

ENCORE EXTRA

September 2025



Celebrating Creativity for Older Adults Since 2007

IN THIS ISSUE



NEW ANNUAL CELEBRATION DATE

Page 2

ENCORE UNIVERSITY

Page 12

ENCORE MASTERCLASSES

Page 15

ENCORE SPOTLIGHT

Page 20

SAVE THE DATE

Page 23

You are Cordially Invited to Our



ANNUAL CELEBRATION BRUNCH

Join Encore Creativity for awards, performances,
and great food alongside your fellow singers as we
celebrate our Encore year and raise support in our
mission!

.....

SATURDAY



FEBRUARY 21 AT 11:30AM

**Please click here for a letter from our
CEO about the change in date for this
event.**

.....

The Mayflower DC

1127 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20036

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

In-Person Tickets: \$75

Livestream Tickets: \$25

Table Tickets: \$850

<https://encorecreativity.org/celebration>

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO



Dear Encore Family,

What an extraordinary way to begin our new season! I am thrilled to share that we have achieved our largest registration in Encore Creativity's history with **2,335 singers** joining us this semester—an incredible **17% growth** from last semester. Behind these remarkable numbers are real stories of new voices discovering the joy of singing for the first time in decades, performers finding fresh inspiration, and communities coming together through the universal language of music. It brings us together.

This record-breaking growth wouldn't be possible without our exceptional team. To our talented conductors who bring passion and expertise to every rehearsal, our dedicated coordinators who ensure every detail runs smoothly, and our entire Encore team who work tirelessly behind the scenes—thank you. Your commitment to excellence and genuine care for all of our singers creates what happens in every rehearsal room across the country.

I invite you to join me on **Thursday, September 25th** for our annual State of Encore presentation, where I'll share comprehensive updates including detailed enrollment numbers, progress on our strategic plan, committee work updates, and our financial health. This annual tradition reflects our commitment to complete transparency with our community, and your questions and feedback help shape our future.

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Our growth and success deserve celebration, so I hope you'll join us for our **Annual Celebration Brunch on Saturday, February 21st at 11:30 AM**, either in person or via livestream. This year's celebration is also crucial to our mission's sustainability as we work toward our **\$750,000 fundraising goal** to ensure we can continue expanding access to creative opportunities. Your support helps us reach more communities and change more lives through the power of music.

Looking ahead, **spring registration opens on November 20th**. Given this semester's unprecedented growth, I encourage early registration for spring. The momentum we're experiencing isn't just about numbers—it's about the profound impact we're having on individuals and communities. Every day, I witness the transformation that happens when creativity meets community, and I'm continually amazed by the resilience, talent, and joy our singers bring to everything we do.

Thank you for being part of this organization. I am grateful for you.

Together, we're proving that the best chapters of our lives can be filled with harmony, growth, and endless possibility.

Joshua Vickery

Chief Executive Officer, Encore Creativity for Older Adults



State of
Encore

State of Encore
September 25 @ 4:30 PM EST

Get a behind-the-scenes look at
Encore's annual report.

[JOIN ZOOM](#)

ENCORE CREATIVITY ROADMAP OF EVENTS

Registrations are open for our upcoming season of camps and trips! Place a deposit to save your spot or register today and put the date on your calendar.

Place \$200 deposits here: [Roadmap of Events 2026](#) for

- Philadelphia Music Camp, June 7-11, 2026
- Nashville ROCKS, August 9-13, 2026
- Chautauqua Music Camp, August 30-September 4, 2026

Please note: All information about the Danube River Cruise, July 16-26, 2026, can be found at this link: [FULL REGISTRATION AND TRIP DETAILS](#). There is no roadmap deposit for this cruise.

If you are ready to register in full, for any of these events, please click on the Registration Link next to the event(s) of your choice.

- Philadelphia Music Camp – June 2026

[REGISTER](#)

- Danube River Cruise – July 2026

[REGISTER](#)

- Nashville ROCKS – August 2026

[REGISTER](#)

- Chautauqua Music Camp – August 2026

[REGISTER](#)

Encore Creativity Launches Exciting Fall Season!

With rehearsals now underway across the country, the energy is high and our singers are ready to make this season one to remember. Whether you're returning or just joining us, thank you for being part of this incredible journey.



Stay tuned for our Fall concert schedule—you won't want to miss the inspiring performances ahead! Looking to sing with us next year? Spring 2026 registration opens in November, so keep an eye out for more details.

Here's to a season filled with harmony, connection, and music that moves us all!

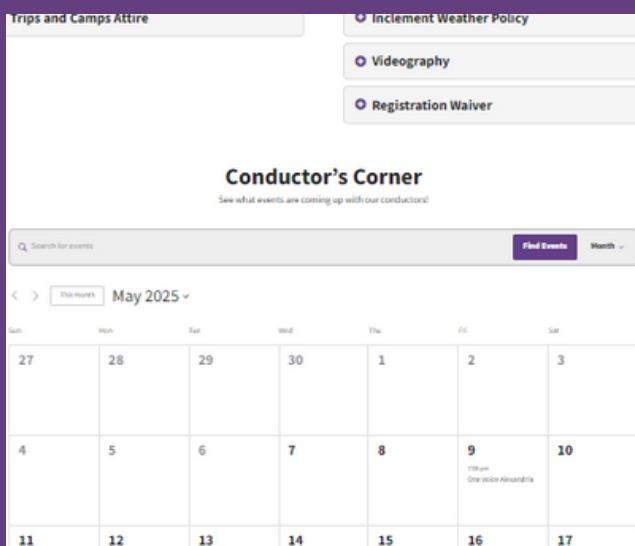
ENCORE EXCHANGE

Where Voices Meet Repertoire

Encore Exchange is a new forum for singers to dive deeper into the music we perform. Each month, we'll gather to talk about our current and upcoming repertoire: why it was chosen, what makes it meaningful or challenging, and how it resonates with us as performers. It's a space for open conversation, reflection, and collaborative feedback across semesters. What pieces have grown on you? What would you love to explore next? Bring your thoughts, your voice, and your curiosity. Join us at the next Encore Exchange — and be part of the conversation behind the music.

- **Wednesday, October 1 | 4:30-5:30 PM EST** *Broadway repertoire with Joey Clark*
- **Monday, November 10 | 4:00-5:00 PM EST** *Chorale Repertoire, Sibelius' Finlandia & Concert Etiquette*

ZOOM LINK



CONDUCTOR'S CORNER

Ever wonder what your Encore conductors are up to outside of rehearsals? Visit the [Singer's Page](#) to explore a calendar of upcoming concerts, performances, and events featuring Encore's talented conductors!

SINGERS PAGE



A NOTE FROM KATHRYN HARSHA

Imagine all the people

This semester, Encore has grown
to over 2,300 singers.

2,300 friends, joining together to sing.

Imagine!

Imagine the first day back at rehearsals together:

Imagine - bright smiles, firm handshakes, and delighted hugs of dear friends returning to rehearsals together.

Imagine - friendly chorus coordinators greeting everyone warmly, helping new members find their sections, and introducing new friends.

Imagine - a chance to share laughter and stories of summer events, travel opportunities, and sunny adventures

Imagine all the people making music as one:

Imagine - breathing together as one before singing the first note

Imagine - the resonance of an entire group singing in harmony

Imagine - music springing to life as the choir grows and learns together

Imagine living (an hour of) your life in peace:

Imagine - a chance to exchange worry and stress for joy and community

Imagine - setting down your phone and grasping your music folder instead

Imagine - being surrounded by friends, joy, and music!

Imagine all the people at Encore - joining together, making new friends, and singing in harmony. Together, we are making it a reality!

-Kathryn Harsha

Artistic Director for Programming



THE ENCORE EFFECT: TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH SONG

ENCORE CREATIVITY'S NEWEST PODCAST

Discover the powerful role of music in life's second act.

The Encore Effect shares inspiring stories from Encore singers and expert insights from the fields of neuroscience, gerontology, and the arts.



Listen and subscribe on
your favorite platform!

ENCORE EFFECT

NEW EPISODES EVERY OTHER TUESDAY

Introducing The Encore Effect — Our New Podcast!

We're excited to launch *The Encore Effect*, Encore Creativity's brand-new podcast celebrating the transformative power of music in life's second act. Hosted by our CEO Joshua Vickery, the podcast features inspiring conversations with Encore singers, thought leaders, and creatives who are redefining what it means to thrive through the arts.

In our first two episodes, we're joined by Encore founder Jeanne Kelly, as well as gerontologist and board member Suzanne LaFollette-Black, who share powerful stories about music, purpose, and community. And this is just the beginning — more exciting interviews are on the way!

Tune in on your favorite podcast platform or stream directly from our website. Stay inspired — because it's never too late to let your voice be heard!

STREAM THE
ENCORE EFFECT

CHAUTAUQUA CAMP 2025



ENCORE UNIVERSITY

Looking for a meaningful, fun, and flexible way to stay creative this fall? **Encore University** is your ticket to exploring the arts, expanding your mind, and connecting with a vibrant online community—all from the comfort of home!

Encore University is an online learning program designed specifically for adults who love the arts and lifelong learning. Classes are engaging, live on Zoom, and tailored for all experience levels. Whether you're new to creative exploration or a seasoned artist, there's something here for you.

What's Included This Fall?

- 10-week live courses in music, movement, dance, and more
- Exciting masterclasses—topics include sight singing, poetry, and more
- Monthly sessions on arts & healthy aging led by top researchers and thought leaders
- All sessions recorded so you can watch at your convenience

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ENCORE UNIVERSITY

How Does Tuition Work?

Thanks to AARP's generous support, Encore University offers a "pay what you will" model—starting at \$0.

Key Dates:

- **Registration opens:** September 4, 2025
- **Classes begin:** Week of October 6, 2025

Whether you're looking to try something new, keep your mind sharp, or just have fun with like-minded learners, Encore University is the perfect creative outlet.

[LEARN MORE](#)

[REGISTER](#)



A NOTE FROM MARY ANN EAST

Dear Singers,

Finally, a bit of fall is in the air! We are several weeks into the semester and I'm so excited to announce that we have **112 singers** in our Sentimental Journey Singers ensembles, and **70 participants** in Melody Makers programs! The growth is wonderful, and we would love to have more friends in our Annapolis group. They meet Thursdays 10-11:30am at the Annapolis Senior Center.

Please reach out if you have any questions:
maryann@encorecreativity.org

Mary Ann East

Artistic Director for Lifelong Learning and Research

SEPTEMBER'S ARTS AND HEALTH RESEARCH MASTERCLASS

Effects of Virtual Singing during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Research Study

with Jonathan Miller and Dr. Sandy Miller, Sounds Good Choir

[Monday, September 29 7:30-9pm EST on Zoom](#)

Choir is Good For You!—Recent Advances in the Science of Choral Singing

Join the co-founders of Sounds Good Choir and the Good Memories Choir (Chicago) for an enlivening talk about the leading edge of our understanding about what choral singing does to promote well-being. Learn about brain science, community-building, and more! The talk will include a report from the “skinny branches” of a study currently in the data-analysis phase. Sounds Good Choir began as an Encore affiliate in 2016 and currently offers 9 choirs in the Chicago area. The organization’s research team includes partners from Northwestern and Rush Medical Centers. The team’s first article, a lookback study at online programming during the Covid lockdown, was published in April 2025 in the Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease.

ZOOM LINK



UPCOMING ARTS AND HEALTH RESEARCH MASTERCLASSES

Virtual Group Singing Programs for Well-Being in Healthy Older Adults – Jonathan Miller and Dr.

Sandy Miller, Sounds Good Choir

September 29, 7:30pm EST on Zoom

How Aging Affects the Voice – Dr. Collin Boothby, Hawaii Pacific University

October 20, 7:30pm EST on Zoom

Singing Through Change – Joanne Bozeman, Cate Frazier-Neely, Nancy Bos, authors

November 17, 7:30pm EST on Zoom

LEARN MORE



ARTISTIC MASTERCLASS

Encore University's October Artistic Masterclass

Poetry of Our Repertoire

Wednesday, October 29th 7:30-9pm ET on Zoom

Join Artistic Director for Programming, Kathryn Harsha and Creative Writer, Grace Sikoski for a discussion about the poetry of our fall 2025 Encore repertoire. We will explore how the meter and composition of poetry is translated into rhythm and pitch of music.

Grace Sikorski (she/her) is a creative writer and college professor with a special interest in historical fiction, magical realism, speculative fiction, and absurdism. She teaches courses in literature, creative writing, research writing, gender and sexuality studies, sociology, art history, and American studies at Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold, MD. She took her BA in English at Queens College, her MA and PhD in English at The Pennsylvania State University, and her MFA in Creative Writing at Lindenwood University.

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ARTISTIC MASTERCLASS

She is currently pursuing an MA in Art History and Visual Culture as well. Her creative work has appeared in LIT, Serpentine, and FemSpec. Her academic work has appeared in The Journal of Creative Writing Studies, Sinister Wisdom, Feminist Teacher, Blossombones, Straight Writ Queer: Non-normative Expressions of Heterosexuality in Literature (McFarland 2006), and Theory and Praxis: Women's and Gender Studies in Community Colleges (Gival Press 2019).



REGISTER



ARTISTIC MASTERCLASSES

Encore University's Artistic Masterclasses

Join Us for Upcoming Sessions!

Poets of our Fall Repertoire

Dr. Grace Sikorski

Date: Wednesday, October 29
at 7:30-9:00pm EST on Zoom

[REGISTER](#)

We Sing of Home

Composer Tim Takach

Date: Wednesday, November 19
at 7:30-9:00pm EST on Zoom

[REGISTER](#)

ENCORE SPOTLIGHT

Kat Gray

Members Services Director

Interview conducted by Howard Gradet

Before becoming Encore's Director of Member Services this year, Kat Gray had been volunteering with Encore for three years while working in Washington, DC. By the time the director's position became available, Kat had already fallen in love with the people and the mission of Encore, and she was thrilled to have the opportunity to really join in and be a part of a great team.



As Director of Member Services, Kat has the unique privilege of being the point of contact for all of Encore's members and potential singers. In this role, every day looks different: At times, it is lots of phone calls from new, excited singers ready to register for next season, or it's working with hotels and tour companies to make sure that singers' needs are being met during camps and trips, or a day can be filled with meetings and administrative work. But whatever it is, each day presents new challenges and rewards!

Kat has been singing in choirs since she was five years old, starting with the little children's choir at church, and moving on to high school competition choir, and then an incredible community choir in Orlando. She's not a great music reader at all (much to the dismay of her childhood piano teacher), but she loves choirs, and can memorize rehearsal tracks with the best of them.

Music has meant many things to Kat over the years, and its meaning has changed in each stage of her life. She remembers being very young—possibly preschool age—and lying on the floor in the living room under her parents' record player, listening to Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops, and every song felt like an adventure.

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As a teenager, music was her safe space, and as an adult, music is her constant companion. When she's not on the phone these days, you can find her enjoying holiday songs by Celtic Woman as she works. She asks not to be judged: for her, it's never too early to start listening to holiday music. [Editor's note: no one in Encore Chorales would judge Kat, when the Chorales begin holiday music in August!]

For Kat, there is nothing more powerful than the sound of voices raised together in unison, creating beauty. Singing with others brings joy, happiness, and peace. Beyond that, the physical and mental benefits for all people, young and not so young, in strengthening the voice and learning challenging music have been proven over and over. And choirs, especially choirs with wonderful singers like Encore members, are such a wonderful place to make new friends and build community!

Kat hopes all new singers will find a home at Encore, a safe place where they feel welcomed and included, a place where they might make a new friend, feel encouraged to try something new, go to a summer camp, or take a master class. For each singer, this will be different, but she hopes that whatever singers connect to at Encore will make them feel a little more complete.

Kat has lived all over the place. As a child of two Navy parents, she started life in Maryland, then it was Hawaii, California and Florida. As an adult she's lived in New Jersey, New York, and most recently, Seattle.

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She loves directing children's musical theatre. In Seattle she worked with Spotlight Repertoire Theatre, and she knows she'll eventually return to working with youth theatre in Maryland. When not working, she loves spending time with friends and family, going on cruises and listening to audio books while she cooks at the end of the day.

Though her degree is actually in Education—Kat was an English teacher for six years—the majority of her adult career has revolved around the arts. She was one of the co-founders of Central Florida Community Arts, and started their School of Performing Arts, as well as their youth musical theatre programs, youth orchestra, and multiple summer camps and outreach programs.

Kat takes most pride in being part of the Encore team. She has worked in many jobs and for many companies over the years, but she can honestly say that the Encore team is the best group of people she has ever worked with.

Kat is excited to be a part of Encore because she knows what an incredible gift this organization is to the people who get to be a part of it. She loves being part of the ADEI committee, working toward making the Encore programs and resources even more accessible to current and future members. Most of all she loves that she has a job that she looks forward to doing every day.

Kat believes in the mission of Encore Creativity, and can't wait to see what happens next!

SAVE THE DATE



State of Encore

September 25 at 4:30 PM EST

Get a behind-the-scenes look at
Encore's annual report.

[JOIN ZOOM](#)



Annual Celebration Brunch

February 21, at 11:30am

at Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC

[EVENT INFO](#)

[DATE CHANGE](#)



Fall Concert Tickets

November 3

Concert tickets available November 3rd!



Encore

Spring Semester

Registration Opens November 20!

SIX SIMPLE WAYS TO SUPPORT ENCORE



Monthly Giving



Employer Match



Community Fund



Gift in Honor



IRA RMD



Stock

SHAPE ENCORE'S FUTURE WITH A LEGACY GIFT

Legacy giving ensures the music continues for decades to come!

Encore's Legacy Circle is the special recognition of those who have designated gifts to Encore via their will, living trust, or another part of their estate plan.

Did you know that you can help someone find joy and community through music? When you support Encore, you do just that. Your gift makes a difference in the lives of Encore singers. Give monthly, quarterly, or through a legacy gift in your estate plan.

Gifts of All Sizes Make a Difference!

[More Information](#)

If you have included Encore in your estate plan, please reach out to joshua@encorecreativity.org for inclusion and recognition in Encore's concert programs!

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Thank You to Our Sponsors and Funders



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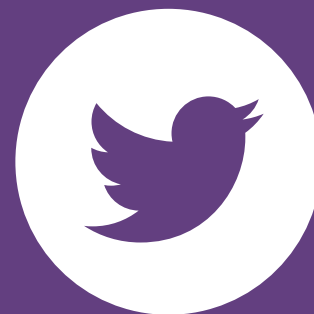
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