



**NORTHWEST CHOIRS
– HOME OF THE NORTHWEST BOYCHOIR AND VOCALPOINT SEATTLE –
ANNOUNCES MILESTONE LEADERSHIP TRANSITION**

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<https://www.nwchoirs.org/contact/>

SEATTLE – The Board of Directors of Northwest Choirs, home of the Northwest Boychoir and Vocalpoint Seattle, one of the premier youth choral programs in the nation, today announces an important addition to its leadership team:

Following an extensive national search, Mark Shattuck has been appointed to serve as Northwest Choir's next Executive Director.

Northwest Choirs provides world-class music education and performance opportunities that serve as a platform for personal growth and development. Now in its 50th year, they have trained thousands of young singers, and more significantly, shaped the lives of its members by instilling important life lessons.

Shattuck will join the organization in a strategic and management capacity, starting April 21, 2025, forming an executive leadership partnership with Music Director Jacob Winkler.

Shattuck says he was drawn to Northwest Choirs' mission. *"Music has the power to transform lives, and Northwest Choirs has been doing just that for decades. The young singers of the Northwest Boychoir and Vocalpoint don't just learn to perform—they develop discipline, confidence, and a lifelong love of music. That mission is what drew me here, and it's what inspires me to help lead this program into the future."*

On the appointment and organization's future trajectory, Northwest Choir's Board President and Search Committee Chair, Marcia Murray shared, *"This leadership opportunity attracted a host of highly-qualified candidates from ten different states. Mark distinguished himself from the crowd, and we feel confident that he is the right person to steward this program's 50-year legacy and launch it into the future."*

Jacob Winkler, Music Director shared, *"Mark's enthusiasm for music and education, combined with his experience in finance, makes him a natural fit for the Northwest Choirs. I'm very excited about partnering with him to lead this program into its next chapter."*

This hire represents a milestone in Northwest Choirs' 50-year leadership history. In 2022, following a 38-year leadership tenure, visionary Music Director Joseph Crnko retired and named Jacob Winkler his

successor. In early 2024, following a 32-year tenure, dedicated Executive Director Maria Johnson retired early for health reasons. The Northwest Choirs Board undertook the national search for its next Executive Director in partnership with Crnko, Johnson, the Northwest Choirs staff, and search consultant Syrah Gunning of the DeVos Institute of Arts and Nonprofit Management. Throughout this transition, the Northwest Choirs Board and staff have worked diligently to assume interim management responsibilities, develop Northwest Choirs' vision and strategic trajectory, and structure the organization's internal operations to support a thoughtful and intentional leadership transition. On this important inflection point, Crnko reflected: *"I enjoyed my interactions with Mark through the selection process and think he is a great fit for the organization. I'm excited by this excellent new hire."* Johnson adds, *"It is with great pleasure that I congratulate Mark as the new Executive Director for the Northwest Choirs. Mark's background complements the vision to further the mission of the Northwest Boychoir and Vocalpoint! Seattle, and I join the board and staff in enthusiastically welcoming him to our community!"*

Looking ahead to the organization's future, Northwest Choirs' alumnus, Board member, and Search Committee Member, Andrew Petersdorf, offered, *"I am thrilled that Mark will be joining Northwest Choirs. Mark brings a wealth of experience in strategic planning, organizational growth, and financial management and I am excited to see the positive impact his vision and expertise will have on our organization, our members, and the communities we serve. Welcome, Mark!"*

A former professional trumpet player and avid choral musician, Shattuck joins Northwest Choirs after serving nearly a decade as the Director of Finance and Administration at Merola Opera Program, a 70-year-old training and development program for the world's finest young opera singers, pianists/coaches, and stage directors. Shattuck oversaw all aspects of finance, accounting, grant management, facilities, HR, IT, and payroll on a \$4M operating budget. Shattuck also currently serves on the board of Volti, a professional vocal group dedicated to the discovery, creation, and performance of new vocal music.

Northwest Choirs' work is grounded in one belief: that learning to hold oneself to world-class standards shapes the way a young person interacts with the world. Through the pursuit of excellence in choral music, choristers develop a sense of purpose and experience the power of belonging to something greater than themselves. Northwest Choirs' programs emphasize musicianship, commitment, teamwork, and pursuit of excellence. They build confidence, teach perseverance and diligence, develop emotional expressiveness, and foster a growth mindset that its alumni carry through their entire lives. With a long-established commitment to need-blind admissions and financial aid, it serves approximately 200 singers – boys ages 5 to 18 and girls 12 to 18 – who represent 100 diverse public and private schools in the region.

A core part of the Northwest Choirs curriculum is providing extensive performance opportunities for its choristers. In an average year, it presents more than 30 concerts and events, performing at 15+ venues and drawing audiences in excess of 20,000. It has a long history of performing with professional groups including the Seattle Symphony and Music of Remembrance, as well as contributing to motion picture and video game soundtracks. Members of Vocalpoint recently performed with the Eagles at Climate Pledge Arena as part of their Hotel California tour, and a live performance recording with the Boychoir was part of the Seattle Symphony's winning submission for Gramophone's 2018 Orchestra of the Year. Its Grammy-nominated Northwest Boychoir is perhaps most well-known regionally for its annual presentation of *A Festival of Lessons and Carols*. A Puget Sound tradition now in its 47th year, this 8-concert series is performed throughout the Seattle metropolitan area and culminates at Benaroya

Hall, presented by the Seattle Symphony. The concert is then broadcast on Christmas Eve on Classical KING FM. It is a source of pride in Seattle and across the broader Puget Sound, an integral part of the region's cultural life, and the officially recognized singing ambassadors of Washington State.

This new leadership appointment comes at an exciting point in the Northwest Choirs season. On March 1, it will host its annual Black Tie and Blue Jeans Gala, in support of affordable world-class music instruction for all qualified youth, regardless of their family's financial situation. The Northwest Boychoir will present Choral Traditions: Nocturnes on March 29 - 30 and Vocalpoint will host their Seattle Show from May 15 - 25 at the Broadway Performance Hall. This summer, the Boychoir will present multiple concerts in California as a part of its two-week concert tour. The concert program will include classical choral works, folk songs, and Americana.

More information and tickets for all performances can be found here: <https://www.nwchoirs.org/concerts-and-events>

The national search was led by Syrah Gunning, Senior Consultant, Executive Search and Development of the DeVos Institute of Arts and Nonprofit Management, a leading provider of arts management services, training, and thought leadership for arts, cultural, and educational sectors worldwide. Learn more [here](#).

For more information about Northwest Choirs, visit <https://www.nwchoirs.org/>

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