

Matthew Harrison is a vocal music specialist who lives in Hamden, Connecticut. Award-winning educator, arranger, composer, pianist, organist, singer, conductor, wanderer, and all things in between, Matt has enjoyed a career of making connections, trailblazing new paths for choral music, and performing in a rich tapestry of landscapes.

Matt graduated from Amity Regional Senior High School (Woodbridge, CT) before attending James Madison University (Harrisonburg, VA) for his undergraduate degree in piano and music education. He then went on to earn his M.M. from The New England Conservatory (Boston, MA) in voice performance. Matt has been a member of the Actors' Equity Association since 2007, when he began his professional career as a music director, song writer, and producer for Cornerstone Productions.

After earning his masters, Matt returned to Virginia to start his teaching career in a large urban high school in Manassas. Immediately, he became active with the Virginia Music Educators Association and Virginia Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association. He was awarded the best first year teacher for Manassas City Public Schools after extensive groundwork had been laid for a large rebuilding effort. In three short years, the size of the program doubled. Matt was recognized within VMEA as a future leader, and was asked to sit on the Leadership Symposium.

Leaving his sizable program (200 voices) in Virginia, Matt returned home to begin teaching at Hamden Hall Country Day School. Five years ago, he began with only 13 singers. This year, Hamden Hall boasts 50 singers, 32 of them earned a spot in Southern Regional Choirs, and 14 of them earned a spot in Connecticut All-State Choirs, and one in All-National Choir. In 2018, the inaugural Connecticut All-State Treble Choir premiered his arrangement of The Star-Spangled Banner. Matt chairs the Southern Regional Honor Choir and the Connecticut Mixed Honor Choir. He has been influential in the creation of women's ensembles in Connecticut, successfully advocating to create more gender equity in the Connecticut Music Educators Association Honor Ensembles.

Matt served as membership chair for the Connecticut Music Educators Association for three years, and helped revolutionize standardized adjudication within CMEA honor choir auditions, working closely with the Student Affairs Commission. These positions give him the insight to advise the ACDA Executive Board via the Liaison Committee. In 2018, Matt was appointed as the Director of Choirs and Organist at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Cheshire, CT. He is also the recipient of the 2018 CT ACDA Choir Director of the Year. In addition, he currently serves the American Choral Directors Association of Connecticut as the President-Elect.

Every July, Matt uses his extensive knowledge of music theater and cabaret repertoire to direct and music direct the Madison Beach Club Follies in Madison Connecticut. This musical review has enjoyed a storied 85 year history. Matt writes, arranges, and performs alongside a multigenerational cast in this great Connecticut tradition.

In June of 2018, Matt was granted a residency at Glacier National Park composing choral music (the first of its kind in NPS history!). While in Montana, Matt made connections with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation. At their invitation, Matt attended a community event where he was given permission to notate drum songs into western notation for the first time in known tribal history. He put together a choir (made up largely of the Glacier Chorale) and performed his own music in Glacier National Park at the end of his residency. This intergenerational choir made of students, professionals, and park volunteers celebrated the epic landscapes of Montana through vocal music.

Matt's Glacier Suite (for accompanied SSA) is published by Pavane, which distributes through Hal Leonard, the world's largest music publisher. The Glacier Suite was featured in the 2019 Voices of Distinction catalogue for Hal Leonard, and just made its Montana premiere through the generosity of The Glacier Conservancy.