

# Dubuque Chorale Strategic Action Plan, 2022-2027

**Vision Statement:** To enrich our community and members through music.

**Mission Statement:** The Dubuque Chorale's mission is to grow our membership, community involvement and financial support in the Dubuque area through engaging, educating, and inspiring the community by performing artistically diverse choral music.

## **Goal 1 - Enrich our community through imaginative, educational, and artistic programs.**

**Objective A: Design artistic programs and events that enrich our community.**

*Responsibility:* Artistic Planning Committee and Artistic Directors

*Action Item 1:* Annually convene a group that will design programs and events of cultural, artistic, educational, and community enrichment for both our members and our audiences.

*Action Item 2:* Develop a rolling two-to-three-year plan of concert programming and after each concert and evaluate these offerings.

*Action Item 3:* Artistic Directors coordinate Chorale, Cadenza, and the Children's Choir. This includes organizing Cadenza not only as a concert performance subgroup, but as a community centered outreach group and a potential touring group.

*Action Item 4:* Identify issues to be addressed by each concert and which community groups could be involved and a plan on how the community groups might be involved.

**Objective B: Embrace diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion initiatives.**

*Responsibility:* Education and Outreach Committee

*Action Item 1:* Develop a plan to identify underserved populations and barriers to participation within the greater Dubuque area.

*Action Item 2:* Build connections with underserved groups to encourage diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion.

*Action Item 3:* Explore partnerships or collaborations with groups already serving diverse populations.

*Action Item 4:* The Chorale will join and support "Inclusive Dubuque" Arts and Culture Sector by appointing a representative to attend their educational and planning events, and report pertinent information to the Board.

**Objective C: Partner with other artistic, community and government organizations.**

*Responsibility:* Artistic Planning Committee and Education and Outreach Committee

*Action Item 1:* Establish a system for discounting concert tickets for cooperating community organizations, and/or joint fundraising efforts.

*Action Item 2:* Use a variety of concert location venues that will expose the Chorale to different communities.

**Measurement:** Increase the audience size by 20% over the five years of the plan using 2022 as the base year and excluding joint Chorale DSO concert. Identify at least one community group as cosponsor and/or collaborator twice per season. The Vice President will do the reports two months after each concert including audience numbers, length, tickets sold or offering totals, expenses, board and artistic director(s) observations, number of singers and corporate and community concert sponsor(s).

**Goal 2 - Grow the membership of the Dubuque Chorale.**

**Objective A: Develop a database which contains contact information for current, former, and prospective members of the Chorale, and donor and patron information.**

*Responsibility:* Publicity Committee and Membership Committee

*Action Item 1:* Update information in the database twice a year.

*Action Item 2:* Present database management plan to the Board.

**Objective B: Review and revise the Chorale Member Handbook annually.**

*Responsibility:* Membership Committee

*Action Item 1:* Review and update the handbook.

*Action Item 2:* The updated handbook will be approved by the Board at the beginning of the concert season.

**Objective C: Increase the size of the Dubuque Chorale by strengthening the relationships between individual members and sections, by recruiting new members and retaining current members.**

*Responsibility:* Membership Committee and Publicity Committee

*Action Item 1:* Maintain existing programs, including:

1. Annually send a formal personal letter to all current and former members to become involved.
2. Send recruitment notices marking the start of a new season to churches and schools, and post in local businesses and art district in July/August of each year.
3. Periodic survey to solicit feedback from the current members on morale.
4. "Bring a Friend" during season's second rehearsal.
5. Snacks during rehearsal break.
6. Afterglow coordination.
7. Annual retreat activities.
8. Name tags.
9. Photo Directory.
10. Continue to sponsor members with financial issues. Perhaps get donors to sponsor members in return for tax deduction.

*Action Item 2:* Section leaders follow policies in handbook regarding attendance and absences.

*Action Item 3:* Board will have discussions on how to manage ensemble size and section viability.

*Action Item 4:* Establish a three-year travel plan for the ensemble.

**Measurement:** Dubuque Chorale will increase membership so that by the third year of this plan, it will have 80 members in the Chorale for each concert.

### **Goal 3 - Ensure long-term financial sustainability, visibility in the community, and organizational stability of the Chorale.**

#### **Objective A: Strengthen relationships with current and potential donors.**

*Responsibility:* Fundraising Committee

*Action Item 1:* Send out a fall fundraising letter to friends and members inviting them to donate to the Chorale's current budget and/or endowment fund.

*Action Item 2:* At each concert, ask concert goers to provide contact information so we can reach them with concert information.

*Action Item 3:* Develop a list of businesses to contact regarding concert sponsorships.

*Action Item 4:* Seek out specific business partnerships for each concert.

*Action Item 5:* Annually seek out at least three Cadenza events to strengthen donor relations and raise funds.

**Objective B: Develop and implement a program to continue increasing the endowment.**

*Action Item 1:* Send a letter or email to potential donors in early September to remind them of Endow Iowa and the current year tax deadline and tax benefits.

**Objective C: Implement an annual program to seek grants.**

*Responsibility:* Fundraising Committee

*Action Item 1:* Make a list of grants available to us and the deadlines for application.

*Action Item 2:* Identify three members of the Chorale or board who can assist in the writing of these grant requests.

**Objective D: Reevaluate and refine the organization's financial system.**

*Responsibility:* Auditing, Treasurer

*Action Item 1:* Develop a rolling two-year budget plan.

*Action Item 2:* Create a reserve fund account in an interest-bearing account that would hold 10-15% of the annual budget.

**Objective E: Develop an annual marketing plan to increase the visibility, awareness, and support of the Dubuque Chorale.**

*Responsibility:* Publicity

*Action Item 1:* Develop a working publicity committee to include specialists in particular areas, including:

1. Posters/ flyers/annual brochure Programs/ad book Billboards Media Coverage
2. Advertising Public Service Announcements (PSAs) Social Media.

*Action Item 2:* Develop Social Media content regularly to promote concerts and increase awareness.

*Action Item 3:* Continue to build connections with programs like Distinctively Dubuque.

**Objective F: The development of a Dubuque Chorale Archive.**

*Responsibility:* Governance and Personnel

*Action Item 1:* Use Loras College Center for Dubuque History as a partner in this venture.

*Action Item 2:* Determine what information will be housed including both visual (programs, posters, articles) and aural (digital recordings).

**Objective G: The Board of Directors will bi-annually review the Bylaws and Strategic Plan.**

*Responsibility:* Governance and Legal Committee, Board of Directors

*Action Item 1:* Review and update the Bylaws in the winter and Strategic Plan in the spring for review by the board.

**Objective H: Recruit and utilize volunteers from both within the Chorale membership and from the community.**

*Responsibility:* Membership Committee

*Action Item 1:* Determine tasks that could be completed by volunteers. They may include: Spending hours in the Chorale office at the Schmid Innovation Center doing clerical work and maintaining a public visibility. Doing offsite work stuffing envelopes, delivering publicity materials, preparing programs, selling ads, etc. Helping with the necessary details setting up and managing concert appearances. Assisting the Music Librarian in creating folders and ensuring that music is accounted for.

*Action Item 2:* Develop a method for tracking and recording the hours of volunteer service generated on behalf of the Chorale for grant writing purposes.

**Measurement:** Develop and meet an annual budget that will fund a part-time office manager and our artistic staff. Increase the balance in the endowment fund annually by 20% over the next five years. Successfully transfer archival material to the Loras College Center for Dubuque History.

**Goal 4 - Strengthen current and develop new community relationships.**

**Objective A: Strengthen current and build new relationships with other artistic organizations for the purposes of musical collaboration and joint fundraising.**

*Responsibility:* Education and Outreach Committee, Artistic Planning

*Action Item 1:* Work with the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra to strengthen our relationship. Work to secure programming ideas more than one year in advance.

*Action Item 2:* Continue to build relationships with area colleges, universities and other community choirs through SongFest or other performances.

*Action Item 3:* Continue to build relationships with area high schools by inviting one high school concert choirs to perform in our concerts. Consider whether the Dubuque Chorale or Cadenza might perform at high school concerts.

**Objective B: Broaden the appeal of the Chorale.**

*Responsibility:* Artistic Planning, Artistic Director, Board of Directors

*Action Item 1:* Conduct “Conductor Chats” as needed in order to more fully inform audience members about the music literature.

*Action Item 2:* Apply for performances at ACDA (American Choral Directors Association) convention programs. Investigate Iowa CDA Summer convention as option.

*Action Item 3:* In every program featuring non-English music literature, a translation will be included.

**Objective C: Support the musical and number of performers growth of the Dubuque Chorale Children’s Choir (DCCC).**

*Responsibility:* Education and Outreach Committee, DCCC Artistic Director, Board of Directors

*Action step 1:* Annually contact students from all area public and private schools inviting them to join the DCCC (including home schooled students).

*Action step 2:* Establish a DCCC parent support team to assist the director.

*Action step 3:* Develop a Dubuque Chorale mentoring process, whereby adult singers attend DCCC rehearsals on an ongoing basis.

*Action step 4:* Annually hold a free gathering with children-tested food, yearly award announcements, and fun activities for the DCCC students and parents.

*Action step 5:* Annually provide an opportunity for the DCCC Director to visit a successful community children’s choir.

*Action step 6:* Include DCCC representative(s) in future strategic planning to advocate for the distinct needs and interests of the DCCC.

**Measurements:** Annually sponsor SongFest and seek to perform with the DSO in three of the five years of this plan. Grow and maintain membership between 40 and 55 DCCC singers each season.

## **Implementation Process**

Prior to the beginning of the next fiscal year, the President of the Board, after consultation with the Artistic Director and relevant Committee Chairs, will submit a “Concert Season Framework.” This framework will list a) the proposed concert program, b) intended initiatives to embrace diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion, and c) potential business sponsorships and a proposed marketing plan.

~~Updated and approved at Board meeting on February 19, 2020~~

~~Revision proposal by committee 3/5/2020~~

~~Revised proposal based on Board Meeting discussion 9/21/2021~~

Approved at 10/19/2021 Board Meeting