

GOSPEL ROOTS OF ROCK AND SOUL LIVE CONCERT FINALE
Friday, November 30, 2018

PERFORMER & PANELIST PROFILES



SARAH DASH defines the word "legend." As an award-winning vocalist, songwriter, motivational speaker, educator, entrepreneur, and humanitarian, Sarah is a unique force whose voice has touched millions of listeners around the world. From co-founding Patti LaBelle & the Bluebelles and making history as a member of Labelle to becoming the very first Music Ambassador (2017) of Trenton, New Jersey, Sarah has blazed a trail in every facet of her remarkable career.

Music has been a constant source of inspiration in Sarah's life ever since her childhood in Trenton. The seventh of thirteen children born to Elder Abraham Dash and Mother Elizabeth Dash, Sarah sang in the Trenton Church of Christ Choir as a young girl and entertained her classmates with renditions of standards like "With These Hands." The radio dial introduced her to everything from R&B and rock 'n' roll to country and polka, with the voices of Tina Turner, Gladys Knight, and Smokey Robinson shaping some of Sarah's earliest influences alongside albums by Mahalia Jackson, Nat "King" Cole, Andy Williams, and her brother's jazz collection.

Doo-wop groups The Capris and The Dells inspired the name of Sarah's first group, the Del-Capris, which included another Trenton-based singer, Nona Hendryx. When Sarah and Nona teamed with Patricia (Patti) Holte and Cynthia (Cindy) Birdsong of The Ordettes, a new group was born — The Bluebelles. Beginning in 1962, Patti LaBelle & the Bluebelles were among the most dynamic vocal groups of the 1960s, recording for major labels like Cameo-Parkway and Atlantic, touring the Chitlin' Circuit, and earning rave reviews for their appearances at the Apollo Theater where they were affectionately nicknamed "The Sweethearts of the Apollo."

Four years after Cindy Birdsong left the Bluebelles to join Diana Ross & the Supremes, Sarah, Patti, and Nona signed with Warner Bros., unveiling a new name and a new style on *Labelle* (1971) and *Moon Shadow* (1972), and recording with acclaimed singer-songwriter Laura Nyro on *Gonna Take a Miracle* (1971). Working with manager and former *Ready Steady Go!* producer Vicki Wickham, the trio began writing their own songs and geared their sound towards a progressive fusion of rock and soul. With the release of *Pressure Cookin'* (1973) on RCA, Labelle transformed into funk-rock goddesses outfitted in fashion-forward couture. A trio of albums on Epic Records, the gold-selling *Nightbirds* (1974), *Phoenix* (1975), and *Chameleon* (1976), sparked Labelle's breakthrough to mainstream success. They topped the Hot 100 with "Lady Marmalade," graced the cover of *Rolling Stone*, sold out theaters across the country, and made history as the first black group to perform at New York's Metropolitan Opera House.

After Labelle parted ways in 1977, Sarah embarked on a successful solo career. She acted in and wrote the theme song to *Watch Your Mouth!* (1978), a PBS series produced by Ellis Haizlip (*Soul!*) that also starred Joe Morton (*Scandal*). She released three albums on CBS-distributed Kirshner Records, *Sarah Dash* (1978), *Oo-La-La* (1980), and *Close Enough* (1981), scoring a massive disco hit with "Sinner Man," which featured Jerry Butler. Throughout the '80s and '90s, she recorded a series of club singles, including "Low Down Dirty Rhythm," plus her fourth solo effort *You're All I Need* (1988) on EMI-Manhattan Records. Sarah subsequently co-produced her independent gospel album *The Seventh Child* (2011) with Donald "Pup" Bolding. The project featured several of her own self-penned tracks, including "I'm Still Here," which has since become a show-stopper of her concerts.

In between producing her one-woman stage shows, "Dash of Diva" and "Sarah: One Woman," Sarah brought her talent to several different projects. Having worked with a variety of acts like Living Colour, Nile Rodgers, Alice Cooper, The Marshall Tucker Band, The O'Jays, Wilson Pickett and Bo Diddley over the years, she toured and recorded with Keith Richards' X-

Pensive Winos and appeared on the Rolling Stones' *Steel Wheels* (1989) album. She reunited with Patti and Nona for the #1 club hit "Turn It Out" (1995), received the Rhythm & Blues Foundation's "Pioneer Award" in 1999, and recorded the Labelle reunion album *Back to Now* (2008), featuring productions by Lenny Kravitz, Wyclef Jean, and Kenny Gamble & Leon Huff. In 2017, the members of Labelle were inducted to the Philadelphia Music Alliance's Music Walk of Fame.

Beyond the stage, Sarah Dash has lent her time to several prestigious organizations. She's a member of the Grammy Board of Governors (Philadelphia chapter), serves as the Grammy New Jersey Ambassador for the Advocacy Board of the Membership Committee, and is a member of the Grammy Hall of Fame (2003), as well as the Board of Trustees for the New Jersey Capital Philharmonic Orchestra. She's raised funds for homeless women with children, volunteered at soup kitchens, and given motivational speeches for churches, women empowerment organizations, and juvenile centers for at-risk children. Most recently, she joined fellow legends at the Apollo Theater for the Jazz Foundation of America's salute to singer Merry Clayton.

Building on a legacy that traces more than 50 years of music, Sarah Dash continues to be a "a chameleon of the most musical kind" (New York Beacon) who's remained "as vital and vibrant as ever" (Philadelphia Tribune) in her performances at celebrated venues like the Laurie Beechman Theater, Feinstein's/54 Below, and Joe's Pub at the Public Theater. In addition to co-producing and hosting the Trenton Makes Music Project, her two-year term as Trenton's Music Ambassador includes advocating for the expansion of performing arts while promoting the positive impact of music on the lives of Trenton residents. Through her constant evolution as an artist, it's a role she's mastered for more than five decades, using the power of her voice to both entertain and encourage her devoted listeners. Like the greatest music legends, there is truly no limit to the inspiration Sarah Dash brings to every note she sings.



J. DONALD DUMPSON, Ph.D., President and CEO of Diverse Arts Solutions also serves as Minister of Music and Arts at Arch Street Presbyterian Church in downtown Philadelphia, PA. He is also the founding conductor and artistic director of the Philadelphia Heritage Chorale. He was Minister of Music and Arts at Bright Hope Baptist Church from 1985–2010. Committed to education, Dr. Dumpson was the founding conductor and artistic director of the Westminster Choir College Jubilee Singers from 1994–2011. He served as assistant professor of choral music, where he directed the Cheyney University Concert Choir

and was director of the University's Center for Cultural Enrichment and Appreciation from 1988–1993. Dr. Dumpson worked in the School District of Philadelphia, from 1983-1991. During his tenure, he served as a general music teacher at several elementary schools and administrative assistant at the Kenderton Elementary School. He served as director of the Concert Choir at the Philadelphia High School for the Creative and Performing Arts for two years before leaving to pursue his masters in piano pedagogy and to teach college.

Dr. Dumpson has provided choral preparation for the recent premiere of Hannibal Lokumbe's "Crucifixion/ Resurrection: Nine Souls A Traveling", a tribute to the nine people killed at the Emmanuel African American Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. He also, collaborated on the Philadelphia Orchestra's world premiere of "One Land, One River, One People", conducted by Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin. In 2015 Dr. Dumpson curated regional singers for the World Meeting of Families Festival of Families Celebration performance featuring Aretha Franklin, Andrea Bocelli, Juanes, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Philadelphia Heritage Chorale. The chorale also appeared with jazz bassist Christian McBride at the Merriam Theater in "The Movement Revisited" featuring Sonia Sanchez as Rosa Parks and Rev. Dr. Alyn Waller as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. Dumpson has served as the conductor for Opera Philadelphia's development workshop of *We Shall Not Be Moved*, composed by Dr. Daniel Romaine and directed by Bill T.

Jones. Having served as chorus master for Kathleen Battle's stellar concert, The Underground Railroad, Dr. Dumpson has served as chorus master for the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts' world premiere of Hannibal Lokumbe's composition "Can You Hear God Crying," which is available on Naxos ArkivMusic. Dr. Dumpson has also collaborated with Mr. Lokumbe on the premiere of his compositions, "A Shepherd Among Us" and "God, Mississippi and a Man Named Medgar."

Continuing to collaborate on special events nationally, Dr. Dumpson is serving as a consultant to WXPB's development of a national documentary on gospel music and its influence on Rhythm & Blues and Soul music. It will premier in 2019. While under the leadership of the late William H. Gray, III, Dr. Dumpson served as a co-producer representing the UNCF for An Evening of Stars, formally known as the Lou Rawls Parade of Stars, benefiting the United Negro College Fund, Inc. He has worked with and secured internationally-known artists, including, Quincy Jones, Bill Cosby, Oprah Winfrey, Stevie Wonder, Whoopi Goldberg, Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds, Denyce Graves, Nancy Wilson, Macy Gray, Joss Stone, Yolanda Adams, Monique, Tyler Perry, Kirk Franklin, Patti LaBelle, Chaka Khan, Al Jerreau, Peabo Bryson, Take 6, and many more.

Dr. Dumpson has conducted the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO), has prepared the NJSO Community Chorus, and served as music director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Chorus. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in 2001 with the Westminster Choir College Jubilee Singers and the legendary maestro Skitch Henderson performing Porgy and Bess. The New York Times cited composer Hannibal Lokumbe regarding Dr. Dumpson's work: "... this was the best chorus I have ever heard." Dr. Dumpson serves on the board of the Philadelphia Convention and Visitor Bureau (PHLCVB) and is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

ROLLO DILWORTH is Professor of Choral Music Education and Chair of Music Education and Therapy at Temple University's Boyer College of Music in Philadelphia, PA. In addition to teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in choral music education, Dilworth conducts the "Singing Owls" Community Chorus. Dilworth frequently serves as a guest conductor and/or clinician for festival and all-state choirs throughout the United States and abroad. He currently serves as Immediate Past Chair of the Board for Chorus America. Dr. Dilworth is a member of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas where the Very Reverend Dr. Martini Shaw is pastor

THE GOSPEL BLENDERS, a Rasheeba Records recording ensemble, is a Philadelphia-based, smooth-sounding, sharp-dressing singing aggregation. Uniquely gifted, the 8-member group can deliver sounds similar to The Canton Spirituals and take you to the modern-day vibe of The Spinners, all while giving praise to God.

Merging soulful stylings and breath-taking Gospel harmonies.

Vocal quartets are an important part of the history of gospel music. Still relevant today, toe-tapping, foot-stomping church services wouldn't be the same without them. But few men's groups can glide effortlessly from traditional quartet music to contemporary Gospel and do it well. That was until The Gospel Blenders hit the music scene.

Seeking more unity in the world and a musical context to combine soul, jazz, R&B, and traditional and contemporary gospel musics, Rakim E. Harris, Rodney J. Harris, Ronald "Rudy" Harris, Leroy "Curtis" Johnson, Shevinah Johnson, Dorsey Mitchell, Jr., Richard F. Safford, Jr. formed this spectacular male ensemble, The Gospel Blenders.

GOSPEL MUSIC PRESERVATION ALLIANCE, INC (GMPA) was founded in 1989 by Serena Blanco and a group of professional singers, musicians, and music lovers. GMPA's focus is preserving the rich cultural heritage of gospel music and its influence on the music industry past and present. The board of directors are responsible for implementing the vision of the organization.

GMPA is recognized for taking the lead in sponsoring GOSPELAID '94 a benefit concert for those impacted by Aids. A collaboration of Health Partners, Mayor Ed Rendell, and the gospel community came together to speak victory over the Aids epidemic. They understand even today when people come together in love, we can be just like that balm in Gilead.

GMPA and Serena Blanco have been recipients of numerous awards from the City of Philadelphia, the state of Pennsylvania and many civic organizations throughout the tri-state area. Under GMPA's sponsorship was birthed the Philadelphia Fellowship Choir (PFC) and the all-female choir, **InOneVoice** whose focus is supporting issues affecting women.

GMPA has a music cabinet comprised of many outstanding directors, composers, and musicians from the Philadelphia and New Jersey area. The music cabinet consists of Music Coordinator Karen Mercer Hines along with Bethany W. Smith, Willida Luff, Katherine Burton, Minister Alex Ingram, Bill Smith, Rev. Frederick Bowers IV, Gregory Allen, James Early, Robert Ladson, Sha Quan Moore, Elder Willie Phillips, and Marlon Lewis. Their efforts enhance and establishes an indelible mark in the contributions to gospel music, far and near.

GMPA is proud and honored to have the Rev. Dr. Albert Morgan, "*God's Mailman*" pastor of the Union Baptist Church of Bridgeton, NJ as its spiritual advisor. Pastor Morgan is active in the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses, (NCGCC) serving as the interim Chairman of the Board and fifth Vice-President. "*God's Mailman*" is honored and respected worldwide for his love and support of Gospel Music.

The Gospel Music Preservation Alliance, Inc. is a member of The National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses (NCGCC), the oldest gospel music convention founded in 1933 by Professor Thomas A. Dorsey. GMPA joined under the leadership of the late Bishop Kenneth H. Moales, Sr. Bishop Moales is known for creating the "War Cry." Today, GMPA is honored to serve in this Convention under the leadership of Dr. Marabeth Gentry, the first female to lead a gospel music convention.

CALLI GRAVER has created a versatile and steady career as a crossover vocalist. A native of Lancaster Pennsylvania, Calli moved to Philadelphia to pursue her degree from the University of the Arts (BM in vocal performance/MM in jazz studies). Her education has allowed her the opportunity to work in various musical capacities and she seamlessly transitions through genres. Calli's beginnings in theater led her to her interest in music, having performed in numerous productions at the Fulton Opera House including Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Ragtime, and The Secret Garden. Calli has extensive choral experience and currently sings with the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir, Voices of the Philly Pops, and Philadelphia Heritage Chorale. Most recently, she traveled to Cornwall with the choir of First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia where they held a residency at the Truro Cathedral. Calli has been privileged to sing with various symphonies and Pops orchestras around the country. She has performed as a soloist with the Philadelphia Wind Symphony, the Philly Pops, the Philadelphia Chamber Orchestra, and Opera Lancaster.

Calli also works as a background vocalist for a series of themed Pops concerts and has most notably performed with the Ocean City Pops, Harrisburg Symphony, Jacksonville Symphony, Maryland Symphony, Seattle Symphony and the Calgary Philharmonic. Calli's heart is in jazz and is fortunate have a regular trio she sings with. She is finishing her holiday album this year that celebrates the season in swing, based on the success of her annual holiday jazz concert entitled Cheer! She also regularly performs with Philadelphia big bands and lends her voice to other original jazz projects. Last year, Calli and collaborator Nick Lombardelli composed and produced a jazz suite entitled The Divine Lorraine based on the iconic Philadelphia residence. She also had the pleasure of touring a Gershwin Tribute with jazz pianist Peter Nero and sang for Christian McBride's jazz suite The Movement Revisited, sponsored through NPR and performed at the Merriam Theater. Some of the other acclaimed musicians she has sung for include Ben Folds, Aretha Franklin, and Andrea Bocelli. Calli is also a regular on the Philadelphia wedding band scene, collaborates and records for various artists in the city, and teaches voice at the Lumberton School of Music and the Community College of Philadelphia.

She is grateful to her supportive family and is always quick to remember that dreams don't work unless you do!

ANNETTE GUEST-HARDEMAN was raised in Philadelphia and has enjoyed a rich musical career. Growing up in a talented musical family, she loved writing songs and singing with her uncle William Guest, a member of the R&B group Gladys Knight and the Pips. She started her professional singing career as a part of the trio First Choice. Signed to Warner Brothers Records the group went on to record many hits, Dr. Love, Armed & Extremely Dangerous, Let No Man Put Asunder, Smarty Pants and many more. After the group disbanded Annette was a most sought after lead studio session singer, whose voice can be heard on hundreds of albums.

Recorded and toured extensively with recording artists including Patti LaBelle, Anita Baker, Patti Austin, Lou Rawls, Jonathan Butler, Teddy Pendergrass, Stephanie Mills, Miki Howard, Regina Bell, Elton John, Pink, Gorky Park, Cinderella, Grover Washington Jr., Miles Jaye, Nancy Wilson, Grover Washington Jr., Sonny Sitt, and recorded a duet with gospel artist Clarence Fountain of the Blind Boys to name a few.

Launching a songwriting career with her husband Gabriel Hardeman Jr. they scored several chart topping hit singles including "I Feel Good All Over" the Stephanie Mills hit that reached # one on the Billboard R&B charts, Mikki Howard's hit "Love Under New Management", The Last Time and Truly Blessed on Teddy Pendergrass Gold CDs, "JOY" and "Truly Blessed". Annette was a soloist and co-producer on the Grammy and Stella award nominated gospel group Gabriel Hardeman Delegation CD, to The Chief Musician. She continues to write, record, and tour today.

LINWOOD HEATH, born and raised in Philadelphia, experienced his first taste of gospel music in high school when he joined with five classmates and found the Savoy Singers. WDAS Radio personality, Louise Williams, was instrumental in giving them their start and during their six-year history, they made several recordings, introduced gospel music to nightclubs and traveled as far west as Chicago. Appearances included folk festivals, the Apollo Theater with Duke Ellington in the Catskills' Concord Hotel.

Linwood began his radio internship in 1963 working with Louise Williams at WDAS and became friends with Clara Ward, Reverend James Cleveland, the Davis Sisters, the Dixie Hummingbirds, Staple Singers and other great pioneers. In 1970 he joined his present church, New Gethsemane Baptist Church in South Philadelphia, and organized a youth community choir and the Willing Workers, as well as teaching Sunday School.

In 1972, he cohosted Philadelphia's first Gospel Music TV Show, "Deep River," a weekly show featuring local artists. He also produced concerts at various churches and schools. On the radio, he hosted a Sunday show, "Revival," on WXPB for three years until 1982 when he became part of the Gospel Highway on WYIS in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. When the station moved to Norristown, Pennsylvania and became WNAP, Philly's first all-gospel music station, he hosted the morning show. In 1988, station manager, Fred Blain, assigned him to the awesome task of producing "Great Moments in Gospel," a daily show telling the history of gospel music and conducting interviews with various artists. During the spring and summer months, Linwood hosts a Sunday afternoon program, "Precious Memories," featuring music from the 20s through 70s.

In the 1980s Linwood's work with a local concert promoter had him working with the greats including Aretha Franklin, the Spinners, Ray Charles, Nina Simone, B.B. King, and James Brown, to name a few. Recognizing his contributions to the history of gospel music, the Pennsylvania Historical Society presented him with the "Martin Luther King, Jr. Medal of Freedom Award," for "Great Moments in Gospel Music." In 1998, he received the "People's Choice Award" and was inducted into the Philadelphia Gospel Music Hall of Fame. Mr. Linwood Heath is dedicated to preserving the history of gospel music and bringing recognition to Philadelphia as the home of many of Gospel's great artists.

THE HENDERSON SISTERS, Faye, Rosette and Sharon are life-long members of the Church of the Living God, headquartered in Indianapolis, IN. They were saved and filled with the Holy Spirit since early childhood. Raised by their parents to honor and serve the Lord in their living and giving, they have dedicated their lives to the cause. Their grandfather, the late Rev. Charles H. Williams, former pastor of the Friendly Baptist Church would often have them sing on gospel programs at his church when they were very young in age.

Their faithfulness and devotion to God, their Church and their families has caused them to be blessed and used by Him in the ministry as well as in demonstrating their musical gifts. Faye is an Elder & Evangelist, Rosette is Bishop and Pastor of her church, and Sharon is an Elder and First Lady of her husband's church - all are still under the covering of the Church of the Living God. They have been married to their husbands for 48 (Faye), 47 (Rosette), and 46 (Sharon) years - respectively, and have reared their children in the fear of God. He has spared them to be able to enjoy their grandchildren as well.

The Henderson Sisters represent stability and longevity, and have been singing traditional gospel songs in and around the city of Philadelphia for many years. As they sing, they also minister to the low-in-spirit and the brokenhearted. They have also traveled extensively throughout the country and Nassau, Bahamas spreading the gospel of Christ in music ministry. In May of 2018 the Henderson Sisters were inducted into the Philadelphia Area Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

The size of the crowd they minister to or the lack of finances makes no difference in how aggressively or earnestly they project the anointing that God has placed on them. They pride themselves in being able to say that they truly "live the lives they sing about in their songs."

CHARLENE HOLLOWAY, an international recording artist and a native Philadelphian, comes from a family of talented musicians and started her career in the recording studio with The Gabriel Hardeman Delegation. She has collaborated on projects with Regina Belle, Patti Labelle, Patty Austin, Anita Baker, Myles Jaye, Gerald Veasley, Miki Howard, Shenna Easton, Phil Perry, Bunny Sigler, Leon Huff, Gerald Alston, Jeff Majors, Leata Galloway, D'Atra Hicks, Chris Walker, Chantay Savage, Loose Ends, Stephanie Mills and with the late greats Lou Rawls, Phyllis Hyman, Luther Vandross, and, Teddy Pendergrass. She has traveled the world with these great artists and has sung for former President, William Jefferson Clinton.

Charlene's debut CD, HOLLOWAY, "Big, Bad & Beautiful" was released in London, Lagos Nigeria and America. Presently, Charlene is the lead vocalist of Eddie Bruce Music. Gerald Veasley has released a single on Charlene at, fanwavemedia.com, a song entitled "FREE". Charlene also co-writes with Producer/Song Writer/Bass Man Doug Grigsby. To learn more about Charlene, please visit her at <http://www.charleneholloway.com>

PAULA D. HOLLOWAY is a native Philadelphian. As with most singers, she was born and raised singing in the church. Under the training and direction of her talented parents Charles Holloway, Sr. of the Edwin Newberry Singers and Roxie Holloway of Victory Choral Ensemble she learned the skills needed to be a lead singer as well as the subtleties and discipline necessary to become a sought after background vocalist and musician.

Over the past 40+ years she has been blessed to perform, tour and record with such artists as Ms. Anita Baker, Ms. Pattie LaBelle, Phyllis Hyman, Teddy Pendergrass, Lou Rawls, Nancy Wilson, Regina Belle, Miles Jaye, Criss-Cross, Blackeyed Susan, Billy Paul, Stephanie Mills, Cool Mo De, Foreigner, Peabo Bryson, Joe, Tyrese, Phil Perry, Keith Washington, Cherrelle, Melba Moore, Howard Hewett, Gerald Alston of The Manhattans, international artist Gorky Park, and many many other artists.

Paula's career includes theatrical performances such as the lead role of "Dorothy" in Cheney University's production of The Wiz, Freedom Theater's "Black Nativity", and "The Gospel at Colonus". More important than any of the above accomplishments, She Loves the Lord and knows that everything she has achieved or will become is owed to Him. You will always hear her say "To God Be the Glory for the Things He has done."

THE PHILADELPHIA HERITAGE CHORALE, Inc. (2018) formerly known as the Celebration Choir of Philadelphia was founded by Dr. J. Donald Dumpson in 2009. The Chorale's mission is to facilitate access for appreciation, participation, and celebration of the choral arts in Philadelphia, and to bring excellence of presentation to a broad range of choral literature. The Chorale has a special commitment to music borne of the African Diaspora or created by composers of African descent.

The ensemble performed at the 2016 Democratic National Convention's official Welcome Gathering, and at the 2015 World Meeting of Families Festival of Families Celebration performance, which featured Aretha Franklin, Andrea Bocelli, Juanes, and The Philadelphia Orchestra. The chorale appeared with jazz bassist Christian McBride in "Movement Revisited", featuring Sonia Sanchez as Rosa Parks and Rev. Dr. Alyn Waller as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 2014, members of the PHC accompanied Kathleen Battle in a recital entitled "The Underground Railroad". PHC also sang the world premiere of Hannibal Lokumbe's powerful work, "Can You Hear God Crying?" with the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia. The performance was released on Naxos ArkivMusic in 2014.

In March 2019, PHC has the honor of sharing the stage with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and the Morgan State University Choir, under the direction of Dr. Eric Conway, for the premier of Hannibal Lokumbe's newest work "Healing Tones." The Chorale is honored to have been selected as one of the featured choirs at the Chorus America National Conference in June 2019 in Philadelphia, PA. To learn more about the Philadelphia Heritage Chorale, please visit www.DiverseArtsSolutions.com

MATTHEW SHEPPHERD started his musical career performing in community and professional theatres throughout the South Jersey area including roles in: West Side Story (Tony), Les Miserables (Marius), The Mystery Of Edwin Drood (Neville), Beauty & The Beast (Beast), A Grand Night For Singing (Boy), Urinetown (Bobby Strong), South Pacific (Lt. Joseph Cable) and A Christmas Carole (Jacob Marley). Matt still performs with The Shaken Not Stirred Players on occasion in their Broadway review show, Broadway By Request. His career in musicals peaked in 2003 when he was asked to perform in the ensemble of Les Miserables on Broadway for a short run. More recently, Matt has spent the last 5 years singing lead and playing guitar with a local Philadelphia wedding band, The Bachelor Boys Band. He is thrilled to be working with Crossfire Bookings and is very excited to be planting his Gospel Roots here tonight!

BRUCE WARREN, a Philadelphia native, grew up on the classic R&B and soul music sounds of Philly. He is Program Director of WXPB and Executive Producer of the nationally syndicated World Cafe, distributed by National Public Radio. Throughout his 25+ years at WXPB, he's won multiple awards for his programming including multiple Program Director of the Year awards and the prestigious ASCAP Deems Taylor Broadcast Award. A passionate advocate for public media, Warren also teaches at the University of Pennsylvania in the Non-Profit Leadership and Organizational Dynamics Master's Degree programs, of which he is a graduate of.

DYANA WILLIAMS is an entertainment powerhouse. A broadcasting professional for more than four decades, Williams is currently heard weekly on Radio One Philadelphia's Old 100.3 WRNB where she co-hosts Soulful Sunday with Derrick Sampson. In addition, Williams is CEO of Influence, where she has engineered media strategies for a diverse clientele. Past and present clients include, Rihanna, Justin Bieber, T.I., members of the Dave Matthews Band, Janelle Monae, A\$AP Rocky, The Zac Brown Band, three American Idols, one Real Housewife of Atlanta and one Love and Hip Hop Atlanta cast member, among many others. She is a frequent commentator for TV One's landmark NAACP Image Award winning docu-series, *Unsung*. She served as co-executive producer of the Teddy Pendergrass episode. She is a go to commentator on African-American music and culture and has appeared on CNN with Anderson Cooper, PBS, MTV, BET, Good Day Philadelphia, and the Tom Joyner Morning Show. She has also been profiled on NBC, VIBE, Essence, Ebony, Jet, Black Enterprise,

Upscale, The Philadelphia Tribune and The Philadelphia Weekly.

Ms. Williams is also a community activist, print journalist, documentarian, and lecturer at colleges, universities, and corporations across the country, and internationally. In her role as a music advocate, Dyana successfully lobbied Congress, and helped to enact House Concurrent Bill 509 to recognize African-American music as a viable economic and cultural entity, establishing June as Black Music Month. For her activism, she was recognized in the White House by Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. Williams, a native New York, moved to her adopted hometown, Philadelphia over thirty years ago, where she is a Cultural Ambassador, received a Liberty Bell for her service and petitioned former Mayor Michael Nutter to augment the longstanding slogan, The City of Brotherly Love to now include Sisterly Affection. Dyana also received a citation from the Guinness Book of World Records for her role as a co-producer of the World's Largest Soul Train Line. Dyana cherishes her role as mother to three adults, Caliph, Salahdeen & Princess Idia Gamble, and adores her grandson, Luke!

AUSTIN WOODLIN, house band director, is very involved in the music industry as well as the local gospel music community. He currently serves as Minister of Music for Pentecostal Bridegroom Temple, Music Director for Pentecostal Assemblies of the World International Music Ministry, Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church, and Music Director and Producer for national recording artist Zak Williams & 1Akord, among other things. Also skilled in songwriting, his latest work, "God Is", has been blessed to be placed in heavy rotation on gospel radio. In 2011, Austin completed his Bachelor of Arts at the University of Pennsylvania in Music Theory/Composition with a minor in Computer Information Systems. During his time at the University, he also served as Director of the New Spirit of Penn Gospel Choir in addition to working with several other artists.

Over the years, he has also learned to play the drums, Hammond organ, pipe organ, bass guitar, alto and tenor saxophones, electric guitar and trumpet. Austin knows how to play these instruments skillfully, but most importantly, he has learned that these instruments have a purpose from God, and aims to serve Him and fulfill this purpose, praising His name. In 2014, Austin was blessed to marry his beautiful bride, Shante. They now have two children, Eden and Levi. His family inspires him to continue to carry out the calling God has on his life. Whatever he does, He believes that ultimately, all the glory belongs to God.