OYC Year In Review

OYC served 600 singers in yearlong programs at 20 sites. Singers learned music of many cultures— including Ghana, Palestine, Israel, Russia, South Africa, Jamaica, and Spain. OYC provided 10-12 in-school and community performance opportunities for each student to develop confidence and community building across neighborhoods. For the first time in many years, over 80% of all programs had at least one performance at their school sites!

Elementary singers demonstrated growth in musical skills. 98% of 3rd-5th and 95% of K-2 singers matched pitches, and 90% of 3-5 singers read rhythms independently (up 7% over the year). 60% of 3rd -5th grade singers sight read a melodic example independently – a 10% increase. OYC sees an informal trend in annual assessment results toward higher levels of musical learning and independent musicianship over the past three years.

Favorite Miracles moments included Kaiser Elementary’s Harvest Festival, the Alameda Tree Lighting, and Oakland Zoo Lights. Many families had never experienced this event and stayed after the singing to connect and share the zoo with new friends! 65% of our Concert Chorus and Chamber Singers in the 2015-16 season started with OYC in our school programs – testament to the depth of relationships and long term interactions core to OYC.

Concert Chorus and Chamber Singers continued to garner praise and acclaim for their musicality and energetic performances! Highlights included the Walt Disney Family Museum Gala, where Chamber Singers sang with Disney animated stars including Jodi Benson (the voice of Ariel in the Little Mermaid) and honored Mary Poppins’ composer Richard Sherman. Singing for community agencies including Lincoln Families, Family Paths, Pier 39 Tree Lighting, SF CASA, Oakland Rotary and Oakland Symphony and our guest appearance with Calling All Choirs highlighted OYC’s community building through the arts. The groups also made a return appearance to the Worldstrides Heritage Festival, touring to New Orleans. The trip began with Dr. Meg Frazier, Director of Choral Programs at Loyola University, working with the singers on vowels, breath and releasing yourself to the music, planting seeds for our singers’ futures academically. At the competition, the 25 singers (a mixture of Concert Chorus and Chamber Singers) performed “What a Wonderful World” (in honor of New Orleans own, Louis Armstrong) and Richard Smallwood’s Total Praise, receiving Silver honors. More importantly, through touring the French Quarter, visiting Mardi Gras World to observe how Mardi Gras floats are created, and connecting to culture through food and beignets, singers increased awareness and respect for our country’s diversity.
A Note from our Executive Director

The 2015-16 season saw inspiring performances, depth of music education for singers at all levels of our programming, and sowing the seeds for future growth at OYC. Our Chamber Singers represented OYC’s love of music and created harmony through diversity throughout the Bay Area and in New Orleans. My personal favorite was watching them sing alongside Mary Poppins’ (and many of my Disney childhood favorites!) composer Richard Sherman at the Walt Disney Family Museum! School programs continued to thrive – including significant increases in both learning and in school based performances to connect our communities through song.

We continued to build relationships and programs to increase access to music education and equity in our programming, expanding our Middle School programs and our elementary offerings in East Oakland. The season culminated with our third year in partnership with the OUSD Oakland Summer Jazz camp, providing two weeks of free instruction to OUSD middle school students, and our second year of summer enrichment with Love, Learn, Success – this year focused on a Newcomer program at Bridges Academy.

Looking ahead, we are excited to expand our middle school programs and our partnerships in Fruitvale and East Oakland in 2016-17 to continue to provide access to choral music with excellence and increasing equity across our communities. Join us in investing in our young singers’ futures, and celebrate them at performances that deepen relationships with other city and cultural institutions, including Oakland Zoo, Chabot Space and Science Center, and Oakland Museum of CA. Our 42nd season celebrates connection, community, and the power of our voices to change the world.

In harmony,

Keri Butkevich

From our families

“She loved every second....We will remember you just like a song in our heart.” - Nikki, Miracles mom

"My son loves to sing and there were certain letters he needed practice articulating. Singing seemed a natural way to address it. He loves it! He likes singing, being part of a group, and speaks better and seems more confident.” - Jennifer, Miracles mom
Our Supporters: July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016

Our success comes from the partnership and support of many foundations, corporations, businesses and individuals whose generous contributions make creating harmony possible through our programs. Our heartfelt gratitude to those listed below and to those who contributed to OYC anonymously, via affinity programs, OYC events, or through their workplace’s employee giving programs. OYC apologizes for any omissions or errors. Please help us to ensure we honor your gift correctly by contacting Keri at keri@oaklandyouthchorus.org with any corrections. Thank you for helping to lift our children’s voices in the 2015-2016 season, and please support OYC in continuing to create harmony, friendships, and stronger communities through access to excellence in choral music education for East Bay children and youth!


Oakland Youth Chorus Financials 2015-16

2015-16 Board of Directors: David Bond and Patrick Zimski, Presidents, Suzanne Reinfranck, Vice President, Kathleen Davis, Treasurer, Tina Flores, Secretary, Jeanine Hooks-Allen

2015-16 Staff: Keri Butkevich, Executive Director, La Nell Martin, Artistic Director, Trish Yanko, Admin. Assistant, Sid Quinsaat, Teacher and Community Engagement Associate, Ja’Mell Fairley, Teacher and Finance Associate, D’Shawn Hunter, YLC Coordinator, Rhonda Crane, Bryan Dyer, Sarah Hawley-Snow, Rebecca Kleinmann, Holly Shogbesan, Teachers, Riho Kojima and Adam Griffin, Interns.

Join our team! OYC is actively looking for volunteers, interns, and board members passionate about music education and performance ready to give back to their communities through the Chorus. Contact Executive Director Keri Butkevich at keri@oaklandyouthchorus.org to find out more!