SANTA FE DESERT CHORALE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JANICE L. MAYER, TO LEAVE AFTER FIVE SUCCESSFUL YEARS OF LEADERSHIP

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Santa Fe, New Mexico, September 27, 2019: Patricia Stanley, President of the Board of Directors of the Santa Fe Desert Chorale (SFDC), one of the nation’s premier professional vocal ensembles, announced today that Executive Director Janice L. Mayer will be leaving her post on January 15, 2020 following five successful years of leadership. In making the announcement, Ms. Stanley said “Janice has been a major force in guiding the Chorale to fulfill its mission to inspire diverse audiences with the beauty and power of great choral music. She has been the facilitator of this vision and has broadened the Chorale’s reach into the Santa Fe community through creative community engagement programming.”

Accepting her resignation, the Board of Directors has created a committee of Board and community members and will launch an executive search shortly. “We are sad and reluctant to have Janice leave, but we are so very grateful for her dedication to the Chorale and her ability to guide us over the next few months through this transition to new leadership.”

In announcing her departure, Janice said “I have dedicated the majority of my professional life to advancing the vocal arts, both as an arts administrator and as a manager of classical vocalists. It has been an honor to lead the Santa Fe Desert Chorale — a treasure in the choral world — through this period of national expansion and increased depth of programming here in New Mexico. I wish the organization much success in the future.”

In August, the Chorale produced its most successful fundraising gala in the organization’s history with net proceeds of more than three times the proceeds from special events prior to 2015. During her time with the Chorale, mainstage ticket revenue increased by 8%, foundation and government grant income increased by 470%, and individual donations (non-Board) more than doubled. In 2019, vocal chamber programs, and the innovative Insights & Sounds series which she curated, introduced new audiences to the organization. In creating the Community Engagement programming, Ms. Mayer launched Santa Fe Sings! an annual workshop for avocational singers, and piloted “Hearts in Harmony,” a weekly choral sing at the Interfaith Community Shelter. “Hearts in Harmony,” which provides arts access to those who would not have an opportunity to participate in music otherwise, is a model of cross-sector funding and it is featured on the new video issued by Pete’s Place.

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Additionally, she oversaw nearly sold-out tour appearances in Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas and Oklahoma City, as well as acclaimed appearances at the American Choral Directors Conferences in Chicago, Illinois and Pasadena, California. Ms. Mayer was the Executive Producer on SFDC’s first commercial recording, *The Road Home*, which launched at No. 3 on the *Billboard Classical* and *Classical Crossover Charts*.

Janice L. Mayer entered the performing arts field as a National Opera Institute Fellow at the New York City Opera under General Director, Beverly Sills. Miss Sills became her life-long mentor. During her distinguished career, Ms. Mayer has held leadership positions with Musica Sacra, The Shubert Organization, The Metropolitan Opera, the Van Cliburn Foundation, and Classical Action: Performing Arts Against AIDS. She was a Vice President at Columbia Artists Management, Inc., and founded and directed Janice Mayer & Associates LLC, an international artist management firm based in New York, for over a decade. Consulting clients have included The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Copyright Society of the United States, The Harlem School of the Arts, and the U.S. State Department’s Cultural Fellows Program, among others. She has served as a panelist and juror for arts service organizations including the National Endowment for the Arts, The Kurt Weill Foundation, and the New Jersey Council on the Arts. Committed to arts education, she taught as adjunct faculty at both New York University and Purchase College, State University of New York. Janice L. Mayer holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in American Studies and History from Connecticut College and a Master of Public Administration (specialization in arts administration) from New York University.

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About the Santa Fe Desert Chorale:

Founded in 1982 by Lawrence “Larry” Bandfield, the Santa Fe Desert Chorale is one of the longest continually performing professional music organizations in New Mexico, as well as one of the most distinguished. In his review of the American Voices program, Scott Cantrell of The Dallas Morning News wrote “The variety certainly displayed the ensemble’s impressive versatility. Habermann consistently got vivid performances, introspective music elegantly colored and shaped, extrovert fare delivered with great pizzazz. Individual singers got lots of solo exposure.”

Now in his eleventh season, Artistic Director Joshua Habermann leads the Chorale in repertoire spanning seven centuries, from early polyphony to contemporary works. The composition of the Chorale is truly national in scope and the ensemble is recognized as one of the finest American chamber choirs. A recent highlight was an invitational appearance at the American Choral Directors Association National Conference, which was later broadcast by Minnesota Public Radio. In the 2017-2018 season, the Chorale toured to Chicago, Dallas, Fort Worth, Los Angeles, and Oklahoma City, and presented regular winter and summer seasons in New Mexico. Now in its 37th year, the Desert Chorale summer festival season is a centerpiece of the cultural life of Santa Fe, and among the nation’s most significant choral events.
The Chorale’s first commercial release, The Road Home, launched at No. 3 on the *Billboard Classical Chart* following a sold-out CD launch program in Santa Fe.

Throughout its history, the Chorale has maintained a commitment to give voice to music from Hispanic and Native American communities. Dedicated to advancing the composers of our time, the Chorale has commissioned 23 works by 19 composers; three-quarters of the composers commissioned have been American. In addition, another seven works have been given their world or American premieres by the Santa Fe Desert Chorale. The ensemble performs at historical sites in Santa Fe such as the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi and Loretto Chapel, as well as other venues throughout the Southwest.

The Desert Chorale prides itself on its strong relationships within the community of Northern New Mexico, and enjoys collaborations with the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum, Museum of International Folk Art, Museum of Spanish Colonial Art, New Mexico History Museum, Performance Santa Fe, Santa Fe Botanical Garden, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Santa Fe Pro Musica, Santa Fe Opera, and Santa Fe Symphony Orchestra & Chorus, among others.

Community Engagement programming partners the Chorale with other musical, artistic, social services, and educational organizations in Santa Fe and on tour. Other important goals include fostering the next generation of singers and arts administrators.

For more information, please visit desertchorale.org