

Choir History

Twenty-Five Years of Harmony

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir began life in 1982 when the twenty-two founding members of the "Piedmont Boys Choir" first gathered in the living room of Piedmont resident Susan Rahl to sing together. Then and now, the organization's overarching goal was to provide an opportunity for children from all over the East Bay to participate in a quality, nurturing choral program. Within a relatively short period of time, young women joined the mix, followed by older (high school) singers, and the organization expanded steadily under the rubric "Piedmont Boys and Girls Choirs." Summer choir camp and performing tours became part of the experience in 1983 and 1984, respectively, and another significant milestone was reached in 1991, when the Choir founded the Golden Gate International Children's Choral Festival, the only such European-style competitive choral festival held in the US. The program continues to evolve in depth and breadth to serve a growing number of singers and to keep pace with their growing musical skills.

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir has come along way over the last twenty-five years. Where there was once one choir, there are now twelve, and the original group of twenty-two singers has become nearly 350, drawn from 25 area cities and 96 local schools. We are highly respected on the local and regional performing arts scene. On a state level, we have been designated as an "exemplary organization" by the California Arts Council in recognition of the high quality of our accomplishments and our leadership role within the children's arts world. In a larger context, the Choir has represented the Bay Area, the State of California, and even the United States at important civic and cultural events. Our own international choral festival, the GGF, is celebrated for bringing youth choirs from all nations to share their music, dance, costumes, customs and traditions with Bay Area families.

However, the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir's most lasting contribution to the world undoubtedly is the unique body of young musicians who have emerged from our program. Tens of thousands of students, families and audience members have found their way to music through the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir over the last quarter century, and our graduates continue to champion our mission and enrich our communities as performers, music teachers, arts administrators and arts supporters in their adult lives.