San Diego Children’s Choir, Known as the Official “Ambassadors of Song”

SAN DIEGO -- The San Diego Children’s Choir, dubbed by the city as the “Ambassadors of Song,” is the region's oldest and largest choral training program. It serves more than 450 youth, ages four–18, throughout the county.

Through the choir’s programming, children are introduced to the joys of singing and receive age-appropriate training of their maturing voices. Young artists enjoy exciting performance opportunities and a choral music-training program where excellence is encouraged and performance etiquette is required. The experience fosters an awareness of cultural diversity, inspires personal growth, and instills a lifelong love of music.

The San Diego Children’s Choir believes that no child should be denied access to musical training. To this end, the choir has created branches throughout San Diego County, in neighborhoods of varying ethnic and socio-economic composition, and provides scholarships to all who qualify. Currently 24 percent of enrollees receive tuition assistance. For many children, the choir is the only accessible and affordable formal choral training program available.

“Through surveys of our participants, we have found that our choristers report increased self-confidence, social skills and self-discipline,” said Carrie Cottriall, executive director of the San Diego Children’s Choir. “As one of our participants reported, ‘It’s fun, social and teaches valuable life lessons.’”

Polly Campbell, a devoted music professional and educator, founded the organization in 1990 to provide children access to choral music education, which had been diminished or removed from the public school curricula. Campbell directed the choir until her passing in the year 2000. What started as a single location with two choir levels and 42 enrolled children has grown to five branches with four age-based ensembles, an early years program, and an after-school neighborhood program.

Since 1993, the San Diego Children’s Choir has toured both nationally and internationally. The choir’s first tour was to Northern California to participate in the Golden Gate International Children’s Choral Festival. Subsequent tours have included performances in Great Britain, Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Hawaii, Australia, Canada, Alaska, Oregon and Louisiana.

The choir is a vital part of the arts community throughout the region and frequently joins with other organizations in collaborative concert programs and events. In these endeavors, the choir
hopes to enrich the community's arts and culture by adding a youthful touch to existing events and collaborations.

Because of the vocal quality and energy of its choristers, SDCC is often asked by local TV stations to appear on news programs to commemorate events like the winter holidays or the celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Likewise, groups like the San Diego Zoo have asked the choir to perform songs like "You Belong In The Zoo" at special events. Corporations can hire the choir for special events as well.

The San Diego Children's Choir is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Tuition and other forms of earned income only cover 57 percent of the choir’s costs. The rest is raised through the generous support of our community. For more information, visit sdcchoir.org, Facebook at San Diego Children’s Choir or call (858) 587-1087.

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