



Alexander High School Choir

Douglasville, Georgia
www.musicofahs.com

About the Director

Sandra Chandler is Director of Choral Activities at Alexander High School, Douglasville, GA and the conductor of *Georgia Canto*, a multigenerational community choir. Sandra has been a choral music educator in the Georgia and Texas public school systems for over thirty years, and is currently responsible for teaching Mastery Choir, Advanced Chorus, multiple beginning choral classes, Show Choir and musical theater productions at Alexander. She is the Douglas County Choral Resource teacher responsible for staff development and mentoring middle and high school choral directors in her county. She is an accomplished conductor, adjudicator and remains active as a performing pianist.

Sandra's choirs have performed at Carnegie Hall and the Cathedral of St. John Divine, New York City, have participated in international concert tours throughout Italy, England and Ireland, and have performed in festivals in Hawaii, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Nashville, Orlando and additional locations. Her choirs and productions have received superior ratings and critical acclaim including nominations in the Shuler Awards. In 2018, she lectured and adjudicated at the "China International Chorus Festival" in Beijing and lectured at the 2019 Xi'an International Choral Festival in Xi'an, China. Sandra was chosen by her peers as "Teacher of the Year" for 2011-2012 and system winner Star Teacher in 2006.

Prior to teaching at Alexander, Sandra taught at schools on all levels in Georgia and Texas. Sandra graduated from Shorter College, Rome, Georgia with a Bachelor degree in Music Education, studied at the State University of West Georgia, and received her Master of Arts Education degree from Central Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI. She is an active participant and holds professional membership in the American Choral Directors Association, the National Association for Music Education, and the Georgia Music Educators Association. Her writing is currently featured in the *Choral Reviews* section of the *Choral Journal*. Sandra resides in Lithia Springs, Georgia with her husband Keith.



About the Accompanist

LeAndra Douds currently lives in Winston, Georgia. She is in 12th grade and attends Alexander High School. She thoroughly enjoys music of all kinds, classical, pop and rock. She plays the piano and harp and is a member of Alexander High School chorus. She has played the piano for eleven years and has played the concert pedal harp for seven years.



LeAndra toured Ireland with the Alexander High School Chorus and was the featured soloist and accompanist. She toured Mexico with the Buckhead Youth Orchestra during June of 2016. She is currently Co-Principal harpist of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra. She also plays for the Atlanta Harp Ensemble which performs two concerts. In

addition, LeAndra performs for weddings, church and other private events.

LeAndra hopes to attend a music conservatory for college to become a concert harpist and also teach music.

About the Accompanist

Wayne Gilreath is an active performer, teacher, and church musician. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance (2005) from the University of West Georgia where he studied with Professor George Mann. His Master of Music degree in Piano Performance (2007) is from the University of Tennessee where his teachers included Dr. David Northington (principal teacher), Dr. Christy Lee (collaborative piano), and Mr. John Brock (organ). Wayne continues his organ studies with Ms. Sarah Hawbecker, organist at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Atlanta.



A member of the Music Teachers' National Association, Wayne recently presented a lecture-recital at the 2015 Georgia Music Teachers' Conference entitled "Listening for the bells: teaching the piano music of Arvo Pärt". In 2014, he was guest artist with the University of West Georgia Wind Ensemble performing Edward Grieg's famous Piano Concerto in A minor. Wayne is also a member of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

About the Alexander Choir

Alexander High School is located just west of Atlanta. The choral department is thriving with six unique choirs that perform often in school, throughout the community, out of state and internationally. In the 2018 – 2019 year they were featured on the stage of Carnegie Hall, lead in a worship service at The Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in NYC, featured choir at Georgia Music Educators Conference, received superior ratings at adjudicated festivals, performed at Oglethorpe University, Truett McConnell University and Berry College, held master classes with Paul Phoenix (formally of The King's Singers), master class with Joseph Lattanzi (opera), multiple performances with Dr. Tim Sharp (ED ACDA) including his "Come Away to the Skies: A High Lonesome Mass", performed at Disney World Disney Springs and were featured in many local concerts and events.



Their repertoire includes Benjamin Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*, Madrigals, Sacred songs including "introitus and Kyrie" from W.A. Mozart Requiem, "Glory Be to God" from Rachmaninov *Vespers*, "Credo" from J.S. Bach *Mass in B Minor*, "Amen" from G.F. Handel *Messiah*, *Come Away to the Skies* "A High Lonesome Mass" by Wes Ramsay and Tim Sharp, Spirituals, and other contemporary composers such as Ēriks Ešenvalds, Jake Runestad, Ola Gjeilo.

The Choir in Action







In the News

AHS on tour in Ireland

Choral students sing across country while on winter break

BY LIZ MARINO
STAFF WRITER

Choral students from Alexander High School experienced the trip of a lifetime during their winter break as they shared their talents while participating in a total cultural immersion during a tour of Ireland.



According to Alexander's choral director, Sandra Chandler, the eight-day tour from Dec. 26 through Jan. 3 included three concerts where they performed a diverse program, which included the music of Tim Sharp, executive director of the American Choral Association.

The tour included a group of 20 students and 13 adults, some coming from different choirs. Also touring with the group was Kevin Hibbard, professor of music and chair and director of choirs at the University of West Georgia.

Internationally known in choral music circles, Sharp, who toured as guest conductor through Ireland with Alexander's choral group, has become a locally-known presence as well for his composition "Come Away to the Skies: A High Lonesome Mass," which he has conducted during the choral group's performances.

SEE TOUR/PAGE A10



Above: Pictured inside St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, Ireland, which was founded in 1191 and is the National Cathedral of the Church of Ireland, are Alexander High School choral students, from left, Colby Davis, Emma Brackett, Emily Waters, LeAndra Douds and Kate Mitcham. Left: LeAndra Douds, a sophomore at Alexander High School and the harpist for the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra, toured with the choir, performing as well as singing, during their trip to Ireland during winter break. She is pictured performing at Christ Church in Dublin.

Photos Submitted

AHS' Chandler embarks on trip to China

Choral director shares expertise at July music festival in Beijing

BY LIZ MARINO
STAFF WRITER

Alexander High School Choral Director Sandra Chandler embarked on a rare opportunity this summer to share her expertise and knowledge globally as a judge and lecturer at the 14th International Chorus Festival and International Federation for Choral Music Conference in Beijing, China from July 19-25.

The festival and conference drew 308 choruses from 59 countries, Chandler said.

Representatives from China reached out to the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM), asking that they send people with

SEE CHINA/PAGE A2

Sandra Chandler, center, choral director at Alexander High School, is pictured with two global musical colleagues, Donka Miteva, a conductor in Berlin, and Rainar Held, a conductor from Switzerland, during an excursion to the Great Wall of China during her participation as a judge and lecturer at the 14th China International Chorus Festival and International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM) conference in Beijing from July 19-25.

Submitted



Congratulations to Sandra Maloney Chandler for being featured as Eric

Whitacre's teacher of the week!!!! 🙌🏻 Way to go!!!



Instagram



WORLD on a STRING

Sometimes, finding a career follows loads of research, determination and soul searching.

Sometimes, it follows a stroke of inspiration.

For LeAndra Douds, it was the latter. At the age of 11, she simply got up one morning and the inspiration was there.

"I just woke up and was like, 'I want to play the harp,'" says Douds. "I don't know where it came from; I just decided I wanted to play."

At first, her parents were understandably skeptical. Of course, they thought, a pre-teen wants to take up some obscure hobby they must have seen on TV or Instagram. Surely it won't last, they thought. But Douds persisted, asking over and over when she could finally take harp lessons. After a full year of asking, they relented.

Today, Douds is an accomplished harp player, securing gigs with the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra, Atlanta Harp Ensemble, Buckhead Youth Orchestra and, recently, playing at a teacher retirement luncheon.

LeAndra Douds has a bright future as a classical harpist

STORY BY HAISTEN WILLIS
PHOTOS BY NADAV SOROKER

September/ October 2018 West Georgia Living 53

CHANGING THE WORLD ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

TEACHER OF THE WEEK



ERICWHITACRE.COM

Repertoire of the Alexander High School Chorus



Alexander Mastery Choir **at Carnegie Hall**

Women's Mastery March 2019

Alexander Mastery at **GMEA Conference**

Recordings of the Alexander Choirs