



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

My Vision for the Chorus' Future: More Children, Broader Program

Three years ago, when we had 40 children, I thought I would be satisfied if the Chester Children's Chorus grew to 60. I could see 60 children filling the stage in Lang Concert Hall and filling the entire hall with their strong, joyful music. Last year, the chorus grew to 60, and I knew it would be even more wonderful if we could add just another 15 children.

This year we did that. Imagine: 75 children learning music, learning to work together happily, exploring the world, developing their creative and intellectual powers, and giving glorious concerts in Chester and Swarthmore!

But as I see these children blossom, I know that more could benefit from joining us and that we would benefit from having them. So we are on our way to 90, a goal we will reach next summer.

And here is my vision for five years from now: 150 children, double today's number, all benefitting from our rigorous music education and cultural and academic enrichment.

In five years, some of our chorus members will be drawn from the Chester School of the Arts, the full-day academic and arts school that will open in September 2008. (See story, left.) However,

dozens of additional chorus members will come from other schools throughout the Chester-Upland School District, as the chorus continues to reach out to and embrace the entire community. This large chorus will perform as a group, and its strongest singers will form chamber choirs to learn more advanced music. In these small and large groups, the children will give more performances and will fill many stages.

In five years, our non-musical offerings will also have expanded, because it's just as important to increase the children's learning opportunities as it is to serve more children. Three years ago, we added African dance and drumming; art was new last year; this year we introduced individual piano lessons, teaching 28 children during the summer and 14 during the school year. For next summer, the children have requested cooking and a foreign language. As the pro-

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Come
Celebrate
With Us!



Holiday Concert

Saturday, Dec. 15, 8 p.m.

First Pentecostal Holy Church

324 Pusey St., Chester, Pa.

Admission free—Tickets not required

Chester School Receives Major Grant, Sets Opening for September 2008

Boyed by the receipt of a \$500,000 challenge grant from the Sunshine Lady Foundation, the Chester School of the Arts plans to open in fall 2008, with 90 children in pre-kindergarten through first grade.

John Alston, who founded and directs the Chester Children's Chorus, is president and founding head of the School of the Arts, an academic and arts school that will eventually go through 12th grade.

To meet the challenge successfully and receive the Sunshine Lady funds, the school must raise an additional \$500,000 by March 31, 2008. The school's board is

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John Alston teaches Kadraya Taylor (below, left) and Isis Dill in summer music class.



SAVE THESE DATES! SPRING CONCERTS ON MAY 9 AND 10; SUMMER CONCERTS ON JULY 25 AND 26!

To make a tax-deductible contribution, please detach this coupon, complete, and mail to the following address:

Chester Children's Chorus, Swarthmore College, Department of Music and Dance, 500 College Avenue, Swarthmore PA 19081

☐ Enclosed is a check in the amount of ☐ \$35 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ Other: _____.
(Check should be payable to Swarthmore College with Chester Children's Chorus in memo field)

☐ Please charge my gift to my:

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover

Card # _____

Expires: ____ / ____

Amount to charge: \$ _____

☐ My gift will be matched by my employer.

(Please enclose your signed matching gift form.)

THANK YOU!

What a Summer it Was!



Every day for five weeks our 75 chorus members came to Swarthmore College to sing, learn, create, and grow in their ability to create a community through music and friendship. 28 children took individual piano lessons, working on scales, chords, improvisation, even a bit of Bach. Fighting fish, rockets, and robots were among the topics studied by Concert Choir members in science classes taught by Swarthmore College faculty and students. The dancing and drumming at our Celebration of Africa were electric and were enjoyed by children from three other programs in Swarthmore and Chester. Adult volunteers made reading special for our youngest chorus members. In outdoor sports, children let off steam and learned teamwork. And the children's many hours of chorus rehearsal were repaid with two wonderful concerts of American music for audiences of 400 people each night.

My Vision... (continued)

gram evolves over the next five years, the choices will be expanded even further.

As we grow, we will continue to refine and redefine our activities to make them more attractive and beneficial to the children. Last year, we added an intermediate class in African dance; this summer we offered art to more children. This fall, we refocused our Saturday afternoon tutoring program to serve children in eighth grade or above and to concentrate on two academic fundamentals, math and English. These older children are more conscious than the younger ones of the importance of academic success. We've added homework and midweek telephone conferences with tutors to assure that the children make substantial progress.

I have occasionally been asked if the chorus would be disbanded when the Chester School of the Arts opens. Far from it. The Chester School of the Arts will have a relatively small student body, and its students will be core members of the Chester Children's Chorus. But the chorus will also provide hundreds of children from other schools throughout Chester with excellent music education and broader cultural and intellectual horizons—just as we do today.

—John Alston



School... (continued)

optimistic that the match will be met by the end of 2007.

The Chester School of the Arts will offer Chester children an education equal to that of the best schools in the country. "We believe that Chester children deserve an outstanding education, and the Sunshine Lady grant will help make that possible," said John.

The \$1 million raised through the Sunshine Lady challenge would provide two-thirds of the \$1.5 million needed for the school's first year. The search for a principal began in late September.

The School of the Arts is managed and funded separately from the Chester Children's Chorus. Inquiries about the school may be directed to managing director Wendy Emrich at wemrich@com-cast.net.

Chorus Welcomes Two New Board Members

The chorus board has expanded to nine members with the addition of Jay Tucker and Mary McTernan. Jay, a chorus parent and Chester resident, is a professional truck driver and drummer as well as an experienced fund-raiser from his years as owner of the Delco Mustangs, a semiprofessional football team. Jay's 9-year-old stepson, Darrin Wood, is in his second year as a chorus member.

Mary is a former vice president at Pennsylvania Hospital with experience in fund-raising and grant-making. She has served on the boards of Williams College and the Valentine Foundation, a Haverford organization that funds programs empowering women and girls.

Both Mary and Jay are members of the board's Development Committee, which oversees our fund-raising activities.



Jay Tucker



Mary McTernan

What's New

Visit us on the Web at ccc.chester-childrenschorus.org. See photos, hear the children sing, check out our concert schedule, read back issues of the newsletter, or learn how to volunteer...Our **Swarthmore College Chorus members** this year are alto Jenniffer Foster, 13, and basses Nkenge Daniels, 17, and Jabree Reaves, 16.

CHESTER CHILDREN'S CHORUS

John Alston, founder and director

Andrea Knox '64, managing director

Elisa DeNofio, assistant

Advisory Board

Cordelia Delson, president

Scott Kessler, vice president and secretary

Leslie Price, treasurer

Maurice Eldridge '61, ex officio, Swarthmore College

Wendy Emrich

Edmund Jones '39

Mary McTernan

Sandra Robinson

Jay Tucker

Voice

The Newsletter of the Chester Children's Chorus

Andrea Knox, editor

Phillip Stern '84, designer

Photos by Jonathan Hodgson, Andrea Knox, Alan Brian Nilson, and George Widman

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www.chesterchildrenschorus.org

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In our summer art classes, 40 chorus members created this glowing quilt of painted squares that represented their hopes or important events in their lives.