



Detroit Concert Choir

Strategic Plan 2020-2025



DCC at Sweetest Heart of Mary Church - Detroit

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

This 5-year Strategic Plan originated from a two-day board workshop in the summer of 2016. The board reviews and updates it yearly to ensure that our projects and activities are timely, realistic, and within the parameters of our vision, mission, and core values.

HISTORY

Detroit Performing Artists, Inc., a 501c3 tax-exempt arts organization doing business as Detroit Concert Choir (DCC), provides artistic opportunities for the amateur musician, performance and income opportunities for the professional musician, and educational opportunities for young people and adults. DCC is a 75-voice choral ensemble that promotes choral music of high artistic merit and cultural enrichment for our community. Celebrated for exceptional programming and distinctive performances, the choir is valued by singers and audiences alike for DCC's exciting cultural offerings to our metropolitan Detroit area.

The Choir was established in 1987 by founding Artistic Director Gordon Nelson (1931-2015), a former Detroit Public Schools Vocal Music Teacher whose 27-year leadership brought the choir to international acclaim. His successor, Dr. Brandon Johnson, served the choir as Artistic Director from 2015 – 2019. In June 2019, Dr. Michael Mitchell became the Artistic Director of the Detroit Concert Choir and continues the tradition of promoting and expanding choral arts opportunities for young people and adults throughout metropolitan Detroit.

Throughout its three-decade history, the Choir has performed hundreds of concerts in our communities, presenting exciting performances to local audiences. Comprised of musicians of varying ages, backgrounds, and walks of life, singers gather from over 35 communities and perform in some of the Detroit area's most beautiful and historic churches and performing arts centers. Repertoire includes contemporary literature, *a cappella* compositions, American folk and gospel, and great classical works for chorus and orchestra.

The ensemble enriches the city's cultural offerings by presenting an annual concert series, singing for community events, and collaborating with fellow choruses and renowned orchestras. Most recently, we joined in by performances with the Michigan Sinfonietta, the Oakland Symphony Choir, and the Oakland University Symphony Chorus, as well as performances with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

DCC has received eighteen national and international honors in esteemed music conventions and international competitions and won the prestigious "Choir of the World" title at the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod in Wales. The choir also received the nationally acclaimed Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence based on artistic excellence, strong organizational structure, and a commitment to outreach, educational, and culturally diverse activities. Highlights include performances at National, Regional, and State American Choral Directors Association Conventions attended by top conductors and educators nationwide.

DCC has appeared on local television and radio programs, at sporting events, and as featured artists for community events. The DCC has produced six professional CDs, and they are often aired on 90.9 FM WRCJ, southeast Michigan's classical/jazz FM station.



Spirit of the American Road Concert - May 2023

OUR VISION: To inspire and enrich lives through exceptional music.

OUR MISSION: To promote musical excellence by uniting people through inspiring concert performances, education, and community engagement.

We aspire to be an exceptional choral ensemble committed to musical diversity, evoking passion, and educating our members and audiences. We seek opportunities to present our music to audiences across the nation and around the world.

OUR CORE VALUES: To enhance the lives of others through music.

1. Promote and perform a wide range of choral music while serving the metro Detroit area as an outstanding resource and representative.
2. Deliver quality musical experiences that welcome everyone and leave lasting impressions through creativity, expressivity, and collaboration.
3. Provide artistic and performance opportunities for volunteer and professional musicians and educational opportunities for young people and adults.
4. Convey passion for our vision and mission with a community that shares our quest for excellence and helps move our organization forward.
5. Incorporate fun into our organization to provide a positive, inclusive, engaging atmosphere that builds relationships and enriches lives.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

DCC operates with a small staff of two part-time administrative employees and one part-time artistic employee. While most of the choir membership is volunteer, we contract and compensate services for 40-100 artists per season. We have office space at a Grosse Pointe church and travel to rehearsals and concerts in schools, auditoriums, and churches around the metro Detroit area, including Grosse Pointe, Detroit, and Royal Oak/Beverly Hills.

Key Objectives:

We're committed to making meaningful progress and positively representing Detroit and the communities we serve through increased inclusion and diversity— including ethnic, generational, sexual orientation, and religious diversity. We will specifically:

- Recruit, retain, and develop diverse musicians, board members, and audiences.
- Expand and build new relationships and collaborative opportunities within Detroit and the metropolitan communities we serve.
- Increase understanding and acceptance of different cultures, voices, and styles, and enrich musical experiences, making choral music a more inclusive environment.
- Actively engage community organizations that support diversity initiatives for recruiting, networking, collaborating, and performing.
- Cultivate an innovative mindset that allows the choir to embrace new vision and artistic strategy and adapt and evolve to meet the changing assumptions and expectations about the choral experience, including digital content—adapting traditions and technologies to expand our audience and reach.
- Capitalize on strengths and dedication to our mission while thoughtfully re-aligning goals, possibilities, and priorities for the future.

STRATEGIC AMBITIONS

- ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE
- EDUCATION
- COMMUNITY
- ACROSS OUR BORDERS

ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

We aspire to choral excellence and seek to provide vibrant and engaging concerts that unite people and serve as shining examples of artistic achievement.

Goals

1. Provide compelling concert experiences as a premier performing ensemble that inspires and promotes unity and well-being.
2. Build upon the tradition of exceptional collaborative performances within the Detroit Metro area.

Actions

1. Attract and retain skilled amateur and professional singers from our region.
2. Offer diverse choral programs that contain literature of the highest artistic merit.
3. Seek “outside the box” performance opportunities that embrace collaboration and create memorable experiences for our audiences.
4. Apply for adjudicated performance opportunities outside our region.

Outcomes

1. More concerts that exceed 350 audience members.
2. Two collaborative concerts each season.
3. National and international invitations that will provide a positive representation of our city, state, and country.



Joint concert with high school choirs featuring music of legendary Detroit composers - March 2023

EDUCATION

Educate ensemble members and audiences alike to deepen musical understanding and broaden perspectives to build a community with great appreciation for choral art. In addition, we seek to provide educational activities for people of all ages and backgrounds to join in our mission.



Musicianship and conducting workshops



Goals

1. Offer educational opportunities for our singers to grow and develop their passion for singing and choral music.
2. Be a community contributor to educational opportunities for people of all ages to appreciate choral art.
3. Offer pre-concert lectures and other opportunities to educate our general audience members on choral music.

Actions

1. Develop workshop opportunities for college/university students to work with DCC. Music reading sessions, conducting master classes, and guest conductors and lecturers will become a regular part of our concert season.
2. Develop a systematic process by which our selected singers can grow and strengthen their musicianship.
3. Provide clinic and guest conducting experience for high school programs in the region.

Outcome

DCC will be widely known as an organization incorporating choral art with all, regardless of age, background, and experience.

COMMUNITY

We seek to serve our community by growing and cultivating a broad, engaged audience that is increasingly dedicated to the organization's mission. We are a community resource for artists, students, educators, and patrons to learn about, contribute to, and connect through quality choral music. We seek to promote equity and diversity among our singers, programming, and audience, becoming more aligned with the demographics of metropolitan Detroit.

Goals

1. Join arts organizations for community partnerships.
2. Grow and connect to a diverse audience and strengthen the connection to the DCC.
3. Be a resource for artists, students, educators, and patrons of choral art.
4. Be a partner in keeping Detroit's finest singers performing in our community.

Actions

1. Actively seek new audiences in different, exciting locations.
2. Collaborate with other not-for-profit partners to expand and enliven the bridge between music and these other organizations in our community.
3. Connect to area universities and colleges to engage local aspiring musicians.

Outcomes

1. DCC becomes highly recognized in the area of community engagement.
2. Mutually beneficial partnerships will develop and be strengthened among DCC and other community organizations.
3. DCC becomes a regularly coveted contributor to significant celebrations in our community.



Audience 2023

ACROSS OUR BORDERS

We aspire to be a positive representative of our city, state, and country. We seek opportunities to perform at conventions, festivals, and competitions nationally and internationally.



DCC collaborates with artists who represent many cultures— Pictured: Polish dance ensemble and singer/conductor from Namibia

Goals

1. We seek to represent our community with excellence and musical distinction.
2. We seek to provide our singers with unparalleled opportunities to share music-making across the world.
3. We seek to be held in high esteem nationally as a leader in our area within choral music.

Actions

1. We will make multiple applications for our ensemble to perform worldwide at festivals, concerts, and conventions.
2. We will present our singers with a model for successful financial travel options.
3. When the opportunities present themselves, we will make strategic branding and public relations investments to let Detroit know how we are representing them.

Outcomes

1. DCC will become the place for choral musicians who enjoy seeing the world.
2. DCC will become known in our community as musical ambassadors for our city.