



UPCOMING CONCERTS

Saturday, April 29, 7:30 PM

St. Luke Greek Orthodox Church
35 N. Malin Road, Broomall, PA

**Friday, May 12 and
Saturday, May 13, 7:30 PM**

Lang Concert Hall, Swarthmore College
Seating limited to 425 guests. Doors open at 6:45 pm.

Thursday, July 27, 2:00 PM

Matinee Performance
Lang Concert Hall, Swarthmore College

**Friday, July 28, and
Saturday, July 29, 7:30 PM**

Lang Concert Hall, Swarthmore College
Seating limited to 425 guests. Doors open at 6:45 pm.

**ADMISSION IS FREE!
DONATIONS SUPPORT CCC PROGRAMS.**



STUDENT REGISTRATION:

Friday, April 21, 2017, 5:30–8:00 PM at
the Black Cultural Center, Corner of Elm
and College Avenues, Swarthmore College

**COME VISIT US AT THE
SWARTHMORE FUN FAIR:**

Sunday, May 7, 2017, 1–4 PM



Looking Ahead to the Future CCC: 2017 Strategic Plan

After a year-long process guided by Swenson & Associates, the CCC Board approved a Strategic Plan with the following goals to guide the future steps of the program. "We look forward to new and exciting opportunities that will expand support to every CCC child," remarked Executive Director, Kirsten Halker-Kratz. "We are grateful to Ted Swenson and Jennifer Shropshire for working with us in exploring every aspect of the CCC's potential." Three goals structure the Plan's principles:

Goal 1. Achieve Musical Literacy, Fluency, and Artistry: CCC will continue its focus on excellence in performance, musicianship and skill development, and increase support of those with higher musical aspirations.

The CCC will help members refine their technique, including emotional and intellectual engagement with the music, while supporting those seeking more intense musical exploration.

Goal 2. Attend to the Whole Child: CCC will help members not only to learn how to sing, but also to cope with any struggles, to have fun, and to realize their full potential.

Activities in and around their pursuit of choral excellence will help the CCC members build intellectual, social, and emotional scaffolding for their future success as adults.

This includes targeted academic programming, preparation for life after CCC, and a culture of respect in and outside the group.

Goal 3. Achieve Long-term Sustainability: CCC will engage Board, staff, and others in its expanded programs, develop new partnerships, document methodology, conduct outcome measurement, and find additional space. CCC will raise its profile, and generate and steward greater financial resources.

The CCC will build upon its engaged community, create a solid infrastructure with specific goals, best practices and evaluation, while heightening awareness and increasing our financial resources.

We are pleased to share our goals with the community. For your own copy of the Strategic Plan, e-mail ccc@swarthmore.edu.

CCC CELEBRATES OUR GRADUATING SENIORS



DARRIA BROOKS

Next steps: Majoring in biomedical engineering at Penn State

Favorite Song: *I'm Not Done*

Favorite memories: Getting to sing the *Laudate Dominum* solo and the first time I tried African Dance.

Her CCC experience: Learning how to use our music in the world is what the CCC teaches us. We can make it a career, a lifestyle, or just [let it] be [a part of] you. The CCC motivates you to make it—your voice, your music—what you want, but also to not just settle: You work to your full potential. This chorus is special.

Darria Brooks will be performing a solo voice recital at Trinity Episcopal Church, Swarthmore, on Sunday, April 9, at 3:00 pm. All are invited!

NA'JAE "CHRISSY" COLLINS

Next steps: Investment banker, singer, producer

Favorite song: *I'm Not Done*, *The Lord is My Shepherd*, *See and Ye Shall Find*

Favorite memory: When I brought a water gun to summer camp and surprised (and soaked) John on his birthday.

Her CCC experience: The CCC taught me more about music. I became more friendly and social.



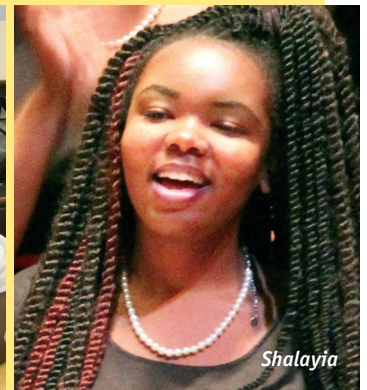
SHALAYIA SETH

Next steps: Become a mainstream artist and have enough money to give back to my city and people all of the world in need

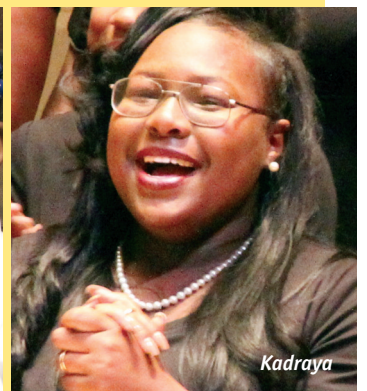
Favorite song: Mozart *Requiem*, *Deo Gracias*, *Let My People Go*, *Northern Lights*, *Battle of the Sexes* set, *When You Miss Him/Her* ... all of them!

Favorite memories: When we went to Harrisburg to sing for the Governor, the Lifetime gospel competition, and the Maryland trip

Her CCC experience: The CCC has a very strong value to the kids of Chester. It gets them [us] on the right track and shows the good part of Chester.



FROM 2007-2017: *All four graduates have sung with CCC for 10 years.*



KADRAYA TAYLOR

Next steps: Get a degree in dance

Favorite song: "*Lacrimosa*" from Mozart's *Requiem*

Favorite memory: When we first made the festival choir, and we were the 'originals.' (Note to our readers: this class was the first Festival Choir division for the CCC!)

Her CCC experience: We come here to be free and find love in music.

Mary McTernan

Mary McTernan remembers hearing her first CCC performance in 2002 when the Chorus numbered just 35 members. Volunteer extraordinaire, Mary has served as a swim and reading volunteer, secretary of the advisory board, chair of the development committee, and led the executive director search in 2012. We invited Mary to share her CCC experience:

What were your first CCC concert impressions?

We were instantly convinced that John Alston was doing something positive and powerful that we wanted to support. The 35 beautiful Chester children sang so well that the audience stood up and cheered! I loved that John provided the children with an opportunity to demonstrate their potential and that the concerts and the universal language of music provided a bridge between our communities.

Who asked you to join the board?

In 2005, Cordelia Delson reached out to us to ask if we would contribute toward the purchase of one keyboard for a CCC student taking piano lessons. Until then we had been very modest donors, but Cordelia began to open our eyes about the scope of the program and the need for more substantial support. Those conversations continued until I agreed to join the board in 2007.

How have you seen the CCC change over your tenure?

There were 75 Chorus members in 2007 and now we have almost double that number. Under John's dedicated guidance, the program has flourished in terms of the breadth, depth and quality of the musical experience. As anyone who has been to a concert recently can attest, the concert choir is performing challenging classical pieces with such enthusiasm and polish that standing ovations are now a given. John's original compositions have always delivered positive messages to the children, but lately he has become much more sophisticated in using the music to help the children process challenging issues such as violence in their

community (*If I Had Known*) and social injustice (*I Still Can't Breathe*). In addition to the intense music experience, CCC offers a rich summer learning program on Swarthmore's lovely campus featuring a reading program staffed by community volunteers, a comprehensive science program, African Dance, a learn-to-swim program started by a local high school volunteer, math tutoring, and horticultural classes through Scott Arboretum.

What motivates you to continue as a board member?

I know how much my own children benefited from music lessons and the excellent music programs in our school district, and I continue to believe that all children should have these valuable opportunities. I am proud that so many local individuals, faith communities, civic organizations and foundations continue to support the CCC. It is particularly gratifying in these times of political divisions to see how music and arts can bring us together and help us find our common humanity.

Do you have a favorite song or memory?

Hard to choose a favorite song! I do remember spontaneous tears on my face moved by the beauty of the concert choir's performance of Randall Thompson's *Alleluia*. The honor of premiering Tom Whitman's *Etz Chayim/Tree of Life* was also unforgettable.



Mary McTernan with chorus member Wayne Browne III.

What excites you about the new strategic plan?

It was gratifying to be part of an inclusive process involving board, staff, supporters, CCC families and alumni. Consultants Jennifer Shropshire and Ted Swenson brought valuable experience and insights as we built a vision for the future together. We learned from surveys that CCC families strongly believe that Chorus participation has a positive impact on their children, but they would welcome more academic support as well as college and career planning guidance. We came to appreciate that the CCC offers important and rare continuity through its year-round programming and ten-year participation in an intense choral learning and performing experience that emphasizes excellence.

The strategic planning process helped all stakeholders to re-commit to the belief that all children deserve the opportunity to realize their full potential. It will guide us as we continue to strive for excellence and diversity in musical artistry while providing more focused academic support and attention to the needs of the whole child.



The CCC offices are moving! Thanks to Cordelia and Don Delson, the CCC will be leasing space at 112 Park Avenue. Come visit us at the Swarthmore Fun Fair on May 7 from 1–4 pm.

SUPPORT US! I am pleased to make a contribution to the Chester Children's Chorus in the amount of \$ _____.

☐ Enclosed is a check (Check made payable to "Swarthmore College" with "Chester Children's Chorus" in memo field.)

☐ Please charge my gift to

- ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard
☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Card # _____

Expires: _____ / _____

☐ My gift will be matched by my employer.
(Please enclose your signed matching gift form.)

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Phone number _____

To give online, visit our website
www.chesterchildrenschorus.org,
and select "Volunteer or Give!"

For information, call Executive Director
Kirsten Halker-Kratz at (610) 328-8286.

Please return this form to our address below.



THANK YOU!

CHESTER CHILDREN'S CHORUS

John Alston, founder and artistic director
Kirsten Halker-Kratz, executive director
Sean Tripline, assistant music director
Elisa DeNofio, administrative assistant

If you have received an
extra copy of this newsletter,
please notify us at
610-328-8180 and
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Andrea Knox,
Jonathan Hodgson



ONE OF US

Last summer we closed our big concerts with the song, *One of Us*, which was by far our favorite summer piece (with Prince's *Purple Rain* and Mozart's *Laudate Dominum* capturing 2nd and 3rd). In the song's chorus, the poet asks, "What if God was one of us; just a slave/slob like one of us; just a stranger on a bus trying to make his way home?" Perfect lyrics and a powerful melody.

Eric Bazilian, the composer, a world-renowned songwriter, and founding member of the band, The Hooters, saw our performance of his song on the CCC's Facebook page. He was moved to share it on his own page and offered to sing his song with us when his schedule allowed.

On MLK Day, we arrived at St. David's Episcopal Church in Wayne at 5:30 pm to rehearse with their youth choir in preparation for a 7:00 joint concert. We spent most of the rehearsal singing Tallis and Mozart, led by Elaine Sonnenberg, St. David's youth choir director. Eric arrived at 6:00, and by 6:15 he was on stage with us. The children were chill; I was excited and nervous. Eric and I greeted each other and very quickly planned the performance of his song—he would play the introduction and sing the first verse. Piano, drums and chorus would enter quietly on the pre-chorus, we all hit the chorus hard, altos take the second verse, we all play it out. I think that entire discussion took two minutes. When jazz and pop musicians need to put together a song or set, we assume that we all know the music and can play it in several keys. Most of the discussion concerns the 'route' of the song. We ran through *One of Us* without a hitch and headed to dinner. Eric and I had a few minutes to get to know each other.

As we all began moving to the sanctuary

to start the concert, Eric politely asked if we could make a change in the route—he wanted to repeat the second pre-chorus. I casually agreed, then frantically chased down several of the section leaders, explained the change and decided to use a hand signal to guide us through the change. The concert was spectacular. Three CCC and two St. David's girls sang the *Laudate Dominum* solo beautifully, and later in the program the audience rewarded our *Rock of Ages* with a standing ovation. Then Eric joined us on stage, played his intro, sang his verse, and the children entered quietly as planned. We negotiated the last-minute change effortlessly. The children later teased me for smiling so hard, but I think Eric was the happiest of all—surrounded by all those beautiful children, gorgeous singing, and energy and love.

—John Alston, CCC Artistic Director

VOLUNTEER WITH US THIS SUMMER!



If you enjoy reading or swimming, we need you to join us for the 2017 Summer Learning Program. Volunteers read with our third and fourth graders, and swimmers help grades 3–5 at Ware Pool. Volunteers need to be 18 or older. For more information on the Andrea Knox Reading Program, contact us at ccc@swarthmore.edu. For more information on the swim program, contact our swim coordinator, Charlotte Brake, at cfbrake@gmail.com.

THE CCC MOURNS THE PASSING OF DEAR FRIENDS Robert Coleman '43, Edith "Billie" Hebble, David Mooberry, John Nikelly, and Lorene Yates. We will miss their kindness and support.

