ORANGE COUNTY
women's chorus

Eliza Rubenstein ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
23802 Avenida de la Carlota, Laguna Hills, CA 92653
ocwomenschorus.org

About Us

Orange County Women's Chorus

Beyond Twenty-five Years of Excellence!

The Orange County Women's Chorus, under the artistic leadership of Eliza Rubenstein since 2000, has grown from a small group of women brainstorming about singing together to one of the region's leading choruses, performing repertoire from many lands, eras, and genres. Highlights of the chorus's history have included concert tours to Canada, England, Wales, and Croatia; being named a 2014 Outstanding Arts Organization by Arts Orange County; featured performances at the 2004, 2012, and 2020 western region conferences of the American Choral Directors' Association; a 2022 Carnegie Hall debut; and collaborations with ensembles from across the country and around the world.

We're especially proud of our commitment to new music and up-and-coming musicians; we regularly commission new works for women's voices, and our conducting internship program, designed to encourage young women entering the field of choral conducting, has been a model for other choruses around the nation.

Women of Excellence

Chorus members include teachers, professors, attorneys, nurses, executives, retirees, students, artists, activists, mothers and grandmothers.

Our Mission and Values

The Orange County Women's Chorus creates and performs outstanding choral literature, engages and enriches our audiences, and celebrates women in music.

We embrace these values:

- **Excellence:** The Orange County Women's Chorus pursues artistic excellence by recruiting talented and dedicated musicians, preparing and performing choral music with the highest level of artistic integrity, and commissioning new works for women's voices.
- **Community:** The Orange County Women's Chorus fosters a deeply felt sense of community among its members. We support each other, have fun, and work together to achieve artistic excellence. The OCWC strives to extend this sense of community to our audiences, collaborators, and donors.
- **Diversity:** The Orange County Women's Chorus embraces different perspectives and abilities. We are women who come from a variety of backgrounds, life experiences, and professions, ranging in age from young adult to retirees. We are committed to performing music from different cultures and eras, in original languages.
- **Leadership:** The Orange County Women's Chorus is an advocate for women's choral music and for women in music. We commission and perform new work for women's voices and we offer opportunities for women to develop expertise and gain recognition as singers and conductors. Our board is actively engaged in organizational development, and is committed to adopting best practices for nonprofits and lifelong learning.

Questions?

Contact Board Chair, Mary Langsdorf
mary@ocwomenschorus.org

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Eliza Rubenstein, Artistic Director

Eliza Rubenstein studied choral conducting and English at Oberlin College before moving to southern California in 1995 to earn her master's degree in conducting from UC-Irvine. Besides her work with the OCWC, she is the Director of Choral and Vocal Activities, and the former Artistic Director of the Long Beach Chorale and Chamber Orchestra. She also serves on the board of the California Choral Directors' Association.

Eliza is a former animal-shelter administrator and dog trainer, and the co-author of *The Adoption Option: Choosing and Raising the Rescue Dog for You*. In 2006 she presented a seminar entitled "Sit! Stay! Sing!: What Choral Conductors Can Learn from Dog Trainers" at the ACDA's Western regional convention. Her family includes her partner, Julie Fischer, and five dogs. When not making music, Eliza is passionate about photography, grammar, training and showing dogs, the St. Louis Cardinals, and the St. Louis Blues.

Sarah Hughes, Assistant Director

Sarah Hughes, the OCWC's Assistant Director since 2013, is a 2011 graduate of the Conservatory of Music at Chapman University in Orange, CA. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree in music education with an emphasis in voice and completed her Master of Arts degree in teaching at Chapman's College of Educational Studies in 2016. She teaches music to students in middle school in the Fountain Valley School District.

Conducting Internship

One of the OCWC's most exciting programs is its Conducting Internship, an annual opportunity offered to one or more promising young women entering the field of choral conducting. Since conducting continues to be a largely male-dominated field, and since it is traditionally difficult for aspiring conductors to gain experience at their craft, this paid internship is an important and innovative contribution to the musical community, and choruses across the country have used our program as a model for their own internship opportunities.

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Role and responsibilities of the Board—what we do

The Board's major responsibility is to develop the widest possible support and community involvement for the chorus. We are the governing body of the corporation and we are responsible for managing the business and property of the OCWC. As the Board of the OCWC, we:

- Establish our mission and vision
- Ensure that we adhere to the mission
- Maintain the financial solvency of the corporation
- Elect officers
- Appoint the Artistic Director and Chorus Administrator
- Supervise the investment of capital assets
- Give generously
- Raise funds
- Approve annual budget and long-range plans
- Sell tickets
- Attend concerts
- Promote the OCWC to the public
- Demonstrate pride in the OCWC

Expectations of Board Members—what we commit to each other and the OCWC

Meetings: Board members are required to attend a minimum of 75% of our Board meetings. We typically conduct four in-person Board meetings per year plus a strategic planning session. Additional meetings are scheduled when deemed necessary. These are supplemented by conference calls and video conferences as necessary.

Committees and Task Forces: All Board members are expected to serve on one or more of OCWC's governing committees and working task forces. Singers and supporters may serve on task forces also, helping us do what needs to be done. Please carefully consider the skills and abilities you bring to the Board and how you might serve as a chair or member of our committees and task forces.

Contributions: All Board members are expected to support the organization financially. We ask Board members to make gifts that are personally significant to you, and we believe that if you are serving on our Board, we should be one of the top three recipients of your charitable giving. At a minimum, we ask you to match the contributions requested of our singers ($250 annually) and we respectfully suggest a minimum donation or combination of donation and fundraising of $1,000. With grant requests it is important to respond that 100% of the Board contributes to the financial resources of the organization.

Ambassadors: Last, but definitely not least, share your enthusiasm for the OCWC and our mission. Audiences, subscribers, donors and board members are all nurtured through one-on-one relationships. Share your passion!

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Organization—how we get things done

The Orange County Women's Chorus currently has a part-time Chorus Administrator, with the majority of our organizational work done by volunteers. The Board of Directors is in transition, from a hands-on, working singers Board to a community-based Board whose primary responsibilities are governance, audience development, friend-raising and fundraising.

Governance: The governance team identifies and recruits new Board members and develops governing policies and procedures. The chairman of the governance committee is the president of the Board. The governance team includes a minimum of one other Board member and may include other volunteers.

Operations and Volunteer Management: This team is responsible for all aspects of concert production, including facilities contracts, sound engineering, reception hosting, and managing the front-of-house and back-of-house volunteers.

Audience Development: The audience development team issues press releases, develops print and direct mail materials, nurtures long-term relationships with media partners, and maintains the website. The team manages the box office and singer ticket sales, updates the online box office, and manages all email marketing to our patrons. This team conducts audience surveys, promotes the OCWC and evaluates the results of promotional activities, all designed to increase concert attendance and public awareness.

Fundraising: This committee is responsible for developing and implementing a fundraising plan that encompasses everything from the annual donor campaign, online giving, special events, and identifying potential corporate contributors to developing a grant calendar and preparing grant applications.

Artistic Director

Eliza Rubenstein

Assistant Director

Sarah Hughes

Conducting Intern, 2026 - 2027

Hannah Black

Pianist

Janelle Kim

Chorus Administrator

Hillary Pearson

Board of Directors as of July 1, 2026

Mary Langsdorf, Board Chair and Founding President
Katrina Veldkamp, Vice-chair and Legal and Administrative
Marjorie Beale, Governance
Laurel Chowdhury, Audience Development
Janelle Forney, Commissions and Touring
Adriana Gomez, Member at Large
Mary Harmon, CFO
Claire Stoneman, Fundraising and Development
Alec Waters, Operations and Technology
Megan Waters, Community Connections and Operations
Paige Ye, Director at Large