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HAMILTON CHILDREN'S CHOIR
2014-15 ANNUAL REPORT



Hamilton
Children's Choir



Message from the Executive Director

The 2014-2015 season was one of great ambition, sparked by our 40th anniversary celebration. As with any significant milestone, Hamilton Children’s Choir grew older and wiser in many areas.

Each year in January, Zimfira Poloz, HCC’s Artistic Director, and I would develop a plan that will support her artistic programming vision while balancing the season’s budget. HCC overall business strategy is always focused on incorporating specific plans that will ensure its future sustainability.

We are proud to report that HCC continues to thrive. The following charts demonstrates the growth of our organization in the past few years:

Organizational Measures	2006-2007	2013-14	2014-15
Choir Registration	82	180	208
Choirs	2	5	6
Artistic Staff	4	11	10
Admin Staff	1	3	4
Budget	\$126,000	\$366,250	\$443,856
Concert Revenue	\$13,747	\$30,790	\$34,478
Fund Development*	\$13,747	\$117,954	\$168,615
Fundraising Events***	\$6,705	\$14,093	\$7,782
Reserve**	\$19,393	\$52,871	\$44,819
Profit/Loss	\$6,346	\$10,971	(\$8,052)

*Fund Development includes grants (federal, provincial, municipal), donations (individual, corporate), sponsorship, and fundraising events

**Reserves are purposefully built to mitigate any unexpected economic downturns. It is advised to have a minimum of 3 months of operating expenses. The HCC reserve is currently at \$48,000 and this reserve has grown on average by \$3K per year.

*** Fundraising events include funds raised for both HCC operations and touring.

To ensure the sustainability, the Board of Directors implements a 3-year strategic plan which includes three priorities: grow membership, increase revenue and build awareness. The numbers demonstrate that HCC is on the right track towards realizing those goals.

Board of Directors



Gabriel Araiche is a lawyer with the law firm of Connor, Connor, Guyer & Araiche. For the past twenty-two years, his practice has focused mainly on Real Estate and Estate law. He received an honours undergraduate degree from the University of Toronto in Political Science and obtained his Bachelor of Laws from the University of Manitoba. His daughter currently sings with the illumini choir.



Laurel Trainor is a Professor at McMaster University, and a Research Scientist at the Rotman Research Institute, and the Founding Director of the McMaster Institute for Music and the Mind (MIMM). She has published over 100 articles on the neuroscience of auditory development and the perception of music (<http://psycserv.mcmaster.ca/ljt/> for more information). She is a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science, an Innovator of Distinction, and holds a patent for the Neurocompensator hearing aid. Laurel is the Current and Founding director of a cutting edge laboratory/ concert hall, the LIVElab (<http://livelab.mcmaster.ca/>) for studying music performance and performer-audience interactions. Laurel also has a Bachelor of Music Performance from the University of Toronto and is currently principal flute of Symphony on the Bay.



Suzanne Shulman has earned international critical acclaim for solo recitals and is recognized as one of Canada’s foremost flutists. She is a graduate of the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto and is also a three-time Canada Council grant recipient. Suzanne has appeared as soloist with major Canadian and international orchestras and is a frequent guest at music festivals at home and abroad. Suzanne has an extensive discography and is a founding member of the ensembles Camerata Canada, Trio Lyra and ChamberWORKS. Her extensive teaching career has included the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto. She has served on the board of the National Youth Orchestra of Canada and is a past Chair of the Board of Governors of Hillfield Strathallan College. Suzanne is also the parent of an HCC Alumna. www.suzanneshulman.com



Tom Fleming is a graduate of the University of Toronto’s Operatic Performance program, Tom Fleming spent 13 seasons performing with the Canadian Opera Company chorus. In addition to his work with the COC, Tom sang several roles with Opera in Concert, Toronto Operetta Theatre as well as numerous appearances in oratorio. Tom also spent two summers in the opera program at the Banff School of Fine Arts. Tom lives and works in Hamilton and is a realtor with Judy Marsales Real Estate Ltd, Brokerage.

Board of Directors



CHAIR: Kim Thompson has been a Hamilton Children's Choir volunteer for approximately 8 years. She is a parent of a former chorister who sang with the Concert and Chamber choirs for 6 years. Kim has volunteered in many roles such as lead parent, stage manager, chair of 35th anniversary concert committee and has accompanied the Illumini choir on several tours as a chaperone. Kim has been a member of the Board of Directors since 2009 as a director and most recently as board chair. Kim is a full-time employee of the Hamilton Health Sciences and has worked in the Intensive care unit at Hamilton General for 27 years.



VICE CHAIR: Joel Hilchey is a true renaissance man. He earned a Masters in environmental engineering, and now teaches sustainability at McMaster University. Joel founded a youth engagement initiative called The Beanstalk Project, and he speaks at schools and conferences across North America, using juggling, magic, and mousetraps as metaphors for leadership. Joel's quartet "Test Drive" is an Ontario champion and arguably Canada's most entertaining barbershop quartet. He's an author too - Joel's illustrated book "The Time to Climb" has been a hit, and a new book on teaching creativity is in the works. He also loves to travel, cook, do yoga, and taste exotic foods, but that stuff is just for fun. www.joelhilchey.com



TREASURER: Leslie Zahoruk is a choir parent and works as Finance Manager at Aryzta Canada. She is a certified management accountant & yoga instructor. She graduated from National Taipei University in Taiwan with Social Work major. She was a Children's ESL (English as Second Language) teacher in Taiwan prior to moving to Canada.



SECRETARY: Kate Boose is currently the Director of Vocal Studies at Hillfield Strathallan College. She holds a Master of Music degree in Music Education and Choral Conducting from Westminster Choir College, an ARCT diploma in piano performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music, and an Intermediate level certificate from the Royal Academy of Dancing (London, England). Her choral experiences have been diverse in nature and have allowed her to perform with many distinguished conductors and esteemed orchestras including the New York Philharmonic.

To be better at what we do, HCC needs to develop stronger fundraising strategies and approaches that would yield positive results. It is important as an organization we demonstrate that we are doing our part to raise money. In 2015-16 we conducted focus groups with choir parents to gather feedback and views on fundraising. It is our goal to improve in this area and we look forward to incorporating some of the ideas shared and for the opportunity to work with you, our stakeholders, to implement a better fundraising strategy. Stay tuned as more information will be coming your way on how we can work together to achieve more positive results.

It is my personal goal, as the Executive Director, to ensure there is continued growth of HCC as we work together to create life-changing music opportunities for our choristers.

Success is something that can only be achieved if we work together!

Sincerely,
Patricia LeClair

Message from the Artistic Director

I am so proud of what we accomplished artistically in 2014-15 season!

We launched our Lads & Gents program to give young male singers the opportunity to sing together with their peers and more importantly be able to continue singing while going through the vocal transitions. This program has always been a part of my bigger artistic vision of which I am so pleased we were able to realize.

Our choral programming continues to grow in numbers and caliber. This is only possible with a skilled and talented artistic team who are all dedicated to ensuring each chorister has a positive experience, feel safe within their learning environment while still being challenged as they develop as singers. I am a big believer that each child has potential as 'excellence has no age.' Our dynamic approach to music has assured long-term benefits for each chorister.

While travelling around the world and working with other children's choir organizations, it is obvious to me the Hamilton Children's Choir is very special. Artistically, we are open to new and unique ways to present choral music. Our reputation as one of the world's leading children and youth choral organization is not only because of our music education and performance standards, but also because of HCC's ability to be flexible when responding to different guest performance opportunities. Opportunities for choristers included the Pan Am Closing Ceremonies performance and Apocolypsis as part of the Luminato Festival in Toronto. As an Artistic Director, I will continue to respond to these high-profile events so our choristers have as many special opportunities as possible.

Finally, the 2014-15 was our 40th anniversary year. While our plans were an ambitious, I am so pleased with the outcomes. Hosting guest performers, Rajaton and TorQ, made our 40th anniversary concerts very special. They motivated and inspired our choristers. A special thank you to all of those individuals who helped make our 40th anniversary celebrations a memorable one.

We are not perfect. Each season offers so much to be learned from and offers insight on how we, the HCC artistic team, can improve our choral music education techniques and performances. With a continued emphasis to offer life-changing musical experiences for our choristers, we have attempted new methods when presenting choral music, as seen in our recent Home Alone-inspired holiday concert. Incorporating theatrical-based and a multi-arts approach to performing choral music is my dream. We will build on this as we plan our concert series in the future.

Choir parents, the ongoing success HCC experiences are really because of your commitment and support. We are so grateful for your efforts. I am committed to ensuring each that chorister has, as best possible and the most memorable choir experience of their lives. Your children are all so special to me and will continue to be in many years to come.

Thank you!
Zimfira Poloz

2014-15 major accomplishments

2014-15 Major Accomplishments

- Launched Lads & Gents program, HCC’s male-only choir
- 25 guest performance appearances; earned \$17,500 in performance fees
- Presented four HCC concerts including two Holiday Concert performances (matinee & evening), Spring Concert, 40th Anniversary Can You Feel It’ Concert,
- High-profile performance opportunities included Apocolypsis (June 2015), Pan Am Closing Ceremony (July 2015)
- 40th Anniversary ‘MUSIC MATTERS’ Free School Concert attended by 1900 singers.
- Polyfolia Festival Tour in France
- Offered \$14,400 in financial support in response to 35 Financial Award applications
- 40th anniversary CD produced and sold
- Increased municipal funding (City of Hamilton) from \$1,649 to \$35,000
- \$50,000 in Ontario Trillium Funding was awarded

Special thank you to Elfreida & Vern Heinrichs of the Heinrich’s Foundation, for becoming a new financial supporter of Hamilton Children’s Choir.

