



For Immediate Release

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### **Chorus America's 2014 Awards Recognize Outstanding Choruses and Individuals**

Washington, DC (April 28, 2014) – Chorus America has announced the recipients of its 2014 awards program, recognizing a broad range of achievements in choral music, including artistic excellence, adventurous programming, innovative education programs, generous philanthropy, and lifetime service to the choral art.

“The exemplary leadership demonstrated by these deserving individuals and organizations serves as a model for all choruses as they strive for success in their communities,” said Ann Meier Baker, president and CEO of Chorus America.

Independent panels selected the following individuals and choruses to receive awards, which will be presented at Chorus America's 37th Annual Conference in Washington, DC, June 11-14, 2014.

#### **Chorus America Distinguished Service Award**

The Chorus America Distinguished Service Award recognizes a member whose long-term service to the choral field significantly furthers Chorus America's mission “to build a dynamic and inclusive choral community so that more people are transformed by the beauty and power of choral singing.”

The 2014 Distinguished Service Award goes to **Ann Howard Jones**, professor of music and director of choral activities at Boson University. Throughout her career, she has distinguished herself as an academician, clinician, and author. She previously served as assistant conductor of the Atlanta Symphony Chorus under the leadership of Robert Shaw. Her accolades include the Boston University Metcalf Award for Excellence in Teaching, Donald C. Agnew Award for Excellence in Teaching, and the Robert Shaw Award for Distinguished Service from the American Choral Directors Association.

#### **Chorus America/ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming and Alice Parker Award**

The Adventurous Programming awards recognize choruses that demonstrate a sustained commitment to adventurous programming through performances of choral music written in the last 25 years. The 2014 winners are:

- **Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir**, Robert Geary, artistic director
- **C4: The Choral Composer/Conductive Collective**
- **New York Virtuoso Singers**, Harold Rosenbaum, conductor

The **Chorus America/ASCAP Alice Parker Award** honors composer Alice Parker, whose career has spanned six decades and has been devoted to the creation of works for the human voice. The award was established in 2003 to recognize a chorus for programming recently composed music that expands the mission of the chorus and challenges the chorus's audience in new ways. The 2014 award goes to **Crescendo, Inc.**, an adult choral ensemble in Lakeville, Connecticut led by artistic director **Christine Gevert**. The ensemble's Spring 2013 concert featured a program titled "New and Ancient Voices: Interpreting Nature in China and the U.S." which included the newly commissioned pieces *West Lake Cycle* by John Myers and *Wu Xing* by Cheng-Chia Wu. Much of the program was performed in Chinese using singers' voices in unconventional ways.

### **Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence**

The Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence honors the memory of Margaret Hillis, founder of the Chicago Symphony Chorus, for her more than 40 years of professional achievement and outstanding contributions to the choral art. The \$5,000 award is presented annually to a member chorus that demonstrates artistic excellence, a strong organizational structure, and a commitment to outreach, education, and/or culturally diverse activities.

The 2014 Hillis Award goes to the **Los Angeles Children's Chorus**, led by artistic director **Anne Tomlinson**. Since its inception in 1986, the Chorus has provided choral music training to more than 1,800 children and teens and has grown to comprise six progressively experienced choirs and a First Experiences in Singing program. Choristers learn healthy vocal technique and master challenging, multi-lingual repertoire and performance protocol in weekly rehearsals. In addition to its core choral music training program, LACC presents an annual self-produced season of free and low cost concerts in accessible community venues, engages in artistic collaborations with world-class artists, and commissions new works for children's voices.

### **Michael Korn Founders Award for Development of the Professional Choral Art**

Named after one of the founders of Chorus America, this honorary citation was established in 1978 to honor an individual with a lifetime of significant contributions to the professional choral art.

The 2014 Korn Founders Award goes to **Jon Washburn**, artistic director and founder of the **Vancouver Chamber Choir**. Washburn has advised music publishers and has served as a board member of Chorus America and the on-air host of Canada's national CBC Radio program, Choral Concert. He has previously served as conductor and artistic director of the Phoenix Bach Choir and is also a published choral composer and arranger.

### **Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal**

The Botto Award was established in memory of Louis Botto for his artistry, selfless service to the choral art, and entrepreneurial spirit in founding the men's vocal ensemble Chanticleer. The award is given periodically to a mid-career choral leader who, through his or her work with a member ensemble of Chorus America, has demonstrated innovative action and entrepreneurial zeal in developing a professional or professional-core choral ensemble.

The 2014 Botto Award goes to **Beth Willer**, founder and artistic director of Boston's **Lorelei Ensemble**, whose commitment to the expansion of repertoire for the advanced women's vocal ensemble helps produce innovative programming that speaks to a wider audience. Willer has collaborated with composers from the U.S. and abroad, delivering numerous premieres, while also working to expose lesser-known works of the Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque periods for women's voices.

#### **Dale Warland Singers Commission Award**

Chorus America and the American Composers Forum have partnered to present this award to honor Dale Warland's lifelong commitment to new music as embodied through his work with the Dale Warland Singers. The \$5,000 award is made possible by the Dale Warland Singers Fund for New Choral Music, a permanently restricted endowment fund established in 2004.

The 2014 recipient of the Dale Warland Singers Commission Award is **Dolce Canto**, conducted by **Peter Park**. They will partner with composer **John Muehleisen** to commission a new composition about international peace with original poetry by Charles Anthony Silvestri. Written for double choir and including symbolic exchanges between two groups of singers, the piece will receive its world premiere during the 2015-2016 season in the chorus's hometown of Missoula, Montana. The piece will later be performed during the chorus's tour of three South Korean communities, where the work will receive additional performances in collaboration with local choirs.

#### **Chorus America Education and Community Engagement Award**

The \$2,500 award is presented to a Chorus America member ensemble whose education outreach program demonstrates mission-based program development, viable music education, effective management and fiscal integrity, a commitment to artistic excellence, and a collaboration that is sustainable, beneficial, and meaningful for all partners.

The 2014 Education and Community Engagement Award honors the best collaborative program, and goes to **Cantaré Children's Choirs of Oakland** in Oakland, California for their children's education programming. Launched in 1999 in response to the decline of music education in Oakland public schools and the particular void of choral music opportunities, Cantaré's programs have served over 6,500 youth since its inception. During the 2013-2014 season, Cantaré worked with over 2,300 Oakland public school children in 65 classrooms, along with seven tuition-free after-school choirs, reflecting their commitment to cultural diversity and access to an underserved populace.

**The recipient of the inaugural Brazeal Wayne Dennard Award will be announced in June 2014 at Chorus America's Conference in Washington DC.**

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*Chorus America is the advocacy, research, and leadership development organization that advances the choral field. We support and serve choral conductors, administrators, board members, and singers with tools, training, peer networking, and access so that choruses are better able to contribute to their communities.*

*More than 2,000 choruses, individuals, businesses, and organizations are members of Chorus America and have access to a wide array of programs, publications, research, and personal services developed for their benefit. These services strengthen their ability to build strong organizations that foster quality choral performances.*

*Chorus America is governed by a diverse board of accomplished arts leaders from across North America, and the executive staff is headquartered in Washington, DC. Learn more at [www.chorusamerica.org](http://www.chorusamerica.org).*

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