2017 Annual Report

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

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2016-2017: A Year in Review

Our 49th year proved to be another year of change for the Wisconsin Singers. It’s important to first acknowledge the faith exhibited by the many troupe members who returned to the Singers knowing they would again be working with a new Director and, for the first time ever, an Executive Producer. They stepped up once again, realizing that the Wisconsin Singers is more than just one individual, that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

I joined the program in August for Production Camp and saw first-hand, a minute portion of what it takes to produce a show of this caliber. Jumping into it after the show had already been written and rehearsed in vocal camp, I faced the enormous challenge of learning all the aspects of the Wisconsin Singers production side and had to do it quickly. I was impressed and excited to have the pleasure of working with an incredibly inspiring group of young people. Dr. Gino De Luca joined us towards the end of Production Camp as the newly hired Artistic Director and along with me, observed the show take shape. We joined forces to move the Singers into the next stage of growth for the program.

Fortunately, Robin (Director/Producer Emerita) was by our side to help mentor and guide us in our new positions.

I look back on the last two years of change within the program, and I realize that even though change is often difficult, many times it’s also for the best. Robin and the student staff were incredible, making sure I was aware of all that needed to be accomplished. Often times, we joked about all of the things that I don’t know that I don’t know. The support of Robin and Chris Novotny, the Friends of Wisconsin Singers, current and past parents, alumni, business interns, student staff, and the performers/techs themselves, all made this year of transition a successful one and launches us forward into our 50th year!

Dr. De Luca turned in his resignation in late December, when an opportunity arose that led him in a different career direction. “Retired” Robin Novotny returned full time to fill the gap, this time as a “volunteer” rather than a paid staff member. Together, we recruited students for 2017-2018 and worked with Taras Nahirniak (Wisconsin Singers alumnus) to create an exciting show concept for our upcoming anniversary season.

2016-2017 year was filled with successes. The show “Live in Living Color” took our audiences through 40 years of “colorful” pop music. Our 49th On Campus shows were held the Wisconsin Union Theater once again. We traveled to schools throughout the state and nation, working with local students to educate, motivate, and inspire them to keep music in their lives. On Spring tour, we returned to Louisville after a four-year hiatus, performing at the Oldham Arts Center. Of course, no spring break would be complete, without our stay at the Bahama House, two shows in the Villages, and some R&R. Summer shows included a new venue in LaCrosse at Riverfest, and a return to the Winnebago County Fair, as well as our annual favorite, an outdoor show at Neenah’s Communityfest.
My goals for our 50th year is to retain the new shows from this year, reconnect with previous bookings, and continue to book new venues/schools to increase to a minimum of 36-40 shows each year. Secondly, I will continuously assess the program needs as the opportunity arises and make decisions in the best interest of the Wisconsin Singer program. As music, technology and the world changes, I will meet those changes with creative solutions, and ideas to continue to catapult the Wisconsin Singers program into the next 50 years.

Finally, as I look forward to our 50th Anniversary season, I am excited about meeting and connecting with former Singers alums, and their families. I have been a part of the Wisconsin Singers “family” for the last 20 years as a sponsor; and now, as Executive Producer, and with over 800 alums, I am expecting a phenomenal family reunion on Nov. 10 & Nov. 11 at the Overture Center. See you at the show!

Georgi Edginginton
Executive Producer / Wisconsin Singers
2016 -
THE WISCONSIN SINGERS’ MISSION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Singers provides quality music education to collegiate level musicians without regard to race, color creed, national origin, sexual orientation or identity.

We specialize in teaching music in performance through a variety of American Pop genres.

We supply professional stage performance and teaching experiences nationwide.

We serve many diverse communities and audiences that include public and private school K-12 music students, University of Wisconsin Alumni groups, and community service organizations, as well as the entertainment needs of select corporate patrons.

Education

Wisconsin Singers provides a unique, high quality, educational experience in the staged performance of American popular music that is both career focused and leadership oriented.

Outreach

Wisconsin Singers provides a dynamic connection between the University of Wisconsin-Madison and in-state and out-of-state high school music education programs by conducting workshops, master classes, and through concerts and public performances.

Public Relations

For forty-nine years, the Wisconsin Singers has promoted a positive public image for the University of Wisconsin–Madison. It supports the UW’s educational prominence through its delivery of a superior level of learning, entertainment, and public service as well as providing significant student employment and scholarship opportunities.
2016 – 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bobby Naramore  
*President – Singers Alum*

Alex Opitz  
*Vice President – Singers Alum*

Chris Novotny  
*Treasurer – Singers Alum*

Brad Umhoefer  
*Secretary – Singers Alum*

Carissa Coorough  
*Member at Large - Singers Alum*

Steph Burg  
*Member at Large – Singers Alum*

Kay Gruling  
*Member at Large – Singers Parent*

Tara Martino  
*Member at Large – Singers Alum*

Abby Kennison  
*Member at Large – Singers Alum*

Julie Woodall  
*Member at Large – Singers Parent*

Judy Novotny  
*Member at Large – Parent of Singers Alum*

TJ Sargent  
*Member at Large – Liaison to ODOS*

Robin Whitty Novotny  
*Director, Wisconsin Singers*
WISCONSIN SINGERS 16-17 FACTS

- Singers completed their 49th anniversary season in existence at the UW.
- 36 students participated in Wisconsin Singers, representing over 25 different majors across campus.
- Performers spent approximately 350 hours this performing season in rehearsal.
- Performers spent more than 400 hours this academic year traveling and performing in more than 30 different venues - plus another 40 hours during the summer.
- The troupe toured during spring break to do 2 shows for alumni chapters in the Villages in Florida, as well as restarting our annual performance stop in Louisville, KY.
- Performers donated over 50 hours of time to shows for campus events.
- Our 7 Interns worked 6-10 hours per week throughout the academic year and student staff members who double as performers donated another 4-6 hours per week.
- Singers cliniced and shared the stage with over 400 K-12 students in workshops geared to improve performance skills, followed by a question and answer session where WS students articulated information about their Wisconsin Experience.
- Performers entertained more than 30,000 throughout the state and nation.
- The Singers again hosted On Campus at the Memorial Union Theater, attaining over 93% attendance at both performances.
- The program raised more than $20,000 in scholarship funds for UW students.
- Singers remained financially independent from the UW for the 24th year.
- Wisconsin Singers continued to bring guest artists from New York/Broadway to create and choreograph the show.

2016-2017 NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Professional Staffing

Georgi Edgington was hired as our new Executive Producer and did a great job of working to fill her head with knowledge of all things Wisconsin Singers, and to begin to rebuild bridges and book the show. It will be a long process, as there is a lot to learn, but Georgi has been an exemplary example of someone that wants to value the vast Singers history and help to ensure its future success.

We still struggle to figure out how to manage the artistic and curricular side of the program. The hiring requirements of the School of Music make it very difficult to find a strong fit, and our hire for the 16-17 season did not work out. Once again, Robin was able to step in and help cover the shortfall on a volunteer basis for second semester.

By the end of the year, Georgi was able to step in and be hired as the professor of record for the class, but we continue to work to find the appropriate delegation of duties so that Georgi can continue to focus on the Executive Producer duties while we search for someone to teach the artistic portions of the class.
16-17 YEAR END BUSINESS REVIEW:

2016-2017 was a year of promise. We still faced some significant transition challenges, not the least of which was losing our Artistic Director hire at semester. In addition, as a result of the booking efforts of the previous year, the 16-17 season had the lowest academic show total (28) in the last 10 years.

However, we are confident that Georgi is the right fit for the Executive Producer position, and she has made great effort this year to rebuild bridges and restore our performance calendar for next season. And thanks to Robin’s volunteer filling of the Artistic Director position for second semester, the loss of those few additional shows this year were offset by the savings in salary and fringe expenses. Most importantly, we had an incredible strong year on and off stage, have a majority of our Singer / Dancers returning, and are poised for an incredible 50th anniversary season next year!

We are confident that with Georgi established and more confident in her position, and with the leverage of the 50th anniversary of the Singers, we will be able to get back to a full slate of academic year performances, and bolster both our operational and scholarship budgets for the future.

Some additional changes are in the works. Due to some substantial organizational changes at the UW, the Friends of Wisconsin Singers is in a position the coming offseason that we need to determine the value of scholarships and class credit to the Singers troupe members. There are significant accounting changes and University oversight and control that may need to be implemented in order to maintain the class credit, and the UW Foundation is discontinuing the matching dollar scholarship program for affiliate groups that we have leveraged for decades to maximize dollars for our performers. We have put forth creative solutions, as we value both the class credit and our relationship with the University, but will need to work through those issues / changes this year to see where we land.

Until then, we look forward to the milestone of our 50th anniversary. We have many special events and celebrations planned and hope that all of our alumni, families and friends will join us to celebrate 50 years of great Wisconsin Singers history, and lay the foundation for the next 50 years as well.

On Wisconsin!

Christopher Novotny
Director of Business Operations
Wisconsin Singers Alumnus 1993 – 1997
## FINANCES

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016-2017</th>
<th>2015-2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Performances</td>
<td>$131,376</td>
<td>$148,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations / Grants</td>
<td>$47,414</td>
<td>$67,740</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scholarship Matches</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
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<td>Merchandise Sales</td>
<td>$17,690</td>
<td>$18,045</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$206,480</td>
<td>$244,185</td>
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| **Expenses**         |              |              |
| Program Service      | $190,120     | $206,1728    |
| Scholarship          | $19,381      | $22,368      |
| Equipment            | $3,284       | $3,479       |
| **Total Expenses**   | $212,785     | $232,019     |

| **Profit / Loss**    | ($6,305)     | $12,166      |

**Merchandise sales include wristbands (on site).**

** Decreased program service expenses due to reduced transportation and other costs associated with fewer performances on the calendar.**
2016-2017 REVENUE

![Pie chart showing revenue breakdown for performances, donations, scholarship matches, and merchandise sales.]

- Performances: 63.63%
- Donations: 22.96%
- Scholarship Matches: 8.57%
- Merchandise Sales: 4.84%

Total Revenue: $131,376

- Performances: $47,414
- Donations: $17,690
- Merchandise Sales: $10,000
2016-2017 EXPENSES

$190,120

Program Service
Scholarship
Equipment

89.35%
9.11%
1.54%

$19,381
$3,284
**2016-2017 DONORS**

**Ambassador $1000+**
Badger Coaches
Brian, Luka, and Steph Burg
Tim Buttke and Kay Gruling
Justin Timber Cooperation
James and Joan Johnston
Nicolet National Bank

**Benefactor $500+**
Barbra Beachley Stenson
Leland and Kenlyn Harris
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**Sustaining $250+**
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Ellen Fisher
Kimberly Gillmore
Mary Hamilton
Scott and Tami Hermes
Shelley Moffat
Mark and Mary Mutza
Philip and Lisa Nelson
New JCI Foundation, Inc.
Tom and Judy Novotny
Gary and Pat Peterson
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Waunakee Rotary Foundation
*Patron $100+

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Anne Bolz
Delores Buttke
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Nicholas Coorough
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Robert Schuster
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Kathryn Wellner
Shelly Ziegler
TrezMarie Tianen Zotkiewicz
Jeff and Mary Zurn
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Jeffrey and Harriet Avery
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Cheryl Beaver
William Beyer
Richard Boese
Dorothy Bollant
Jacquelyn Bonavia
Carolyn Bourdo
Mary Beth Braun
Caryl Bremer
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Janet Weick
Robert Weiss
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Larry and Merikay Willer
Cliff and Colleen Williams
Curt and Carrie Zempel
Denise Ziegler
Margaret Zimmerman
Lynn Zwitter

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Johnson Controls
Microsoft