (piano), and Dave Taylor (drums). Student tickets are available for \$10/piece, and scholarships are available.

Performance details:

When: Friday, January 12, 11 AM

Where: Detroit Opera House

Duration: 90 minutes

Performers:

Rackham Choir

Detroit Opera Orchestra

Too Hot to Handel Trio: Marion Hayden (acoustic bass), Alvin Waddles (piano), Dave Taylor (drums)

Alfreda Burke, Soprano

Karen Marie Richardson, Alto

Rodrick Dixon, Tenor

Suzanne Mallare Acton, Conductor

Tickets:

Student tickets are \$10; every reservation for 10 students comes with a free chaperone reservation. Contact Detroit Opera House Group groupsales@detroitopera.org and 313.309.8251.

Buy your tickets [here](#).

To inquire about scholarships, contact Rackham Choir directly at administration@rackhamchoir.org.

Study guide: Before the performance, an updated curriculum guide, "Affirming Our Identities Through Music," will be provided to students. The guide explores the Black experience through the lens of the various genres included in Too Hot To Handel and the perspective of some of the principal performers as people of color (POC) in the classical music world. "Affirming Our Identities Through Music" is also a great springboard for further discussions during Black History Month in February.

Submitted by **Melissa Bunker, Rackham Choir**

Verdi Opera Theatre of Michigan

Announcing 30th Annual Italian Songs and Arias Vocal Competition

The Verdi Opera Theatre of Michigan is pleased to announce its 2024 Annual Italian Songs and Arias Vocal Competition for Michigan High School Students is now open and accepting entries. Information for students to participate in this exciting event



Those are the required ingredients in every recipe for musical success.

Mix them together under the proper conditions and a star is born. Or two, or three.

The Verdi Opera Theatre of Michigan in cooperation with The Italian American Cultural Society, The Italian American Club of Livonia Charitable Foundation, The Dante Alighieri Society of Michigan, Detroit Opera and Under the Auspices of the Consulate of Italy in Detroit are pleased to announce

The 30th Annual Italian Songs and Arias Vocal Competition for Michigan High School Students

See website: www.verdioperatheatre.com

Ten finalists will be selected from the entries received and will perform at the Concert of the Finalists. Each finalist will receive a monetary prize. Entry forms for the competition and all other pertaining information, are available to teachers and students at our website, www.verdioperatheatre.com

\$1000 First Prize



Concert of the Finalists

Sunday, May 5, 2024 at 5:00 pm
at the Italian American Cultural Center
43843 Romeo Plank Rd., Clinton TWP, MI 48038
Phone: (586) 228-3030



*Join us by encouraging
your students to participate
in this exciting event!*

**Deadline for Entries:
February 17, 2024**

Submitted by John Zaretti, President and Co-founder of Verdi Opera Theatre of Michigan



Help Accelerate Climate Action!

We are recruiting volunteers to help us reach out to youth choirs from throughout the country to be part of a fun, cost-free campaign to inspire and engage young people, their families, schools, and communities to take climate action. Can you help?

Background

Through the voices of 1000's of young people from across the country joining in the chorus of the song, *I Wanna Be Cool* and the associated pledges to take action, together we can make a BIG difference in addressing the climate crisis.

The Campaign is a non-profit, non-partisan initiative focused on bringing attention to the fact that climate change is an urgent issue and that there are easy things we all can do to help.

The Campaign vehicle is a song, *I Wanna Be Cool!*, by Will Kimbrough and Brant Miller. It's an upbeat call to action that contains the line: "Can't you hear your kids starting to shout!" The Campaign takes this line literally, recruiting young people everywhere to record themselves singing/shouting that message in unison on a master recording and video. At the same time, they will be learning about

climate change and mobilizing action among their peers, their families, their communities, and the song's audiences. Optional action pledges will be shared, with easy pathways provided by our action partners, in three areas: electrifying and greening homes, schools, and other buildings; voter registration; and improving schools' climate curriculum.

More information about the Campaign can be found on our [webpage](#). You can also listen to the song [here](#).

Fill out the form [here](#) to start the process. We will then send you the information you need to create and submit an audio and/or video recording.

How you can help

We will be reaching out to engage youth choirs from around the country, from schools, congregations, community groups, and wherever young people – from elementary through college level – gather to sing. We are assembling a group of individuals who can spend some time:

- Identifying choirs that might be interested in participating - through schools, congregations, or associations that have connections with choirs.
- Reaching out to key individuals responsible for choir choices. This could be, for example, choir directors, community arts leaders, or school district program officers responsible for theater and arts programs.
- Directing them to the BeCool webpage where there is additional information, a recording of the song, and a link for receiving all the necessary materials (such as Consent and Release Forms, instructions for audio and video recording, pathways for action with optional pledges, and music/lyrics).

And, importantly, each volunteer's outreach efforts will be recorded on a master spreadsheet to facilitate collaboration and ensure coordination and ability to follow-up.

For more information, you can contact becoolsong@gmail.com

Submitted by Diane L. Winder, Eastern Michigan University School Director and Professor of Music, Emerita



Want to submit a story for Tempo!



feedback@msvma.org

MSVMA Sponsors

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



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



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

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