

Strategic Plan for Women's Voices Chorus, Inc.

January 2009-January 2012

Approved by Women's Voices Chorus Board of Directors, March 30, 2009

Strategic Planning for Women's Voices Chorus Inc. was sought by the Board during 2008. The retirement of our founding Director, Mary Lycan, and the arrival of our new Director, Allan Friedman, presents an opportunity to address the future aspirations of the chorus. No strategic plan currently exists for WVC. Strategic Planning consultation was obtained through Chorus America, and a strategic planning retreat was held on December 13, 2008. The retreat was led by Mark Ohnmacht.

The Board and Chorus membership undertook several preparatory steps prior to the SP retreat. Multiple approaches were used in order to fully understand the chorus members', stakeholders', and board members' perspectives about the current state of the chorus, and their ideas about the future of the chorus.

1. An online chorus member survey was conducted, with nearly 100% response rate. This survey asked respondents about their musical preferences and skills, their perceptions of WVC strengths and weaknesses, and their perceptions of major opportunities in the future of WVC.
2. The Board completed a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis, facilitated by Franzi Rokoske (board member and SP Chair).
3. Stakeholder interviews were completed with key community and chorus members that have supported WVC in various ways throughout its existence.

These sources of information were examined for cross-cutting themes, and used in guiding the Board and Mark Ohnmacht during the SP retreat. Summaries of each of these information sources are in the Appendix.

The SP retreat resulted in three major areas (vital few) to be addressed as goals over the next three years. The Board broadly grouped them as follows:

1. Music. This area encompasses musical excellence/skills and artistic collaboration between WVC and other groups (performance groups).
2. WVC as an organization. This area encompasses the chorus structure and culture.
3. WVC in the community. This area encompasses community relations, collaboration, audience development, and fundraising.

The goals, objectives, strategies and measures of success for each of the domains follows.

Music Program

Goal 1: Singers will have musical skills and knowledge to help achieve the music mission of WVC.

Objective: WVC will provide opportunities for singers of all skill levels to increase their musical skill level.

Strategies:

1. Singers will audition with the understanding that singing is an annual commitment to enable study of two concerts worth of music throughout the year
2. Workshops aimed at increasing singers' skills, intonation
3. Individual skill improvement outside chorus through additional sectional rehearsals, individual vocal lessons or other means

Goal 2: WVC will impact the community by sharing women's music in traditional concerts and performances in collaboration with other performing arts organizations.

Objective 1: Increase the number of annual performances of concerts

Strategies:

1. Increase number of performances of concerts (e.g. repeat concerts on more than one date, multiple locations in the Triangle and/or Triad)
2. Pre-concert talks/Q&A sessions for audience

Objective 2: Collaborate with area performing arts organizations

Strategies:

1. Create and cultivate contacts with area performing arts organizations through networking, and participating in community events, choral festivals and other opportunities. Generate opportunities for collaboration.
2. Form a dedicated Chamber Choir (annual commitment)
3. Continue to form small ad-hoc gig groups to do special events and/or could do run-out concerts

Goal 3: WVC will be a leader in encouraging the growth of the body of musical work specifically for women's choruses by commissioning and performing new works.

Objective: Identify and partner with existing and emerging composers

Strategies:

1. Cultivate contacts with composers with an interest in or experience with composing for SSAA choruses

WVC as an organization

Goal 1: WVC will create and maintain a strong organizational base from which to implement the vision and mission of the organization.

Objective 1: The structure of the governing body of WVC will ensure successful implementation of the vision and mission

Strategies:

1. Revise and define board structure, size, responsibilities, composition (expand to include community members)
2. Develop succession plan for president and for artistic director as well as other key/critical people in the organization
3. Hire a paid person (ED? "Volunteer Coordinator", other title) to help take on responsibilities currently fulfilled by chorus and board members

Objective 2: The culture of the organization will be one of cooperative volunteerism that encourages the involvement of all members in supporting the mission

Strategies:

1. Help members become active volunteers within the chorus. Use the section or social chairs (probably social) as a way to ascertain members' volunteer opportunity interests and skills and hooking them to best "jobs"

Objective 3: The culture of the WVC will be welcoming and supportive, valuing and facilitating the development of camaraderie among members.

Strategies:

1. Social chairs help new members integrate into WVC by facilitating "practice buddies" and "carpool buddies" and other avenues to develop relationships among singers
2. Annual banquet and other social opportunities that allow for socializing across sections
3. Develop an "Inreach" committee that will serve to support chorus members in times of transition, stress, or other life impacting events (illness etc)
4. Understand the factors that lead to member attrition so that we can prevent attrition when possible

WVC in the Community

Goal: WVC community presence will be broad and deep, ensuring the support of the community to achieve the vision and mission.

Objective 1: WVC will broaden reach into our community, thereby fostering the appreciation of the value inherent in women's music and increasing audience size.

Strategies:

1. Form mentoring/collaborations with other women's and/or girls choirs in schools and the community more broadly
2. Establish relationships with other performance groups in order to fulfill our mission to expand WVC programming and reach
3. Use board connections and other networking approaches to increase community organizations' awareness of WVC
4. Greater presence at community events, especially those benefitting women's causes/issues

Objective 2: WVC will continue to build fundraising efforts to ensure organizational and programming goals are reached.

Strategies:

1. Be sure that board composition includes people that are connected in such a way to support networking, fundraising and marketing
2. Establish and maintain committee(s) with clearly defined roles for fundraising, publicity, and marketing efforts
3. Develop strategies to cultivate our current donors
4. Formulate strategies to obtain donors from outside the chorus or immediate family of chorus members
5. Increase the number of grants received