

# Paducah

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# SYMPHONY

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*Youth & Children's*  
**CHORUS**

## HANDBOOK

Revised: August 31, 2016



The Paducah Symphony is supported in part by funding from the Kentucky Arts Council, the City of Paducah, and donations from the community. The Kentucky Arts Council, a state agency in the Commerce Cabinet, provides operational support for the Paducah Symphony Orchestra with state tax dollars and federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

### General Contact Information

- **Office:**  
Paducah Symphony Office  
760 Broadway  
Paducah, KY 42001
- **Phone/Tickets:** 270.444.0065
- **Fax:** 270.444.0456
- **Web:** [www.paducahsymphony.org](http://www.paducahsymphony.org)

### Administrative Team

- Daniel Sene, Executive Director: [daniel@paducahsymphony.org](mailto:daniel@paducahsymphony.org)
- Gina Leeper, Development Director: [gina@paducahsymphony.org](mailto:gina@paducahsymphony.org)
- Janine Zerger, Operations Manager: [janine@paducahsymphony.org](mailto:janine@paducahsymphony.org)
- Morgan Walker, Box Office Manager: [morgan@paducahsymphony.org](mailto:morgan@paducahsymphony.org)

### 2015-2016 Parent Leadership Team (PLT)

- Cindy Poat: [cdpoat@gmail.com](mailto:cdpoat@gmail.com)
- Heather Wadley: [heather.wadley@gmail.com](mailto:heather.wadley@gmail.com)
- Lori Colburn: [loricolburn813@gmail.com](mailto:loricolburn813@gmail.com)

### PSO Facebook Group

- [www.facebook.com/paducahsymphonyorchestra](http://www.facebook.com/paducahsymphonyorchestra)

## INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

The September and January Parent Orientation meetings set the course for each semester, getting everyone up-to-date on activities and performances. Updated information after these meetings will be sent out via email or posted on the website, [www.paducahsymphony.org](http://www.paducahsymphony.org).

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event the McCracken County Schools are cancelled, PSO CHORUS ACTIVITIES ARE CANCELLED (visit [www.mccracken.k12.ky.us](http://www.mccracken.k12.ky.us)). For activities scheduled on weekends, any cancellations will be communicated via email and on the Facebook page of the PSO Youth and Children's Choruses.

## A NOTE FROM OUR CHOIR MASTER

Dear Youth & Children's Chorus Parents,

Welcome to another season of great music learning and making! There is much on-going research into how the study of music positively influences brain development in children. This is particularly true for early childhood and children in elementary school. Research shows us that the study of music: 1) Enhances cognition by teaching the brain to learn using both hemispheres. 2) Enhances the emotional intelligence by teaching the brain how to process emotions and express them positively. 3) Improves the perceptual-motor systems of the brain by activating many different areas in the brain that address perception such as visual, hearing and intuition. 4) Improves memory systems by teaching the brain to process information quickly and efficiently. 5) Assists with the stress response by teaching the brain how to release stress through musical performance, including lowering blood pressure and increasing dopamine levels. \* *Please see "Music with the Brain in Mind" by Eric Jensen.*

Musical aptitude begins to solidify about 8 years of age, roughly 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. That is why the Paducah Symphony Children's Chorus begins at the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. It is at this age, and within the next few years, that a performance education in music becomes an essential component in the intellectual, emotional and perceptual development of the brain.

Finally, researchers have determined that all human brains are "hard-wired" for learning and responding to music. This means that there are specific pathways of neurons in the brain that are designed for music perception. Music is a part of being uniquely human and now we know how music helps in the development of our humanness.

It is important to continue our work in music and arts education. I speak from personal experience knowing that many kids are artistically "hardwired" but never have the chance to develop and grow these skills. Your support of your child and of our program ensures that opportunity. Our singers are the best!

Thank you!

**Brad**

Bradley L. Almquist, Choirmaster  
Paducah Symphony Choruses

## THE FACULTY

### Dr. Bradley Almquist, PSO Director of Choruses



Dr. Bradley Almquist received the Bachelor and Master's degree in music education from the University of North Dakota and was awarded the first Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting by Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

Choirs conducted by Dr. Almquist have performed for the Kentucky Choral Directors Association, the Kentucky Music Educators Association, Southern Division Conventions of MENC, ACDA, and the 2002 MENC National Convention. In addition, they were honored to perform the Raymond Brock Memorial Commission at the 2006 Southern Division ACDA convention. His choirs have toured England, Scotland and Wales, Italy, Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

Dr. Almquist is the recipient of the 2002 Murray State University Board of Regents Teaching Excellence award, the 2002 MSU College of Humanities and Fine Arts Award for Creative/Scholarly Activity, and the 2005 and 2009 MSU College of Humanities and Fine Arts Award for Outstanding Service. He was awarded at the 2004 Summer KYACDA convention with the Robert K. Baar Award for choral excellence. In 2006 he received the first Charles and Marleen Johnson Outstanding Music Faculty Award at Murray State University. He was honored with the award again in 2011.

In addition to his responsibilities as Director of Choral Activities at Murray State University and the PSO, Dr. Almquist teaches High Aptitude 4<sup>th</sup> grade music students for the McCracken County Public Schools, KY. He is a member of NAfME, CMS, ACDA, is the Past President of the Southern Division of the American Choral Directors Association and is currently Vice-President of the Kentucky Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association.

Assisting Dr. Almquist as the conductor of the PSO Youth Chorus is Natalie Krupansky, music teacher at McNabb Elementary School, Gabrielle Wibbenmeyer, interim conductor of the Youth Chorus, and Mrs. Devonda Treece, collaborative pianist.

### Devonda Treece, Collaborative Pianist

Mrs. Treece holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Evangel University in Springfield, Missouri. She also has a Master's Degree in Piano Performance from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. Treece completed a year of Post-graduate study in Group Piano Pedagogy at the University of Colorado in Boulder. In addition to her duties as collaborative artist with the PSO choirs, she maintains a large piano studio, and serves as the collaborative pianist for Paducah Tilghman High School. She also serves as pianist for First Baptist Church in Paducah. She and her husband, Randy, have four children.

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## PADUCAH SYMPHONY YOUTH & CHILDREN'S CHORUS (PSYCC)

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The Paducah Symphony Orchestra expanded its educational outreach mission in 1981 to include the Adult Symphony Chorus, and again in the 1990s to incorporate the Paducah Symphony Children's Chorus (grades 3-7/8). Both choruses are under the direction of **Dr. Bradley Almquist**, professor of music, and the Director of Choral Activities at Murray State University. Vocally maturing artists nearing high-school age may graduate to the Paducah Symphony Youth Chorus (grades 7/8-12) through an additional audition and vocal evaluation. In the Youth Chorus, the singers will continue their vocal development and musical training under the direction of Samantha Veal.

The Youth & Children's Chorus program places special emphasis on educating the whole musical person, growing singers to become patrons of the arts, bringing beauty and culture to their respective communities. In addition to a music education, the singers are trained in professional standards of performance, cultural awareness and personal appreciation by

- Introducing children to the highest standards of western art music; music from other world cultures; American musical traditions including patriotic, folk, and the musical theater.
- Introducing children to standard singing texts in foreign languages.
- Providing the children with a positive and creative means of expressing themselves through choral/vocal music.
- Developing self-esteem through hard work, achievement, and success.
- Developing a positive sense of individuality and personal responsibility within a group setting (ensemble).

The Youth & Children's Chorus is unique to the region, and among only a handful of its kind in the nation to regularly perform with a professional orchestra.

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## PERFORMANCES & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS

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The Paducah Symphony Youth & Children's Chorus performs with the Paducah Symphony Orchestra on its annual Holiday Concert in the Carson Center and for a number of civic organizations such as the Kiwanis and Rotary Club. In addition, they perform with the Paducah Symphony Chorus during the special Made in America concert series and two showcase concerts in the PSO Encore Concert Series. They also perform frequently in the broader Paducah community for a number of concerts including nursing homes, Quilter's Weekend, and at Patti's 1880's Settlement.

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## AUDITIONS

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**Auditions are held at the beginning of each school term (August and January) for new members. Current chorus members do not need to reaudit unless they have been absent for more than a semester. An additional audition may be required to determine vocal development as students graduate from the Children's Chorus to the Youth Chorus. The final decision for that transition lies with the Director of the Chorus.**

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## REHEARSALS

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The Paducah Symphony Youth & Children's Chorus rehearses on Thursday evenings from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Broadway United Methodist Church, 701 Broadway Street, in Paducah. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT THIS IS A PRIORITY IN YOUR CHILD'S SCHEDULE.

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## TUITION

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Tuition for the 2016-2017 Season will be \$100 for all students for the school year or \$50 per student for one semester. Payments will be collected at the Parent Meetings by Janine Zerger, PSO Operations Manager, or another PSO representative. Please make checks payable to the Paducah Symphony Orchestra and mark the student's name in the memo line. If paying by credit card, tuition may be paid in full or by installments. If paying by installments, a recurring payment of \$10 will be charged to your card each month. Tuition is non-refundable. There may be additional fees as repertoire, activities and wardrobe needs require.

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## SCHOLARSHIPS

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A limited number of partial and full scholarships are available for Youth and Children's Chorus members. To apply, please visit <http://paducahsymphony.org/scholarship-form/>.

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## CONCERT TICKETS

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Half-price subscriptions for PSO season ticket packages are available to Chorus Members, which include all Orchestra concerts, Choral & Youth Orchestra Concerts and Encore Performances. Ideal seating for Youth & Children's Chorus guests at the Carson Center is near the back of the main floor or the 1<sup>st</sup> Balcony. For more information and to purchase tickets, please email [janine@paducahsymphony.org](mailto:janine@paducahsymphony.org) or call 270.444.0065. Performers do NOT need tickets for concerts in which they perform. For all other PSO season performances, student tickets are free and may be obtained at the box office at the time of the concert. Season ticket holders may exchange their tickets for a block of tickets to include additional students. Student tickets may be obtained in advance from school music teachers.

Aside from season subscriptions, Youth and Children's Chorus Members receive an unlimited 20% discount on tickets to Carson Center concerts in which they perform. For concerts not held at the Carson Center, tickets are \$10/Adult and Students are FREE.

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## REHEARSAL PROCEDURES

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### DROP-OFF

- Students may be dropped off for rehearsal, no earlier than 5:50 pm, please.
- The Rehearsal Monitor will simply check off the child's name on the list—either the Child (Youth Chorus) or Parent must sign the student out.

- Singers who are of driving age and have been released by their parents to drive themselves must check-in and sign-out.

### **PICK-UP**

- Students will be released for pick-up after Dr. Almquist and Mrs. Veal have dismissed rehearsal and all chairs have been stacked.
- Following rehearsal, a parent must enter the building to claim the child, present ID if necessary, gather any new communication, sign out the child, and leave the building.
- No child is allowed to leave the building unsupervised, unless the child is driving herself with a parent's permission/note.

### **REHEARSAL CHAIR SET-UP (Children's Chorus Only, grades 3-7/8)**

All families are assigned alphabetically to setup rehearsals one or two times throughout the year. If you cannot be present for your assigned date, please arrange, on your own, to trade a time slot with another family or notify a PSYCC Liaison, Cindy Poat: [cdpoat@gmail.com](mailto:cdpoat@gmail.com), Heather Wadley: [heather.wadley@gmail.com](mailto:heather.wadley@gmail.com) or Lori Colburn: [loricolburn813@gmail.com](mailto:loricolburn813@gmail.com). Setup requires putting student chairs out and returning rehearsal spaces to the condition in which we found them. Working together, we can make this a smooth and efficient process, ensuring the hospitality of our hosts at Broadway United Methodist Church of Paducah.

## **CONDUCT & ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

The ensembles of the Paducah Symphony Youth & Children's Chorus maintain a rigorous performing schedule with very limited rehearsal time. Excessive absences from rehearsals prevent us from meeting our goals as an ensemble and diminishes the quality of our performances.

### **PLEASE BE SURE CHORUS IS YOUR CHILD'S PRIMARY THURSDAY EVENING ACTIVITY!**

**Absences:** It is expected that your child will be at every scheduled rehearsal. If she/he is going to miss a rehearsal, please let one of the Parent Liaisons know as soon as you can **IN ADVANCE**.

If your child is involved with another community arts organization, i.e., school play, Market House Theater, etc., that will require more than 4 absences in a given semester, then your child should take a "Sabbatical" for that semester and return at the beginning of the next semester.

**Excused Absences:** If your child is ill or has a school performance that will require them to be absent from a rehearsal of the Paducah Symphony Children's or Youth Chorus, please let one of the Parent Liaisons know **In Advance**. Rehearsals are planned carefully and in a particular order. It helps with the planning if the conductor knows who is going to absent. Sick students should return to rehearsal as soon as they are able to return to school. If the child has difficulty with singing due to an infection, but does not have a fever, they are encouraged to attend rehearsal, listen and mark their music, so that the process of learning music may continue as quickly as possible.

After three (3) **unexcused absences**, members of the chorus will not be allowed to perform with the ensemble on that particular concert. Singers who have a school or activity conflict must have

the absences approved by the PSO Director of Choruses, Dr. Bradley Almquist and the conductor of the ensemble. Parents should provide prior notice (a list of days to be missed and why) to the PSO Director of Choruses who will work with the students and parents, at their request, on an accommodation plan to make up the missed rehearsals. This way the work of the ensemble, as a whole, will not be as directly impacted by the student absences. Parents should not try to work out such conflicts with the Parent Liaisons.

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## PERFORMANCE WARDROBE

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### **CHILDREN'S CHORUS:**

*Formal Ladies:*           Black floor length skirt  
                                  White Tuxedo shirt  
                                  Red cummerbund, - folds up - red rosette  
                                  Black tights & black closed-toe, low-heeled/flat dress shoes\*\*  
                                  (Jewelry is optional – NO necklaces or dangling earrings, posts only)  
                                  Light make-up, no fingernail polish

*Formal Gentlemen:*    Black slacks  
                                  White tuxedo shirt  
                                  Red cummerbund, - folds up -red bowtie  
                                  Black socks & dress shoes\*\*

### **YOUTH CHORUS:**

*Formal Ladies:*           Black floor length skirt  
                                  Black sparkle blouse  
                                  Black tights & black closed-toe, low-heeled/flat dress shoes\*\*  
                                  (Jewelry is optional – NO necklaces or dangling earrings, posts only)  
                                  Light make-up, no fingernail polish

*Formal Gentlemen:*    Black slacks  
                                  White tuxedo shirt  
                                  Black vest & bowtie  
                                  Black socks & dress shoes\*\*

### **INFORMAL ATTIRE:**

*Children & Youth:*     Polo shirt, tucked in  
                                  (Children- Light Blue)  
                                  (Youth- Royal Blue)  
                                  Uniform Khaki Slacks\*\*  
                                  Black belt\*\*  
                                  Black closed-toe shoes\*\*

**\*\*MEMBER PROVIDED ITEMS**

***Always keep in mind that we represent the Paducah Symphony Orchestra and our community. For that reason, we ask that hair color remain a natural hair color.***

**LOGO PRINTED GARMENT BAGS:**

Each Chorus member must have both INFORMAL and FORMAL performance attire.

To maintain uniformity and professional appearance, all wardrobe items not marked with asterisks must be obtained through the PSYCC by either consignment sales or new orders. For new item orders, a deposit of ½ the order total is due at the time of the order placement, with the remaining balance due before the order is delivered.

**ALL CELL PHONES SHOULD BE TURNED OFF AND PUT AWAY DURING REHEARSAL**