

**MTVA CHORAL FESTIVAL 2018  
ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL JUDGES**

**ALISON ALLERTON**



Alison Allerton is an Assistant Professor of Choral Music Education at University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, where she conducts the Women's Chorale and Men's Chorus and teaches courses in choral methods, secondary general methods, and ear training. Prior to her collegiate career, Dr. Allerton spent twelve years as a public school choral music educator at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The entire tenure of her public school teaching career was spent in the Greenwich Public Schools in Greenwich, CT, where she was named a recipient of the Greenwich Public Schools Distinguished Teacher Award in 2010 and a recipient of the Yale Distinguished Music Educator Award in 2007. Choirs under Dr. Allerton's direction consistently received superior ratings at festivals and competitions, and in 2011 her 50-voice middle school boys select choir gave an invitational performance at the Connecticut Music Educators Association State Conference.

Dr. Allerton holds a Bachelor of Music Education from James Madison University, a Master of Music in Music Education with an emphasis in Choral Conducting from the Eastman School of Music, and a Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting from Louisiana State University. While at LSU, Dr. Allerton was the graduate assistant conductor for their top choral ensemble, the LSU A Cappella Choir, whom she helped prepare for invitational performances given at Louisiana-ACDA, ACDA Southern Division in Chattanooga, and the Association of British Choral Directors National Convention. Dr. Allerton's primary conducting teachers and mentors are John Dickson and William Weinert, with additional training received by David Hill, Simon Carrington, James Jordan, Robert Page, Trey Davis, and Kevin Fenton.

Dr. Allerton has also performed in Red Shift, the preeminent professional choir of Baton Rouge, since the ensemble's founding in 2015.

## **KAREN ANDERSON**



Karen Anderson has over 30 years of teaching experience in choral music education. She recently retired from Huntsville City Schools where she was the choral director at Huntsville Middle School and Huntsville Junior High for nineteen years. Under her direction, the choral program grew from 90 students, to over 250. Her choirs have performed at state, regional, and national festivals in Huntsville, Atlanta, Orlando, Chicago and New York City. They have consistently received superior ratings. In 2014, the HMS Advanced Mixed Choir was selected to perform at the Alabama Music Educators' Association State Conference. In October, she was the middle school clinician for the Madison County Honor Choir. This spring she will be working as a consultant with the Alabama State Council on the Arts.

Mrs. Anderson graduated from Murray State University with degrees in Music Education and Piano Performance, and received a Master of Music degree from Arizona State University. She has been a member of AMEA, AVA, and ACDA professional organizations and is currently a member of MTNA. She has recently opened a music studio and teaches piano and voice. Her husband, Tim, is a software architect with Siemens. She has two daughters. Lauren teaches geometry at Hoover High School in Birmingham, and Amanda is the women's choir director at Tallassee High School in Tallassee, Alabama.

## JAMES WELLS



James Wells currently serves as the Director of Choral Ministries at Brentwood United Methodist Church in Brentwood, Tennessee. He oversees the choral program for children, youth, and adults and directs choirs of all ages.

Mr. Wells began his teaching at Freedom Intermediate School in Franklin, Tennessee (grades 5-6) where he taught general music, choir, percussion, ensemble, and drama from 1995-2005. Since 2010 Mr. Wells has served as the co-director of the Nashville Children's Choir at Belmont University.

Mr. Wells holds bachelors degrees in Voice Performance and Music Education from MTSU and a Masters Degree in Music Education with an emphasis in conducting.

Mr. Wells has the opportunity to direct honor choirs, mass choirs, choral festivals, and clinics throughout the U.S. each year. He lives in Spring Hill, Tennessee with his wife Amy and daughters Molly (20) and Emily (17).

## **JENNIFER VANNATTA-HALL, SIGHTREADING**



Dr. Jennifer Vannatta-Hall is Associate Professor of Music Education at Middle Tennessee State University, where she has taught full time since August 2010. She received a Bachelor of Music degree from Middle Tennessee State University in 1998. She taught pre-K through eighth grade general music and directed choirs in Rutherford County for two years. She then served as middle school general music teacher for the next three years in Franklin Special School District, where she conducted choirs and led the musical theatre program for fifth through eighth graders. Jennifer has also co-directed both the Tennessee Choral Academy and the Ethos Children's Choir.

After teaching in the public schools for five years, Jennifer returned to MTSU and graduated with a Master of Arts in Music Education in 2004. She was hired as full-time faculty for the MTSU School of Music for the 2004-2005 school year, where she taught music methods courses and conducted the MTSU Women's Chorale. She then completed her doctoral coursework in music education at the University of Illinois and graduated with a Doctor of Education degree in August 2010. She is certified through the master level of the Orff-Schulwerk approach to music education as well as the Smithsonian Institute's World Music Pedagogy.

Jennifer has presented workshops and conference sessions all over the United States. She conducts and adjudicates choral festivals throughout the state. Her research interests include early childhood music teacher education and secondary general music. She and her husband Scott make their home in Murfreesboro, TN with their son Preston and daughter Piper.