

## 2017 SOAR Project Proposal

**Project Title:** The Choral Village

**Faculty Member:** Dr. Joy Hirokawa, Assistant Professor, Music Department

**Students:** Joe Hall, '19

**Timeline:** 10 weeks total from May to August, 2017. Please see timeline.

### **Description of the Project:**

This summer's proposal is an extension and continuation of the 2015 SOAR project on the Choral Village. While we were not able to actually institute the Choral Village program ourselves in the summer of 2015 as we had planned, Kurtis Reif and I completed a thorough literature review, compiled an extensive list of community, faith, cultural, and school organizations, traveled to New York City to meet with leaders of three large youth choral programs that have social justice as a main focal point, and attended a workshop with Ysaye Barnwell at the New Jersey American Choral Director's Association (ACDA) Summer Conference, where we learned about communal singing in the African American tradition. We focused on research that has been completed regarding the intersection of choral music and social justice, and examined other music programs that have been successful in creating a positive change in attitudes and values. This research is providing a valuable base on which we will build research into the impact of a summer program on attitudes and perceptions in middle school students, providing a real-world application of research put into action.

The research this summer (2017) will investigate the efficacy and impact of the Choral Village program being run by The Bel Canto Children's Chorus of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem (BCCC) July 24 – 28, 2017. (For more specifics on the program, please see the Addendum.) We are currently determining the most appropriate qualitative research design for our study. Our research question will examine: What are the effects of participation in a week-long, diverse summer music program on attitudes and perceptions of middle school aged youth towards other youth of varying backgrounds? Our research may include interviews, videography, surveys, or if we find a willing participant, a case study. We intend to seek IRB approval as our research involves working with youth in an educational setting.

Joe will assist in documenting, interviewing, and collecting data. Additionally, he will provide genre specific musical leadership, and have opportunities to organize and lead activities. He will be working closely with the guest artists and me.

### **Enumerate the roles and responsibilities of the student(s) and faculty mentor, and include a timetable of expected milestones.**

May 15 – June 2 (40 hours = Week 1)

Joe will complete the first 40 hours of work over three weeks in May, working with me to finalize the research methodology, and will assist with recruiting participants.

June 5 - 9 (40 hours = Week 2)

- Review scholarship on the effect of community building through choral music (found in previous research).
- Identify and review programs, curricula, and team building activities for inclusion in the program and to provide a reference point.
- Prepare and apply for IRB approval.
- Assist in identifying potential student participants
- Assist in identifying appropriate music for the program
- Assist in overall program planning

June 12 - 16 (40 hours = Week 3)

- Research and prepare investigative materials appropriate to the study (surveys, questions, etc.)
- Prepare materials and plan for team building activities based on completed research
- Assist in overall program planning
- Coordinate with Lehigh Valley groups and organizations for special cultural activities to take place during the program week.

June 19 – July 7 (120 hours = Weeks 4 – 5 - 6)

- Learn how to use video recording equipment and video editing software.
- Obtain required permissions from parents if the student is interested in participating in the research. (Participation in research is completely voluntary and not required to participate in the Choral Village program.)
- Continue with program planning.
- Develop final schedule, curricular materials, and organization of the program

July 10 - 28 (80 hours = Weeks 7-8)

- Finalize research materials
- Develop instructional plans and materials
- Coordinate with facilities
- Continue with overall program planning

July 24 - 28 (Week 9)

- The Choral Village Program
- Collect Data

July 31 - August 4 (Week 10)

- Compile all data and organize for final reports, presentations, and video
- Write final report for SOAR
- Complete 5 – 10 minute documentary video of the project
- Prepare presentation for Moravian Scholar's Day

**Describe how the student will be engaged in discipline-appropriate scholarly research.**

Joe's work will be based on the research Kurtis completed in 2015 relative to the positive impact of singing in groups to create community and developing good citizenship among young people, and other programs and activities that provide similar opportunities for youth. He will be directly involved in discussion of the research design and in designing the materials for completing the research. He will work closely with the artistic staff of Choral Village to learn techniques and approaches for community building with young people.

During the week of The Choral Village, Joe will instruct activities and provide leadership for the program. Using techniques consistent with the selected qualitative research design, he will document and ultimately report on the project. Audio/Video documentary is an appropriate choice for research based in the performing arts.

**Describe how the work of the student will contribute to the discipline and opportunities the student will have to share his or her work with other students, faculty, and the community.**

In recent years, there has been increased interest in examining the role of music in breaking down barriers between people, particularly for youth. The conference I just attended March 7 – 11, 2017,

for example, held sessions specific to examining this issue, and in the Fall, the September journal for this organization (*The Choral Journal*, published by the American Choral Directors Association) will be devoted completely to the issue of social justice and choral music. This study will contribute a unique aspect to this research as it applies to school aged students.

Joe will be preparing instructional materials and plans appropriate for middle school aged students. As he is a music education major, this experience applies directly to his area of study and future work as a teacher. In the final week of the project, he will develop a 5 – 8 minute video capturing the spirit of the project that may be posted on Moravian’s website or YouTube. It will also be shared with BCCC. He will apply to present at the Moravian Scholar’s Day. We will apply to present this research at the PMEA (Pennsylvania Music Educators) Conference.

**Addendum:**

The Choral Village program will run Monday – Friday, July 24 – 28, 2017 from 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM, possibly extending on Friday to include a 7:00 PM concluding performance. Guest artists will provide specialized instruction. World Drumming will be led by Philadelphia based world drummer Joe Tayoun and Story-Telling/Theater Games will be led by Bethlehem based teacher and theater artist, Jennie Gilrain. These activities are designed to contribute to learning about others and working together as a team. I will lead choral activities with the assistance of Joe Hall. Recently published research has found that the “physical synchrony” of choral singing “may encourage choral singers to adopt a ‘we perspective’ rather than an egocentric perspective” (Stewart and Lonsdale, 2016). Local musical artists from a variety of ethnic communities in the Lehigh Valley will provide a direct connection to our broader Lehigh Valley community.

## **Student Statement of Purpose**

### **Project Title: The Choral Village-Leadership through Song**

Joseph G. Hall

Major: Music Education

Graduation Date: May 2019

Faculty Member: Dr. Joy Hirokawa, Assistant Professor, Music Department

Length of the Program: Planning and preparation begins May 15; Program runs July 24 - 28, 2017; Data analysis continues following the program.

On-Campus Housing: Yes

I am glad to be working on a SOAR project that addresses how music making can draw people together and inspire people for change. My faculty mentor, Dr. Hirokawa, is very passionate about this topic and is an active researcher in the relationships between singing and impacting issues of social justice. I was first introduced to this area of research when I had taken her “First Year Seminar” titled, “Raise Your Voice” (LINC 101H). We learned about the various ways communal singing has been used as a catalyst for change against social inequity. The biggest takeaway that I got from the class was her incorporation of having everyone in the class sing, and participate in drum circles. Most people in the class were apprehensive to sing, but by the end of the semester, I got to learn about most of my classmates on a personal level which I didn’t expect, and made friendships that exist today. It was then I learned that there is something universal and powerful about music making, particularly when people sing. This experience has prompted me to find out if we can create a program that will unite children together and change their perspectives about one another for the better through the activity of vocal music.

Upon being granted acceptance to this research opportunity, Dr. Hirokawa and I will assess how a week long music program will affect the attitudes and perceptions of the adolescent participants. The program is designed for middle-school level children from various schools, cultural backgrounds, languages, socioeconomic status, and religious faiths in the Lehigh Valley. The participants of the program will be immersed in an environment in which they will learn the importance about learning, experiencing, and appreciating each other’s diversity. I will have an integral role with Dr. Hirokawa in preparing the research design for the camp, collecting data for surveys and interviews, setting up videography for the digital storytelling documentary, as well as assisting rehearsal methods and instrumental accompanying. The nature of our research will require us to consult the Internal Review Board (IRB), as protocol when dealing with human subjects from a social science perspective. This will be to insure that no subject in the study will be harmed in any way and that they consent to being a participant in the study.

At the summation of this “Choral Village” project, we will analyze the outcome of the program through a series of interviews and surveys from the participants. I plan to create a “digital storytelling” production on the process and experience of the camp that may be posted on Moravian College’s website, Youtube, or possibly on a community organization’s website. I believe that creating this media production is also a critical aspect of the research design because it will highlight our inquiry in an attractive fashion and perhaps make it more accessible to a wider audience. This will give greater momentum to the outreach of our message.

### **Rationale:**

It is broadly accepted that music making has a unique way of bringing people together to form a sense of community. If we claim that music making has this effect, we need to develop research that will challenge this premise and provide a basis to what extent music making has an effect on a person and community. Our research will provide information and serve as a model to others who may wish to start or improve a program of their own. We live in a climate right now that is impacted by feelings of disillusionment, apathy, and separation. Today, our society is in need of finding positive ways to bring people together. Our research will challenge the generalization and provide a basis of what draws people together when they make music together. Finally, this research opportunity will help me to develop skills in collaborating, speaking, and critical teaching, a skill that is especially important for a music educator to have in this field. As I plan to pursue my doctorate in music, this SOAR project will expose me to the process of top tier-level research, an experience that is both valuable and preparatory towards my projected graduate studies.

### **Expected Outcomes:**

At the culmination of the program, I will attain teaching, researching, and leadership skills. experience and leadership skills that will be necessary in my field as a music educator. My involvement and experience in this research opportunity is critically valuable to me a I plan pursue my doctorate in music. Furthermore, I plan to teach at the collegiate level, being involved as an researcher, educator, and performer. At this level of music scholarship, it will be necessary for me to demonstrate leadership skills, and reach a wide, diverse audience. I expect that this program’s success, will spark other programs like it to develop.