

From Your President

Goal Setting for 2014

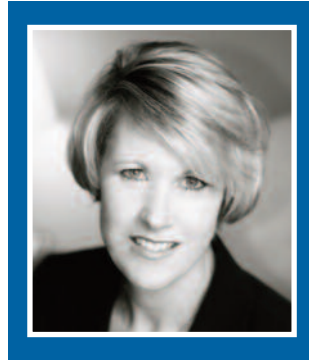
AS I SIT IN MY KITCHEN on New Year's Eve, watching the snow flurries swirl outside, my thoughts turn to New Year's resolutions (or "revolutions" as the little guy in the AT&T commercial says). I am not much for making New Year's resolutions, mostly because I don't stick to them and then get very frustrated with myself when they are abandoned. However, I am one for setting goals. Particularly in my professional life, I find the setting of goals to be not only helpful, but often essential to professional success and development.

The best part of goal setting is that it causes us to first examine carefully where we are. If we cannot objectively see where we are, we have no way of knowing where we are going. Worse yet, without a careful examination of our current position, we may have an unrealistic idea as to where we *should* be going. For example, if I currently direct a choir that comprises 25 sopranos, 20 altos, six basses and two tenors, I probably should not list "sing double choir literature by conclusion of semester" as one of my goals. Not only is the objective unrealistic, it will both frustrate me and alienate my singers. However, a very practical goal in this situation might be to recruit two more basses and three more tenors by the end of the semester.

Another important element of goal setting is that it allows us to dream a little. The setting of long term goals, especially, encourages us to look into the future and imagine where we would like to be. Goals such as "in five years, I will have completed my master's degree" or "in five years, I will have doubled the size of my choir program" are both practical and challenging. They also give us just a few moments to say "Wow, wouldn't that be fabulous?!"

Here are a few I have found very useful in my own goal setting and I hope will be of use to you.

- 1) Keep the list short. I would suggest no more than two short-term and two long-term goals. Perhaps it would be more useful to have only one of each to start.
- 2) Examine at the outset whether or not the goals can be easily measured. For instance, if the goal is to have *better relationships* with your colleagues, measurement might be tricky. However, if the goal is to de-



OCDA President Dara Gillis

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velop better *communication* with colleagues, developing a measuring tool would surely be easier.

3) Determine if the goal can be accomplished in stages. If so, what might those stages be? Using the example from the earlier paragraph about growing the size of the men's sections in my choir, nothing says I must add all those men at the same time. Phases of completion can be very helpful and encouraging. They often spur us to not only accomplish but perhaps surpass the original goal.

4) If achievement is not reached, it may only mean that

the goal requires adjustment, not complete abandonment. Winston Churchill said "Success is not final; failure is not fatal: it's the courage to continue that counts." We sometimes just need to take a step back to evaluate the process before soldiering on.

My final suggestion is simply this: continue to set goals throughout your career and, in fact, your lifetime. As we all grow older and especially as we begin to reap the benefits of our own successes, it is very easy to think that we no longer need things to work for. In fact, there is sometimes a point

when we feel we are at the top of our game and we need not study or learn any more. That is a slippery slope, my friends. There is a very fine line between no longer *needing* to set goals and no longer *caring* to set goals. The people I respect most in my life are those who readily admit they still have much to learn. These are the individuals who continue to attend every OCDA Summer Conference, every Central Division Conference (are you registered for Cincinnati yet?), and who continue to find new ways to be inspired. I challenge each of us to continue to set goals as long as we are able. Happy New Year! ♦

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The Value of a Good Song

Jennifer Call, Children's Choir R&S Chair

NO MATTER HOW LARGE OR SMALL the choir, we all consider the financial repercussions of our artistic decisions. While we may have a deep desire not to worry about money, we must. We all need to be concerned with getting the best bang for our musical “buck,” both literally and figuratively. Will the money we spend on music purchases be a good investment? Will the time we spend teaching a particular piece be worth it? How do we know?

Financial Value

Value can be assessed in many ways; the first is purely financial. My litmus test is, “will I do this piece again?” If the answer is no,

then I have to decide if the money I spend on the music is worth the single use. That might be a necessary cost for a particular event, but the question must still be asked. In addition, it is important to stress that any music we use should always be purchased. No music is free—nor should it be. We must financially support the composers and publishers of quality music so that more can be written.

Educational Value

Another way to assess value is in the educational opportunities it provides. History, musical elements, expression, and vocal technique are all taught in our rehearsal rooms – the music we use is our

textbook for the course. In evaluating the literature we teach, the skill set that is being taught must be a priority. Singing the latest difficult and trendy composition might seem glamorous, but is it providing the singers the opportunity to learn what they need when they need it?

Depth of Text

The value in singing rich texts is one that cannot be overlooked. Lyrics are one element that sets choral music apart from other musical disciplines. There are thousands of rich, vibrant texts from all eras that have been set for every level of singing and in every style



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imaginable. My choir is currently learning *Kali's Song*, arranged by Donald Patriquin (earthsongs). On the surface, the text is about an Irish boy and a boat. However, there is rich symbolism within the lyric that requires deeper thought and discernment. This piece has given us the opportunity to discuss symbolism and how each of the singers can relate to the song. Each singer has made a different connection, which allows this piece to be new and rewarding each time we pull it out of the library.

Audience Enjoyment

Our choirs perform—for people. It would be a disservice to our singers, their loved ones, and our extended supporters to not consider who is sitting in the audience. I have often been asked, “why don’t they sing anything I know?” While this question gets under my skin, the point is valid. If audience members aren’t familiar with the choral art, all they bring to the musical conversation is what they hear in popular music. The value of a recognizable piece can be immeasurable. It lifts the spirits of the audience and in turn grows deeper value and support of your program. It can lead your audience to appreciate and come to love the deeper, richer pieces of our beloved art form. Care must be taken, however, to choose appropriate arrangements for your ensemble. This is not an easy task.

Finding Good Literature

There is as much of an art to selecting literature as there is to per-

forming it. The conductor needs to know her ensemble. She needs to understand their current level of skill—their strengths and weaknesses. She needs to understand the people: what life experiences do they bring with them? She needs to have a vision for where music can lead them both in musicianship and understanding of the

world around them. Then, she needs to find music to take them there.

Nothing takes the place of the difficult, time consuming, mind bending, and often tedious work of reviewing music. However, there are many resources that have already done some of the work for you. Consult colleagues to find out



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Free Online Literature Resources

Ohio Choral Directors Association website: ohiocda.org/resources/repertoire

American Choral Directors Association website: acda.org (click on *Repertoire and Standards*)

ChoralNet website: choralnet.org/list/resource

Choral Director magazine website: choraldirectormag.com/resources/repertoire-forum

The value of a good song can be found in the return on your investment, whether the investment is in the dollars and cents, in the time spent learning the piece, or in the impact it has on your singers and audience members. We must be wise stewards of our resources and provide the highest quality literature to the singers with whom we are privileged to work. ♦

Stop, Collaborate, and Listen

Peter Hampton, Northeast Region Chair

LET'S BE HONEST. How often do we actually join forces with colleagues on projects or concerts? College and university directors tend to do this more, but at the high school and middle school levels, we often stick to our own thing. In some schools, teachers are forced to share concerts because of scheduling or program size. One group takes a turn performing its three pieces, the curtain closes, the audi-

ence grows restless while the next group tunes or makes its way onto the risers, and the process repeats. Beyond that, there is often little collaboration among music teachers within a building or district. It's easy to have tunnel vision, stuck in our own choral world so we forget about the other ensembles. And while large choral concerts are important, many learning opportunities are lost when our choirs are

isolated.

My band and orchestra colleagues and I recently experimented with a more collaborative concept. We decided to hold a concert that included all of our top ensembles. Each group would prepare a few pieces to perform alone, but much of the concert would include two or more ensembles performing together. This was new territory for



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us, and it required extensive planning and problem solving, but the end result was amazing. We produced a show that equally featured orchestra, band, and choir, and it ran continuously from one piece to the next without any breaks for re-setting the stage (aside from a short intermission). The concert was even more of a success than we had hoped for, and having pulled it off, we're now prepared for even greater accomplishments down the road. It was a positive experience that taught us all a lot:

Be creative with repertoire.

There's no reason a concert can't include both popular and classical genres. As long as transitions are purposeful and well thought out,

they will make sense. And if you want to do a specific piece, don't let instrumentation hold you back. If you give yourself enough time, having students make arrangements can be an exciting and fulfilling project.

Use space in new ways. Rather than make the audience wait for stage resets between ensembles, have smaller ensembles perform from new locations in the interim: aisles, stairs, risers in the pit, small platforms in front of the stage, etc. This keeps the audience occupied and draws their attention in different directions, making things more engaging.

Consider audience participation. A holiday concert is the per-

Help the Historian

JOHN S. LONG, HISTORIAN

I am trying to collect data for our historical archives. If you have any type of concert programs, newsletters, conference programs, or pictures that you feel would be of value to the Ohio Choral Directors Association, please contact me. In fact, if you simply have a great story or remembrance about the Ohio Choral Directors Association and would be willing to share it, that would be great, too. Please e-mail me at jslong@inbox.com. Thanks so much!

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fect time to have a sing-along. Or find a patriotic song and have the audience sing a verse. Words can be printed in the program, or projected onto a screen if your auditorium allows.

Think outside the box. Sometimes the craziest ideas end up being just what you need. We couldn't figure out how to fit a full choir, band, and orchestra on stage at once while still allowing the choir to be heard. So we had the

choir perform from platforms in the pit, placed a camera behind the orchestra to capture the conductor, and positioned flat screen TVs in the front row of seats. This allowed the choir students to view the conductor from the pit, where they could be heard more easily.

Include something non-musical. Try a relevant poem or reading, or have the drama department perform a five-minute scene from a play. Invite a principal or other ad-

ministrator to read a short story. Do something the audience wouldn't expect to see at a musical performance.

None of these ideas is particularly groundbreaking, but they're a good place to start if you're thinking of putting on a show like this. You'll still need plenty of patience, time, and energy, but trust me: your students, parents and community will appreciate it! ♦

Voices and Color: How to Achieve Balance and Blend in Your Ensemble

Sarah Baker, Southwest Region Chair

AT LAST SUMMER'S OCDA CONVENTION I was brought to the front of my seat when Bruce Chamberlain led his session on voice placement. It's something I have done at the beginning of every semester and any time a new student is added to one of my ensembles—it consistently proves to be one of the most important things I do for my students. This practice was introduced to me by my dear friend and mentor, Charles R. Snyder, who learned the art of voice placement through his work with Ellis Snyder, Paul Christiansen, and Weston Noble.

The Power of Placement

Summer 1994 was my first year as accompanist for the All-Ohio State Fair Youth Choir. This was the summer before my first job as a high school choral director, with

no ambition to be one! But, because of employment shifts, this was the hand that was dealt to me. Mr. Snyder had invited me to be a member of his staff since he was chosen as director of the All-Ohio Youth Choir in 1992. I was 16 the first time I worked with Chuck as an accompanist for various ensemble, church, and musical theatre gigs. When I arrived at the Expo Center that July, I thought I was set up just to spend more time on the bench getting used to being in front of high school students (I had spent the last two years working in a K-5 music classroom, which I loved very much!). What more could I possibly get from accompanying another group of high school kids? Now I laugh at that ridiculous thought! Those 17 days turned out to be the most exciting, whirlwind

learning experience I ever had.

Lesson 1: Bass part rehearsal—2nd day of rehearsal week, July 1994. Mr. Snyder chose two baritones and two basses to sing a short phrase from the piece we were rehearsing. In this lesson, I had to identify the balance between the two parts. The baritone part was almost overwhelming, so to find balance, we moved the basses to the middle of the ensemble. This made an incredible difference. The bass part balanced the baritone, and although the individual voices were more distinct in this formation, the blend was better.

Lesson 2: Cardinal Chorale rehearsal—June 1997. In preparation for the Chorale's summer concert, we had a day's worth of re-



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hearsal in the chapel of the Coshocton Presbyterian Church. Only a portion of the Chorale was able to attend, so voice placement had to be utilized to the fullest to allow for maximum sound quality and balance. As many of us encounter every day, the bass section was a little slim in numbers. Mr. Snyder moved one of the strongest singers, a bass with a vibrant, forward tone, to the front and center of the ensemble. The rest of the basses and baritones were moved into a wedge formation, stemming from that central bass. The remaining voices were placed on the outside of the wedge, keeping the lower, foundation voices more present, allowing the other voice colors to ring freely without re-

pressing sound or compromising a good tone.

Color and Sound

These and many other experiences I had during 18 years in choral music education led me to associate colors with musical sounds, particularly for the singing voice. I now hear individual voices as red, blue, green, and every variation on the color spectrum. Students in my ensembles always look forward to learning what color they are. When I listen to my students for voice placement (the voice part), I also listen for the color of the voice.

Although I have assigned a color as well as a voice part for many years, I hadn't thought of actually showing the colors on my

students until after our appearance in the 2012 World Choir Games. There were many color displays in the attire that the various ensembles wore, and I wanted to find a way to give a little more character to the black dress. Since the fall of 2012, the ladies in my Select Women's Chorale have donned sequined sashes of various colors. Each girl wears the color (or a slight variation) of what I hear in her voice.

Color and Energy

I was introduced to a new perspective on color and music by a friend of mine, Judy Evans, a retired math teacher who, among many other things, helps people through a faith-based method of healing



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touch. After suffering a serious horseback riding accident this past October, I called Judy to help me through the early weeks of recovery. When Judy visited me for our first session, she told me about the seven chakras of the human body and the healing that occurs from concentration on each chakra. As she worked through each chakra, I felt something incredible. Then, in my mind's eye, I saw a color with each chakra. Of course, I had to tell her about the association that I make with color and my singers' voices. Judy said, "This is amazing ... I have a book for you!"

She introduced me to Mary Bassano's *Healing with Music and Color: A Beginner's Guide* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1992). Bassano works as a color-music therapist and also spent a few years teaching at Oberlin College's Conservatory of Music. In her book, the chakras are matched with the seven colors in the spectrum. Bassano classifies each color with a pitch on the C major scale—red with middle C, orange with D, yellow with E, etc. The energy one feels, sees, and hears from each color promotes a different strength

and intensity, disseminating from the first, or root, chakra up through the body to the seventh, or crown, chakra. When I learned of spiritual and physical aspects of color, understanding how music is seen in colors, my perspective of color in the voice grew even more profoundly. Where I place voices in my ensembles now has even more support and purpose than before.

An example of placement by voice color: In my 21-voice Select Women's Chorale, there are only four first sopranos. Not surprisingly, each of the girls is a shade or a variation of blue. Sarah's color reminds me of a crystal sky blue (she wears a silver sash), Allison and Sam are both royal blue, and Sydney is turquoise. Jayne, one of my second sopranos, also wears turquoise; when parts divide more than twice, she will often sing the lower soprano I part. I had to be very careful when positioning them on the risers to get the most from their sound and color. If the ladies are beside each other, one or more of the voices is usually lost (this happens when Sydney and Allison are within proximity of one another). The maximum result occurs

when the girls are placed with a lot of space and other voice parts mixed in between them. Sydney and Jayne stand on opposite ends of the risers. Sarah, Sam, and Allison stand in the front row, mixed in with altos. The altos cover a spectrum that includes pink, purple, and indigo voices. By doing this, the girls are able to sing out more confidently, and they never have to hold back as first sopranos often do.

My sopranos prefer to sing by altos, especially second altos (those are the purple and indigo voices). Intonation and balance is achieved much more easily because they are able to hear and understand how their notes fit within the desired chord. The visual representation of sound by the use of color helps the girls see what they are hearing.

Dr. Bassano writes, "When we know a person's basic tone and color ray, we can tap into that energy with these tools and establish a rapport with the individual" (Bassano, p. 6). The color identification gives the students ownership and value in what they have to contribute to the ensemble, and they learn to value each other. It's espe-

OCDA News, the official publication of the Ohio Choral Directors Association, is published three times annually and is distributed without charge to members of the Association as well as to selected members and officers of the American Choral Directors Association. Distribution is by PDF file that is emailed and posted at ohiocda.org. OCDA reserves the right to determine inclusion of materials submitted and to edit all materials proposed for distribution.

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René Clausen is professor of music and has served as conductor of The Concordia Choir in Moorhead, Minnesota, since 1986. Additionally, he is the artistic director of the award-winning Concordia Christmas Concerts, which are frequently featured by PBS stations throughout the nation. His success as a composer is demonstrated by over 100 commissioned works. "Life and Breath: Choral Works by René Clausen" is a 13-track recording by the Kansas City Chorale. This CD of compositions by Clausen won two Grammy Awards in 2013, including Best Choral Performance.

Lori Hetzel is the Associate Director of the School of Music, Associate Director of Choral Activities and Professor of Choral Music Education at the University of Kentucky where she conducts the UK Women's Choir and the *a cappella* group "Paws and Listen". Hetzel is a contributing author to the new textbook *Conducting Women's Choirs: Strategies for Success*. Outside of the university, Dr. Hetzel also serves as Artistic Director of the Lexington Singers Children's Choir and conducts the LSCC Chamber Choir.



Marla Butke is Associate Professor of Music at Ashland University where she serves as the Coordinator of Music Education, teaches choral and general music methods courses, and directs the Women's Chorus. She is a frequent clinician throughout the United States with research interests focusing on Dalcroze Eurhythmics and reflective practice. Dr. Butke serves as the head of research for the Dalcroze Society of America and is the Ohio Chapter President.

Sharon Davis Gratto is Professor and Chair of the University of Dayton Department of Music, where she directs the World Music Choir. She came to UD from Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania, where she was Music Education Coordinator, a conductor of three choral ensembles, and Founder/Director of the Gettysburg Children's Choir. Dr. Gratto's PK-12 music teaching has included positions at schools in Germany, Spain, and Nigeria. For six years at Indiana University Dr. Gratto piloted Jay Fern and Mary Goetze's technology for teaching world choral music, *Global Voices*.



Sandra Mathias, this year's Children's Honor Choir Director, is Professor Emerita at Capital University, where she served as Professor of Vocal Music Education and Director of The Kodály Institute at Capital for 29 years. She is also Director Emerita of the Columbus Children's Choir, where she served as Artistic Director for 25 years. She is a Past President of the Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE) and served as the R & S Chair for Children's Choirs for OCDA. Dr. Mathias serves as consultant, guest conductor and teacher both nationally and internationally.

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Questions? Contact: Brandon L. Moss, Conference Chair
ocdaconference@gmail.com • 614.499.8089

High School Teachers! Don't forget the...

High School Honor
Men's and Women's Chorus

Monday, June 16
ONE-DAY EVENT!

James Gallagher and
Richard D. Mathey, conductors

More Info: OCDAhonorchoir@gmail.com

2014 OCDA SUMMER CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration fees include parking, the Tuesday business luncheon, the Tuesday evening social event, and reading session music (guaranteed only for workshop participants registering by May 31, 2014).

Fill out the registration form and return as indicated below. The registration must be postmarked by May 31, 2014, in order for the pre-registration fees to apply. After May 31, a higher fee structure is in place (see below). Reading session packets cannot be guaranteed for those who do not pre-register by the May 31 deadline. A refund will be made if a written cancellation is received by May 31, 2014. After that date a deduction of \$80.00 will be made.

The option to earn graduate credit through Otterbein University is available this year **for pre-registrants only**. If you would like to receive graduate credit information, please indicate this in the appropriate space on the registration form below. A current copy of your teaching license must be either mailed in with your registration form or brought with you to the conference.

Mail payment and Registration Form to: Brandon L. Moss, OCDA Summer Conference Coordinator, 342 ½ W. 1st Ave., Columbus OH 43201. Email or call Brandon with questions: ocdaconference@gmail.com 614-499-8089. Make checks payable to the **Ohio Choral Directors Association**.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____ County _____

ACDA Membership # _____ Email address _____

Address _____
Street City State Zip

Home or cell phone _____ Business phone _____

First-Time Conference Attendee? Yes No

Pre-Registration (postmarked by May 31, 2014)

_____ \$154 ACDA member
_____ \$228 non-member (includes membership*)
_____ \$74 retired member
_____ \$119 retired non-member (includes membership)
_____ \$89 non-member spouse (does not include membership)
_____ \$44 student member/1st year teacher
_____ \$89 student non-member (includes membership)

Late Registration (postmarked after May 31, 2014)

_____ \$184 ACDA member
_____ \$258 non-member (includes membership*)
_____ \$104 retired member
_____ \$149 retired non-member (includes membership)
_____ \$119 non-member spouse (does not include membership)
_____ \$84 student member/1st year teacher
_____ \$119 student non-member (includes membership)

* New member price reflects \$21 discount, which equals the amount of OCDA dues for one year!

Other Items of Interest

_____ \$8.00 I am interested in purchasing a Jersey Mike's box lunch for the Lunch Roundtable Discussions.

Please circle your meal option: Ham Turkey Roast Beef Veggie

(Interest areas include: College/University, High School/Jazz/Show, MS/Jr. High, Elementary/Children's/Boys, Church/Community)

_____ I am interested in receiving graduate credit information.

ON-CAMPUS RESIDENCE HALL LODGING

Rooms are air-conditioned. Linens are optional (see below) and include sheets, a pillowcase, and towels. No pillows are provided.

Select date(s): _____ June 16 _____ June 17

Select room: _____ single occupancy \$35.00 per person, per night

_____ double occupancy \$23.00 per person, per night

_____ linens (optional)- please add one-time fee of \$11.00 to total

\$ _____ TOTAL CONFERENCE PAYMENT (Make checks payable to OCDA)

How did you hear about our conference opportunity?

_____ Website

_____ OMEA Conference

_____ Referred by current OCDA member _____ (member name)

(Referring member receives a \$10 rebate on registration to the conference.)

cially satisfying to see how the students in the ensemble want the colors to be mixed in order to complement one another. This color-coding can mean something different to the individual conductor; but, having a system you consistently use can offer profound benefits as you consider the balance and blend of your ensemble as well as the rapport you have with your students.

The Art and Technique of Placing Voices

I first learned the following technique from Mr. Snyder, who used it to place voices in his 100-voice

Coshocton Community Choir: Arrange one section of singers in a single line. Have the singers perform the first descending scale in “Joy to the World.” First, listen to each singer separately. The second time, listen to two singers at once, going down the line, removing the previous singer and adding the next one in line. On the third time, I begin moving singers so that they are placed beside voices that sound similar. You will need them to repeat this phrase until you are satisfied with where you have placed the voices. You will hear a difference! Other songs that work very

well for this exercise include “My Country ’Tis of Thee” and “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”

Once you have placed the voices in your ensemble, you will need to experiment with riser formation. Sometimes, I change formations depending on the color or style of the piece. Also, voices change—especially young voices. As students progress in ability, their voices get stronger, and often the voice color also changes. Keep listening for the colors in the voices and keep them moving for the greatest effect. ♦

Upcoming Events

February 2014

ACDA Central Division Conference

February 26–March 1, 2014, Cincinnati, OH

acda.org

June 2014

OCDA Summer Conference

June 16–18, 2014, Columbus, OH

ohiocda.org

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