

Upbeat

The Newsletter of Trenton Children's Chorus

Trenton Children's Chorus

Making Music
Making Friends
Making a Difference

Mission Statement

*Empowering the academic, social
and spiritual lives of children
through artistry in music.*

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Photo credit: Alicia Brozovich

Nick McBride, TCNJ professor and former TCC conductor and Patricia Thel, TCC Artistic Director together form a dream team to launch a partnership to empower TCC choristers

TCC Heads to Trenton Hall This Fall

"You will learn from an incredible musician how to build relationships and make a children's choir sound great. This partnership will set us apart from other colleges and universities in the state." Dr. Nick McBride, Assistant Professor of Choral Music Education at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), addressed eager music education students as he leaned against the grand piano in the choral rehearsal room of TCNJ's music building - the nuclear site of a new partnership between TCNJ and TCC.

This fall, Chorale students will trek through Trenton Hall on their way to rehearsal with TCNJ students beginning October 10. Each week, the high schoolers will experience the excitement and discovery that is characteristic of TCNJ's campus, while preparing performances with the support of Thel and McBride, who will serve as co-directors of the ensemble this season. The opportunity for performances, both on and off campus, between TCC and TCNJ Music ensembles, are expected fruit of this artistic collaboration.

The *pièce de résistance* will manifest in a formal interactive choral methods course for TCNJ students, to run concurrently with the TCC Chorale schedule. TCNJ music education majors will receive invaluable hands-on opportunities to lead warmups, sectionals and additional student teaching opportunities through the relationships they build with the Chorale students. Patty Thel stood next to McBride as she relayed to his students how this experience will propel the course of their studies:

"Students teach me the most because I face or hear something I haven't before, and that challenges me to learn something new. One-on-one contact is the fulcrum of your teaching; the things that you do that seem small end up very meaningful to a child. This experience will make a difference in your life and a difference in your teaching."

Alumni Spotlight: Sydney Williams, Class of 2011

Sydney Williams, TCC graduating class of 2011, is making a major impact as a mental health counselor at Trenton Central High School. Her role includes supporting students through major changes in their lives, making sure that students are “emotionally and socially ready for school,” and creating a sense of general mental wellness that they can carry throughout their lives.

Mental health counseling became a life path for Sydney after she completed an internship at Wellingborough High School. She took her passion and pursued a BA in Psychology from Bloomfield College, graduating in 2015; and later received a master’s degree in Critical Health Counseling at Kean University, and has been at Trenton Central supporting children ever since.

Sydney was a member of the TCC for nine years. Through TCC, she was giving opportunities to sing in and visit Boston, MA and multiple cities in Virginia. These choral excursions developed in Sydney an “immense wanderlust,” that she continues to cultivate as an adult.

Sydney claims that she developed her skills of time management, scheduling, and work ethic as a member of TCC. She elaborated further, saying that being in multiple ensembles, juggling school, and then helping out with housework prepared her for the intensity of her counseling job.



Photo Credit: Sydney Williams

TCC alumna, Sydney Williams, has gone from making music to making a difference in the lives of Trenton youth through her role as a mental health counselor at Trenton Central High School. This year, Sydney will serve as a college mentor for Paola, a TCC 2019 alumna.



Eric Thomas

was named Teacher of the Year by the Trenton Board of Education in 2002 and 2008. He is the recipient of the 2010 Community Care Award given by the Three Doctors Foundation and the 2010 Ray Broach Award for the Arts given by the Ewing Public Education Foundation.

Drumming: A Laboratory for Leadership

Drumming has always been an essential part of the TCC curriculum, building confidence in students using rhythm, improvisation and live performance. This year, it has been made into a stand-alone ensemble class on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:45 p.m., lead by Eric Thomas.

When asked about drum lab, Mr. Thomas spoke about the joy of bringing out the best in students: “Music is about expression to me, whether it is someone performing on their own or with other musicians to convey an expansive feeling or message to others who are listening. Once a student knows how to play a particular drum or instrument, I want to help them to express themselves through the instrument; they themselves are part of the overall expression of the song. When a student is playing on their own, it is about what they are feeling and bringing [that feeling] out.”

According to Mr. Thomas, drum lab serves as an inspiration to many students, even encouraging students to begin playing other instruments. One student in particular, Tobias Richardson, began as a drumming student, and through exposure to other instruments in drum class and at home, became an “outstanding bassist (Thomas). Mr. Thomas also stresses the importance of both the piano lab and drum lab, as it allows students to “appreciate what I do, JoAnn, and the other musicians who accompany the choirs. Hopefully any percussion added to the songs selected by the different choir directors expands the musical message through the voices of TCC from our youngest members to our high school students.”



Photo credit: Jessie Franko

Summer Springs to Life in Music, Theatre, and Discovery

This summer, nearly 40 TCC members further cultivated their gifts, skills, and character in the phenomenal summer camps offered by The Lawrenceville School, McCarter Theatre, RU-4H, Watershed Nature Camp, and Westminster Choir College.

Eight of these students continued the tradition of TCC members attending Westminster Choir College's Vocal Institute. Malachi Stewart, a recipient of the Princeton Friends of Opera scholarship, was thrilled to participate in the Institute. The musical community seemed to be a focal point of Malachi's time, who said that his favorite experiences were "doing group activities and making new friends, meeting the counselors, and performing in the final concert." Malachi's voice grew more excited as he spoke about the piano and vocal instruction, where he learned about harmonic structures, language pronunciation, and new breathing techniques. Being involved in TCC, Stewart felt extremely prepared for his summer at the Institute, saying that TCC prepared him to excel in music theory, reading, singing posture, breathing, and enunciation.

Gabby Lightner has been a member of TCC for eight years, and this past summer, she attended the High School Intensive Music Theater Lab at the McCarter Theater. This particular program focuses on creating new works. This past summer, students worked with a team of professionals to devise the script for a brand new musical, featuring songs by McCarter artists and inspired by characters from Greek mythology. The final product was a musical featuring different scenes and Greek storylines connected by the opening of Pandora's Box.



2015 alumna Niambi McCoy cites attending WCC's Vocal Institute as her favorite memory from TCC.

Photo credit: Jessie Franko



Photo credits: Westminster Choir College

TCC students attend the Westminster Summer Vocal Institute thanks to the generosity of Princeton Friends of Opera, The Hopewell Valley Chorus, and donors of the annual Spring Into Song fundraiser in March 2019.

TCC 30th Anniversary Season

This season, the cities of Trenton and Princeton will be filled with the cherubic sounds of children singing, drumming, and playing their hearts out. Thanks to your support, we are beginning this next chapter stronger than ever. We are proud to partner with new and old friends for our upcoming concert season, and hope that you'll join us.

- 9/27 One Voice Benefit**
Morven Museum and Garden, Princeton
- 10/22 Fall Open House**
TCC Site, West Trenton
- 12/5 Winter Concert**
Sacred Heart Church, Trenton
- 12/15 Princeton Pro Musica Concert**
Patriots Theatre, Trenton
- 2/6 BHM Concert with Westminster Jubilee Singers**
Nassau Presbyterian Church, Princeton
- 3/29 Spring into Song**
Central Church, Ewing
- 4/25 30th Anniversary Concert**
Miller Chapel, Princeton
- 5/15 Spring Concert**
Sacred Heart Church, Trenton

Season Partners

TCC is thrilled to include the following organizations as partners in the 30th Anniversary Season:

The College of New Jersey
Boys and Girls Club of Mercer County
Black Professional Group- Hopewell, NJ Chapter from
Bank of America
Hopewell Valley Chorus
Westminster Jubilee Singers
Nassau Presbyterian Church
Trinity Episcopal Church
United Way of Greater Mercer County



This program is made possible in part by the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Commission through funding from the Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders, and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, A Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

ONE VOICE

A Benefit for Trenton Children's Chorus 30 Years of Making a Difference

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Tanice and Dudley Fitzpatrick
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(as of September 10)

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THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS
FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Please join us! Fabulous Cocktails & Hors d'Oeuvres

Fantastic Auction includes: African Safari, dude
ranch, vacation to Portugal, Sarasota beach house,
sports bundles, NY theatre tickets, and more

Featuring music by Phil Orr and singing by alumni
and members of

the Trenton Children's Chorus

Friday, September 27, 2019

6:00 – 8:30 pm

Morven Museum and Garden



Photo credit: Jeissi Ollano Photography

Will We See You There?

RSVP Online Today

www.trentonchildrenschorus.org/onevoice