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Letter from Henry Leck, Founder of the Indianapolis Children's Choir

N 1986, I VISITED THE Chicago Children's Choir in Hyde Park and was astounded by what I saw. Not only was the choir's musical quality excellent, but many of the students were impoverished and were using the choir as a vehicle for escaping their poverty at home. It occurred to me when I returned home that Indianapolis needed something similar. We had school choirs and church choirs, but there was a perceived need for a program that would draw together children from all racial, social, religious and economic backgrounds, across the city.

That year, the Indianapolis Children's Choir was born. I never could have imagined the impact that the choir would have—it's been one grand adventure with the choir leading the way. Moving moments and memories fill the three decades. In 1994, when children's choirs weren't well recognized, the ICC sang for the American Choral Directors Association in San Antonio. When we finished, we received a 13-minute standing ovation from the audience. Even to this day, I meet directors who tell me that they remember that performance and who were inspired to become children's choral directors.

One of the first times we performed at the Vatican, we sang for Pope John Paul II, who was Polish. We had heard that he had a favorite Polish folk song, and learned it to perform for him. He was moved by it and came over to bless the singers afterwards.

What astonishes me the most is not the quality of music or the quantity of students, but how life-changing and monumental an experience it has been for so many thousands of kids. We hear from alumni frequently who keep in contact, invite us to their weddings, and keep choir memorabilia for decades. One alumnus has told me that he couldn't believe that he had experienced more at 16 than many experience in a lifetime.

Over the last 30 years, the choir has grown dramatically, from 150 students to over 3,000. What has not changed in that time, and has made the choir so successful, is the consistent quality of teaching. Our instructors are wonderful; most are Kodaly certified and believe in sequential learning. We have a strong belief that the way we treat kids is with a positive attitude, joy, and respect. That's what draws kids back—they make friends and want to come back season after season to learn and to have fun.

My wish is that the ICC will continue to thrive forever, and that it will continue to include children of all backgrounds, create great music, and create experiences that kids will remember long after the last note of the final performance has been sung.







30 Years of the Indianapolis Children's Choir

The Indianapolis Children's Choir was founded on the belief that all children have the potential for incredible artistry. Over the past 30 years, the ICC has been recognized locally and throughout the world for its impressive musical accomplishments.

But it's easy to lose sight of the fact that the impressive musicality of the singers is only the most visible part of the ICC's impact. The process of disciplined rehearsal and artistic study creates a vehicle for the pursuit of excellence, and also affects personal and social development. Students learn to believe in themselves, to express a deep part of themselves, and to bring beauty to the world around them.

Facts & Figures

5,000

Children impacted by ICC programs each year 2,500

Children enrolled in weekly classes and rehearsals each year 10,000

362

Schools represented by ICC students

France, Austria, and

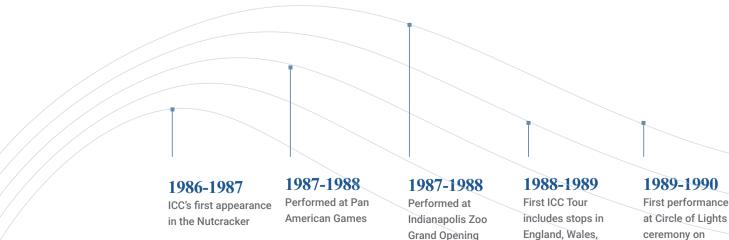
Germany

135

Rehearsals and music classes each week

Monument Circle

^{*}Numbers are approximate and vary from year to year



Early Childhood Program

AGES 18 MOS.- KINDERGARTEN

Taught in preschools throughout the region as well as on the campus of Butler University, the ICC's early childhood programs provide critical early exposure to music, helping children gain language and literacy skills, social confidence, and other academic and developmental advantages.

Preparatory Choir Programs

Grades 1-3

The ICC's non-auditioned preparatory choir programs introduce students to choral music and performance in a playful environment of music and fun.

Choral Fest Grades 3-8

Choral Fest is a summer camp experience offered every year on the campus of Butler University and in Columbus. At the end of the week, students perform what they have learned in a special concert.

Jubilate Grades 3-9

The Jubilate choir is a unique and fulfilling experience for children with special needs to come together, learn music, and connect with peer volunteers from other ICC ensembles.

Regional Performance Choirs

Grades 4-7

Modeled after the ICC's largest affiliate choir, the Columbus Indiana Children's Choir (a cooperative of the ICC and the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic), ICC regional choirs in a host of satellite locations combine the best of both worlds: the resources and breadth of the ICC with local leadership and convenient practice locations.

Campus Performance Choirs

GRADES 4-9

Lyric, Chamber, Octavo, and Treble choirs offer opportunities for students who have demonstrated an intermediate proficiency in vocal technique and sight-reading abilities. The Cantantes Angeli, Bel Canto, and Kantorei choirs offer advanced opportunities for students who have demonstrated a high level of vocal and sight-reading achievement.

High School Performance Choirs

GRADES **10-12**

The ICC offers two high school choirs with rehearsal schedules designed to fit the needs of busy high school students: Bella Voce, an all-female ensemble, and the Indianapolis Youth Chorale, a co-ed, mixed-voice choir.

INNOVATIONS: Supporting Music in Schools

Following its belief that all children should have the best musical education possible, the ICC works to support, not supplant, music programs in local public schools. In addition to its weekly choral and music education programs, the ICC provides a variety of services and resources to music teachers and schools free of charge. The ICC's INNOVATIONS program includes lesson plans, videos, and webcasts for download; clinics and residencies; workshops; and even a Facebook group for teachers.

In an age of dwindling budgets for teachers, these resources help ensure that all students in central Indiana receive a quality musical foundation.

Outreach: Everyone COUNTS

Through Everyone COUNTS (Community Outreach Uniting & Nurturing Through Song), the ICC strives to eliminate barriers of location, learning needs, and family financial situation, so that all children and youth have access to the benefits of music education. Each year, thousands of singers gain access to the ICC through Everyone COUNTS programs such as:

- Tuition assistance for children and youth in Performance Choirs
- After-school choral music education instruction in multiple satellite locations
- The Jubilate choir for children with special needs
- Free or low-cost early childhood music education classes at preschools and community centers serving low-income families and children with special needs

Artistic Excellence

1990-1991

Holiday concert takes on its iconic name, "Angels Sing," and is televised for the first time

1992-1993

Received a 13-minute standing ovation for performance at the American Choral Directors **Association National Convention** in San Antonio

"If we don't have the arts, the community dies. The ICC has embraced this role of the arts. It helped birth humanity in me, and it allowed me to be creative in a unique way." — Turae Dabney

1989-1990

Carnegie Hall debut



1991-1992

Performed at opening ceremonies for the **World Gymnastics** Championships



Performed at the opening ceremonies for the **World Gymnastics** Championships

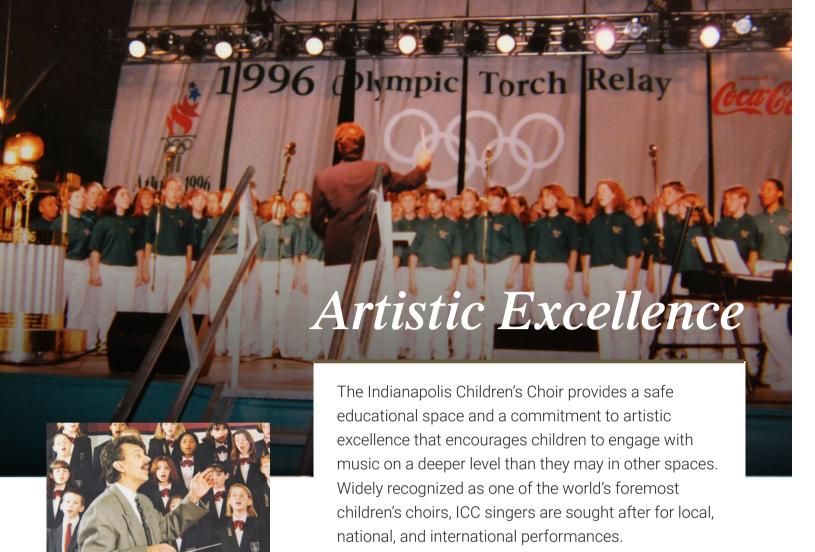


Performed at World **Summit for Children**

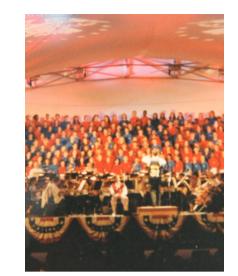


1993-1994

Performed at the **NCAA** Track and **Field Finals**



With a variety of classes and choirs for children and youth ages 18 months to 18 years, the ICC is able to cater to the different needs and skill levels of all of its members. Students learn critical musical theory and performance techniques in its programs, with instructors operating under the belief that children are no less capable of artistic brilliance than professional adult musicians.



Meet ICC Alumna Robin Payne, Broadway Musician and Actress

Singer, actress, and producer Robyn Payne always loved singing as a child. At the age of 13, she joined the Indianapolis Children's Choir to enhance her vocal skills and explore the idea of becoming a singer when she grew up.

Now an accomplished performer in Broadway theatre, television and film, Payne's impressive résumé includes New York productions of "Me & Caesar Lee" and "Tarzan,"— both of which earned her award nominations—as well as Broadway's "The Lion King," and television's "House of Cards" and

"Fringe," to name a few. She is currently starring in the off-Broadway hit "Sistas: The Musical."

Payne credits many of her musical skills, including her ability to read music, to what she learned in the ICC.

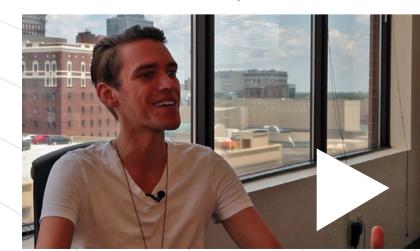
"As a professional singer, I'm always surprised that people don't know how to sight-read," Payne said.
"I notice a difference in how I am versus many musical people who just record the music on their phones to play back later."

Payne also credits her experience in the ICC as one of the driving forces behind her decision to study music at Indiana University and to later pursue a career in music performance.

"It's hard to know why you are where you are now, but the ICC had a lot to do with it," Payne said.

"... We were learning really difficult concepts but they were being taught in a not so difficult way. It seemed like second nature..."

ICC alum Adam Johnson talks about ICC's impact on musical excellence



1993-1994

Kantorei choir began touring

1994-1995

Performed at the World Rowing Competition

1994-1995

First appearance with Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat national touring production

1995-1996

Received an audience with Pope John Paul II after performing at the Vatican

1996-1997

Columbus Indiana Children's Choir (CICC) is formed

1997-1998

Performed at International Barbershop Quartet Convention



URAE DABNEY, an ICC singer from 1987 to 1991, speaks highly of the relationships and friendships she formed through the ICC that she has kept up for 25 years now. Today, Dabney works as a political consultant on campaigns in Washington D.C. and across the country.

"I'm not a musician now; I don't think I've sung since I hung up my blazer," she said, "but I often think about how the choir has developed me. It developed not only my

> discipline of learning music and coming to practice, but the persistence and perseverance needed to succeed in anything do. I was a very unique individual when I was in grade school, and what I loved about choir is that we were made up of a whole bunch

of unique individuals. My uniqueness was celebrated, and you don't always see that."

An Experience to Pass on to the Next Generation

Choir alumni Mark and Katie Landis first met in the ICC in the 1990s and became part of a close-knit group of friends who, many years later, reconnected on Facebook through their shared stories and experiences.

Although they lived in different states, Mark and Katie discovered that they had a lot in common. A spark was kindled, and in 2010 they married, bringing their families together in Indianapolis. Today, the Landis family has enrolled two of their sons in ICC programs, to give them that once-ina-lifetime experience they knew and loved, which brought them together.

"As a mom of an ADD child and knowing what I was like as a kid, ICC helped me a lot with my focus," said Katie. "Character development was huge in ICC because it guided you through those pivotal years where you're really defining who you are as a person. You don't realize how much character development you get from the people around you until years later—the friends you make in ICC are lifetime friends, and their friendships were very influential for me."

Mark recalls his mother being astonished at how his maturity had grown tangibly over the course of a week-long tour to New England. She felt that he came home much more grown up than he had left. "I think the Indianapolis Children's Choir's expectations of excellence and attitude in creating that artistry sets students up to be better than what they would be otherwise," he said. "High expectations were a huge help in my development of character internally, and taught me how to treat others with respect."

Why did they want their children involved in the ICC? "We wanted that experience for them because we know the quality and wanted them to get the discipline," explained Mark. "They've seen me expect really high levels of excellence, and they've heard quality and done it in church choirs and other settings, but it's a big thing for me to give them the opportunity of a large choral experience with Ruth Dwyer, Henry Leck, and now Josh Pedde at the helm."



ICC alum Turae Dabney shares ICC's impact on character development

"I think about how the choir has developed me professionally. It's not only developed my discipline, but also the persistence and perseverance to succeed in anything you do."

1997-1998 Performed at

Convention

1998-1999 Performed with Rotary International Celine Dion

1999-2000

Inaugural ICC Alumni meeting and reception

1999-2000 First appearance in the 500 Festival

Parade

Performed at Formula 1 and premiere of "Daylight Divine"

2000-2001

deeper impact on the personal development of young

people. Time and time again, ICC alumni say that they

acquire confidence, maturity and better social skills

that serve them long after their choir days are over.

2001-2002

Performed at 9/11 **Memorial Service**



to offer them one of three services: a collection drive,

Children Helping Children, as the program came to be known, evoked powerful responses from community partners, parents, and students. Many of the opportunities that year led to long-term partnerships; for instance, during a toy and school supply drive for Teachers' Treasures, an organization helping teachers, the ICC started that organization's first-ever music supply drive.

a service day by ICC singers, or a complimentary

performance for an event.

N ANOTHER case, a choir performed at Lutherwood, a residential treatment for adolescents, right before Christmas. "The ICC singers saw that their peers at Lutherwood face some really challenging situations at home. It struck a chord because here it was at the holiday season, and the kids at Lutherwood didn't have a home to go to," said Don Steffy, executive director of the Indianapolis Children's Choir. "So the singers came to their director and asked if, as part of Children Helping Children, they could do something more to help."

The ICC learned that Lutherwood's greatest need was for pajamas, socks, and underwear. ICC students collected bags and bags of these items, and they have continued this collection each December.

In another story, an ICC book drive filled an entire library at a new IPS school that was opening in a lowincome neighborhood of Indianapolis. Another time, an ICC choir assembled 1,000 winter homeless kits in just a couple of hours.

Five years after its inception, Children Helping Children has grown into a mainstay of the ICC experience ICC choirs participate in Indy Do Day every year and continue to look for ways to engage with and serve the community; in so doing, they discover the value of community involvement and volunteerism. Children Helping Children also helps ICC singers by integrating projects into community service requirements that students already have through school or honor societies.

All in all, participating in the ICC helps young people learn what life looks like for children and teens not only in different countries through tours, but just a few miles away in their own cities.

"That spirit of giving back is really strong with the ICC, because it enriches the experience of not only of ICC but students' musicality as a whole," said Steffy. "When our students sing music or when they're reading texts, they start to relate some of these other experiences into the fabric of their singing and it becomes even stronger."

Elevating the Profile of **Indianapolis**

In addition to engaging with local organizations, the Indianapolis Children's Choir is raising the profile of Indianapolis by contributing to its reputation as a city with a world-class arts scene.

"When people look at moving to Indianapolis, they look at the job market, the housing, the transportation, but they also have families and look for cultural activities where they can engage," explained Steffy. "We have fantastic cultural institutions: the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Indiana Repertory Theatre, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, and-of coursethe Indianapolis Children's Choir. All of these arts institutions make Indianapolis an attractive place to live and work."

For those who are born and raised in central Indiana, teaching Hoosier children to appreciate the arts helps build a stronger society for tomorrow. "If you don't have the arts, the community dies, right?" said Turae Dabney. "I think the arts help us to express ourselves in different ways, and if we don't express ourselves in productive ways, we see consequences. When I think about music, I think about the arts impacting our community in a different way."



2002-2003 Performed for Performed The President Bush Trio of Minuet Indianapolis' first professional children's opera written by an ICC

alumnus

2004-2005

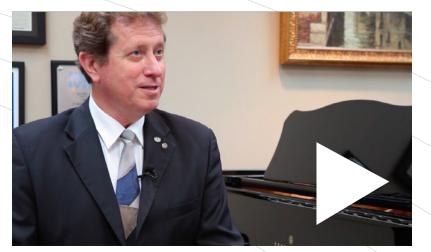
First performance at the NCAA Women's **Final Four**

2006-2007

Performed with the Indianapolis Opera's production of Carmen

2006-2007

Launched early childhood program using First Steps in Music curriculum



ICC Executive Director Don Steffy shares ICC's impact on Indianapolis



In the 1988-1989 season, the Indianapolis Children's Choir took its first tour, traveling to England, Wales, France, Austria, and Germany to perform. The trip made a major impression on singer Turae Dabney. "I went on the very first European tour, which was absolutely amazing. To be able to say that you were 13 and singing in London or St. Peter's is simply phenomenal."

INCE THEN, international touring has been woven into the fabric of the ICC experience, providing an outlet for children to explore and gain an appreciation for the world outside of their community. In addition to travel opportunities, children are challenged to learn musical pieces in other languages, supporting their linguistic and cultural development.

For many, ICC tours are once-ina-lifetime experiences. Ensembles have performed at the Vatican on numerous occasions, the Sydney Opera House, the Meganos in Athens, Canterbury Cathedral, Milan Cathedral, Westminster Abby, St. Mark's Cathedral in Paris, Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, and with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra in Russia. The ICC has performed on every continent with the exception of Antarctica.

Through each of these journeys, the ICC has served as an ambassador for Indianapolis, elevating the profile of the city to international audiences and breaking down barriers through artistic diplomacy.

Alumnus Mark Landis reiterated the positive impact of having crosscultural events and exposure to learning songs in different languages. "In one single year of touring, we sang in 15 different languages. Learning those songs and cultivating the discipline that it takes to be able to learn them are experiences I'll never get anywhere else." He believes that the learning opportunities and the character development offered by the ICC are "so much bigger than any high school program can ever give." The expectations are high, and singers rise to meet them-sometimes surprising even themselves by their abilities.

Mark's wife, Katie, spoke about how singing in the Vatican and touring in Europe helped her shape her identity: "It was actually on an ICC tour where I was really struggling to find who I was; it was through those experiences of singing in the Vatican and singing in these cathedrals that I was able to seek out who I wanted to be as a person."

2007-2008 Governor's Arts

Award presented to the ICC and Henry

2007-2008

First performance for Desmond Tutu in South Africa

2008-2009

Performed with the Indianapolis Opera's production of Hansel and Gretel

2009-2010

Performed at the NCAA Men's Final Four

2009-2010

ICC is awarded International Citizen of the Year by the City of Indianapolis

2010-2011

Performed at The Palladium Opening Gala

ICC alumni Mark and Katie Crane-Landis share ICC's impact



ICC Across the World

In the 1988-89 season, the ICC took its first tour through Europe. Since then, international tours and performances have been an important piece of ICC's work and impact, taking singers to six different continents.

Highlighted countries represent a significant tour or performance for the ICC.



ITALY

1995-1996 Audience with Pope at the Vatican,

1999-2000, 2006-2007, 2014-2015

RUSSIA

2003-2004

Performed and recorded with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra

SOUTH AFRICA

2007-2008

Performed for Desmond Tutu and visited Christel House

AUSTRAILIA

2001-2002

Sang at the Sydney Opera House, with other performances in 1991-1992 and 2010-2011

ENGLAND

1988-1989

Sang for a noon prayer service at Westminster Abbey and at Evensong in Canterbury Cathedral, 1993-94, 1996-97, 1999-2000. 2000-01, 2001-02, 2005-06, 2012-13

6

BRAZIL

1998-1999

Sang for the inaugural meeting of the Brazilian Choral **Directors Association** in Brasilia

MEXICO

2008

Sang at Festival Internacional Coro de Ninos en Mexico, vv

Other international appearances include:

Argentina Austria Canada China Czech Rep. Finland France

Germany Greece Guatemala Mexico New Zealand Norway

Ireland

Scotland

Spain Switzerland Wales

17

You Can Add Your Measure Of Support

Why should you invest in arts education? While the ICC has gained great acclaim for its achievements in choral music, this artistry is grounded in a foundation of exceptional music education. Through the process of disciplined rehearsal and artistic study, music education plays a vital role in the individual and social development of young people.

In the community of the ICC, children and youth learn self-discipline, work collaboratively with peers, and flourish under the guidance of caring adult role models. They thrive in this environment, gaining self-respect, developing maturity, and finding purpose. The arts adorn and bring beauty to our community, even as they bring people together from many different backgrounds.

Why support the Indianapolis Children's Choir?

Did you know that only 50% of the ICC's costs are offset by tuition and performance income? Generous donors help the ICC keep program fees as affordable as possible, and in addition, charitable contributions allow the ICC to:

Bring affordable music programs to low-income families

Through the Everyone COUNTS (Community Outreach Uniting & Nurturing Through Song) program, the ICC provides needbased financial assistance to children whose families might not otherwise be able to afford the cost of tuition.

Support school readiness for at-risk preschoolers

The ICC's early childhood program helps more than 1,000 preschoolers in and around Indianapolis to become school-ready by nurturing cognitive, musical, kinesthetic, and social skills through music programs in nearly 20 locations. A majority of the children enrolled in the ICC's early childhood programs are from low-income families or have special learning needs.

Stimulate learning and self-expression for students with special needs

In 2012, the ICC founded Jubilate, a unique choral music experience for children in grades 3-9 with special needs. Accompanied by peer friends from the advanced ICC ensembles, participants join together once per week to sing, learn music theory and sight-reading, and socialize in a supportive and creative atmosphere. Through a tactile and individualized approach to learning music, students gain confidence in their musical skills and learn to express themselves in new ways.

Support regional music education across central Indiana

Through its 30-year legacy, the ICC's geographic footprint has expanded from Marion County to approximately 20 sites throughout central Indiana. Ensembles meet in Avon, Columbus, Carmel, Fishers, Franklin, Greenwood, Whitestown, and other locations. The goal of the regional initiative is to provide ample opportunities for children in these areas to participate in quality introductory choral programs that are convenient to their homes and schedules.

In addition, by working directly with music teachers and schools, the ICC's Innovations program provides free resources and services to thousands of additional children throughout central Indiana each year.

Support the Indianapolis Children's Choir For The Next Generation

In spite of its multiple benefits, too many children have little or no access to arts education. With the help of donors, the ICC aims to ensure that all local children and youth have the opportunity to experience and create music. You can make a difference in the lives of youth and children. Consider:

Individual Gifts

Donations to the ICC help local children expand their academic and developmental skills, express themselves, gain exposure to a wide range of cultural experiences, and develop into future leaders and civic-minded community members. In addition, many individuals and family trusts have chosen to donate to the ICC through legacy planning.

Corporate Sponsorships

Sponsorships through the ICC offer unmatched visibility to approximately 100,000 attendees that frequent ICC concerts and community performances each year, in addition to audiences watching televised performances from home. Sponsors also receive prominent recognition through the ICC's website, season concert programs, newsletters, fundraising events, and planned giving materials.

The ICC creates packages that are tailored to the specific interests of potential sponsors, including visibility in geo-targeted areas. Through its comprehensive sponsorship program, the ICC offers a variety of partnership packages designed to afford the sponsor with optimal exposure to ICC families, audiences, and the general public. In addition, sponsors may wish to work with the ICC to incorporate awareness of the partnership into their own marketing and communication activities.

For more information and to discuss how you or your organization may become a part of the ICC's family, please contact Dave Riggs, Director of Development, at 317-940-8067 or at dhriggs@icchoir.org

2011-2012

Performed at Super Bowl XLVI and related activities

2012-2013

Performed at Riley Hospital for Children Opening, Indianapolis Prize, and Governor's Inauguration

2013-2014

"From Rivers" recording session with Pulitzer Prize winner Caroline Shaw

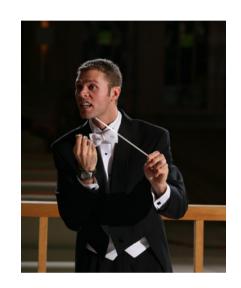
2013-2014

First annual Silver Singers Side-by-Side Festival

2014-2015

First annual ICC Alumni-in-Song Side-by-Side Festival

Letter from Joshua Pedde, Succeeding Artistic Director



HEN I FIRST VISITED AN Indianapolis Children's Choir rehearsal fifteen years ago, I expected to find a room of 50 to 60 elementary and middle schoolers. Instead, I found 80 disciplined and respectful students singing incredibly advanced music as well as any choir I had ever heard. I was hooked. At the time, I was a student director at Butler University with Henry Leck as my

time, I was a student director at Butler University with Henry Leck as my conducting professor. I would continue to work with Henry and the ICC for my next six years at Butler, through my completion of a Master's in Conducting. I left Butler to teach elementary music in Zionsville but continued to assist with the ICC, and it didn't take me long to return to the ICC as a full-time staff member.

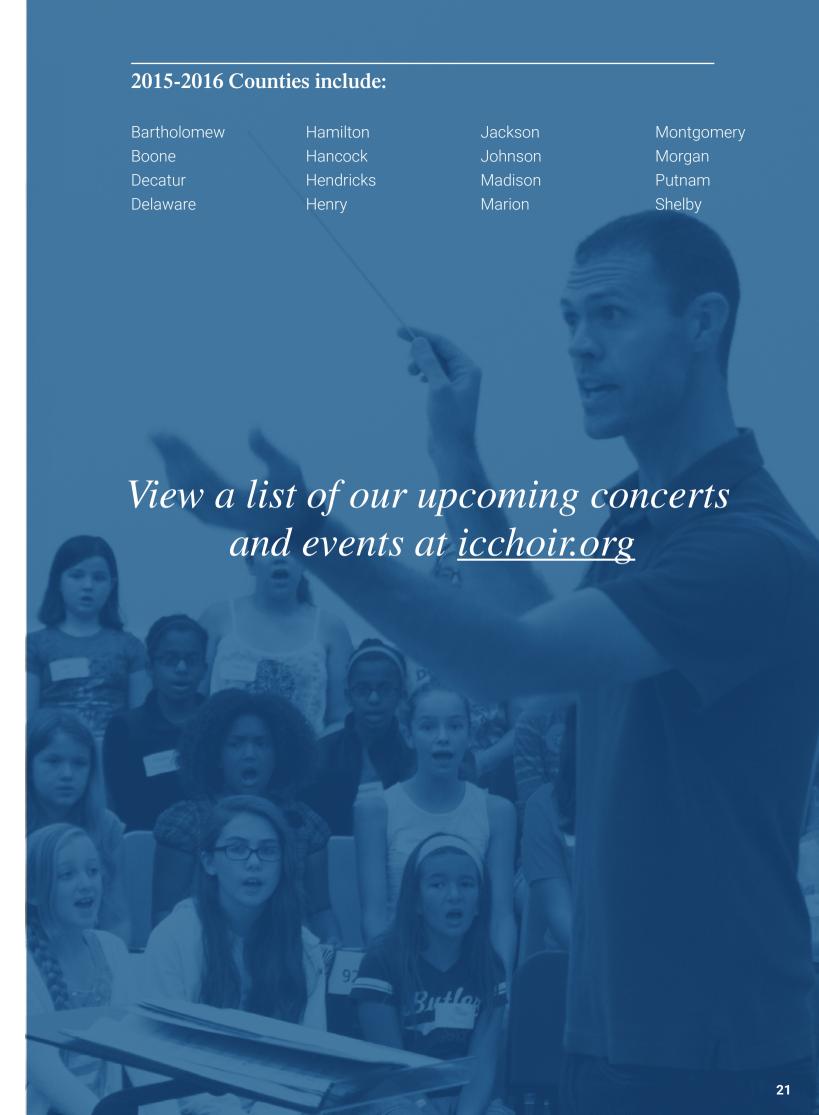
I owe many great things in my life to the ICC. I met my wife while working with the choir, and we now have an amazing family with two children. In my years with the ICC, Henry and I have become very close, and I've learned many invaluable lessons from him. The greatest lesson he has taught me is that the only thing hindering the artistry of children is the person standing in front of them. Children are capable of being very artistic and can have a phenomenal understanding of music and of the world around them. If they believe that they can do it, and the conductor doesn't limit them, their potential is boundless.

The ICC has always put a premium on artistry and on the inclusion of any children who have a desire to sing. It is a place where kids feel like they belong. In recent years, we have expanded our early childhood classes and regional programs so that we are impacting more children than ever before. But through all of our growth, the artistic quality has remained high, and we have continued to ensure that children feel accepted and accomplished.

It's a great honor to have been selected to succeed Henry as artistic director and to have the full support of the ICC staff and Board of Directors. Their confidence in me and the positive response from the community have been truly humbling.

As we enter the next phase in the ICC's story, the choir will continue to nurture and inspire young people by helping them to achieve artistic excellence, acceptance, and a sense of community. As we continue to grow, we will focus on serving our singers and their families first, by making the choir experience memorable and exemplary for all involved. I can't wait to see what new journeys and incredible outcomes the next 30 years will bring!

MA FITH





Our Season Sponsors











