

2013 MTVA Choral Festival

Adjudicator Bios

Chris Clift

Chris Clift is the choral director at Heritage High School in Maryville, TN. Mr. Clift has 13 years of teaching experience, and he holds a Master's Degree in Choral Conducting as well as a Bachelor's of Music Education from the University of Tennessee where he studied with Dr. David Stutzenberger and Dr. Angela Batey.

In his 12th year at Heritage, Chris currently teaches beginning-level men's and women's choirs, an intermediate/advanced-level concert choir, as well as an honors-level auditioned chamber ensemble. Mr. Clift also teaches Music History and General Music.

Choirs from Heritage have received numerous honors and awards both locally and nationally, including superior ratings at the ETVA J.B. Lyle Choral Festival, the Roane State Music Festival, and at the TNACDA State Choral Festival. Heritage Singers has also won numerous awards at national competitions, including a Grand Champion award in Orlando, FL in 2009. Mr. Clift holds memberships in several professional organizations, including ACDA, NAFME, TNMEA, and the East TN Vocal Association, where he served on the Executive Board and/or President during the last 5 years.

In addition to his teaching responsibilities, Chris is the Music Minister at Central Point Baptist Church in Rockford, TN, where he has served for almost 3 years. He and his wife, Lora, have three children: daughter, Emma (7) and twin boys Elijah and Gabriel (4).

Tyler Meredith

Tyler Meredith teaches music at Montgomery Bell Academy in Nashville where he directs the MBA Philharmonic Orchestra and the Junior School Singers. Before MBA, he taught at John Overton High School where under his direction the Chamber Choir went to the ACDA State Choral Festival for the first time in 13 years. He has directed the mass choir at the Warmth in Winter Festival at the Ryman, Honor Choirs in Middle Tennessee and West Virginia, and is the assistant director and accompanist for the Nashville Youth Choir. Meredith has also been the summer clinician for the W.O. Smith summer music camp since 2009 and has served as the accompanist for both the MTVA Mid-State and Tennessee All-State choirs since 2005. He received both his Bachelor of Music in Church Music with an emphasis in piano performance and his Masters of Music in Music Education from Belmont University. He resides in Nashville with his wife and daughter.

Gaylon Robinson

Gaylon Robinson is the director of choral activities at Memphis Central High School where he teaches six ensembles. Prior to his appointment at Central High School, Mr. Robinson was director of choirs at Oakhaven High School. He has also served as adjunct professor of music at the University of Memphis where he conducted the Collegiate Chorale. Mr. Robinson is a recent recipient of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra Educator of the Year award for outstanding teaching. Mr. Robinson is currently president of the West Tennessee Vocal Music Educators Association. He has served as state and regional chair of the Women's Chorale for the Tennessee Music Education Association. Mr. Robinson has served as a choral adjudicator and clinician at choral festivals in Tennessee, Mississippi, Washington D.C., Missouri, Arkansas and Georgia. Mr. Robinson currently holds professional membership with the Tennessee Music Education Association, National Association for Music Education and the American Choral Directors Association. Mr. Robinson made his conducting debut at Lincoln Center in New York City in 2008. Choirs under his leadership have consistently received superior ratings at state, regional and national festivals. The Memphis Central High School Concert Singers have performed for both the division and national conventions of the American Choral Association as well as appearing twice at the State Conference of the Tennessee Music Education Association

Dr. Gene Peterson

Dr. Gene Peterson is the Associate Director of Choral Activities and is the conductor of the UT Concert Choir and UT Men's Chorale. He also teaches courses in undergraduate choral conducting and secondary choral methods.

Beyond his duties at the university, Peterson serves as the Director of Choirs at Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church in Knoxville.

Prior to his arrival to Tennessee, Dr. Peterson has held posts as music director and conductor for college, high school, church, and community choirs in California and Washington. Ensembles under his leadership have performed in venues throughout the United States, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, including the Sistine Chapel, the Sydney (Australia) Opera House, and Chicago Symphony Hall.

Dr. Peterson regularly appears as a clinician and adjudicator for local, regional, and international choral festivals. He holds membership in many professional organizations including the American Choral Directors Association, National Collegiate Choral Organization, and East Tennessee Vocal Association. He has served in professional leadership roles such as High School Standards and Repertoire Chair for the California American Choral Directors Association and as Bay Area Choral Representative for the California Music Educators Association.

Dr. Peterson has had the pleasure to be mentored by and to study with Geoffrey Boers, William Hall, Jane Hardester, and Weston Noble. He holds a Bachelor of Music in Choral Conducting and a Masters of Arts in Education from Chapman University in Orange, California and the Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting from the University of Washington, Seattle.