

Chorus America

STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2023 – 2025





Chorus America's new Strategic Plan took shape during wave after wave of challenges to the choral field and to society: the pandemic's existential threat to singing together, a momentous re-examination of racism, and a politically polarized United States and world. Through it all, our need for singing together to build understanding and hope has never been more apparent, and choruses' innovation and resilience point to a bright future. Our new Strategic Plan builds on lessons learned about remaining flexible in the face of rapid change and ensuring the strength and relevance of the choral field.

This new plan deepens our commitment to meaningful, measurable action steps that ensure representation of and service to the vibrant diversity of the choral field, especially to those marginalized because of race and ethnicity. It is a living document, which will be reviewed often to keep us accountable to our commitments and goals in a fast-moving world. See our complete Introduction ([linked in full here](#)) for additional context on the positioning and intent of this work.

We believe passionately in the transformative power of listening, learning, and singing together. Chorus America members, and society at large, are calling us to play our part in leading this transformation. Our goal in creating the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan is to answer that call and rise to this moment.

“Chorus America’s new Strategic Plan is tightly focused in order to make progress in a rapidly evolving environment. We are committed to this being a living plan, reviewed regularly to guide our priorities and with the flexibility to revise language or work goals as necessary to remain true to our core values and advance our mission.”

–Catherine Dehoney, president and CEO, Chorus America

*The Los Angeles Master Chorale’s Big Sing during Chorus America’s 2017 Conference.
Photo credit: Jamie Pham*





Guiding Principles

- **SINGING TOGETHER:** We value singing and believe in the potential of singing together—and the love of singing—to build bridges of understanding and empathy.
- **COLLECTIVE ACTION:** We value collaboration and belonging; we welcome the full diversity of humankind in our work as together we address issues affecting our field; our goal is to empower and equip leaders of all types of choruses.
- **SERVICE AND LEARNING IN COMMUNITY:** We value service to our members and the larger choral field, which is informed by continual learning and cross-cultural exchange.
- **TRANSPARENCY AND MODELING SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES:** We believe in modeling successful organizational practices, including the thoughtful stewardship of our financial and human resources, and being transparent about how failures and successes have informed our learning/development as an organization.

“Chorus America is a vitally important resource for the choral ecosystem. This plan shows Chorus America leading by example and modeling a strategy that lifts up the full multiplicity of singing voices in our world.”

*—Grant Gershon, Kiki and David Gindler artistic director,
Los Angeles Master Chorale*

Photo courtesy of the Los Angeles Master Chorale



Vision

Chorus America envisions a vibrant society in which diverse singing communities affirm and share the full range and depth of our humanity.

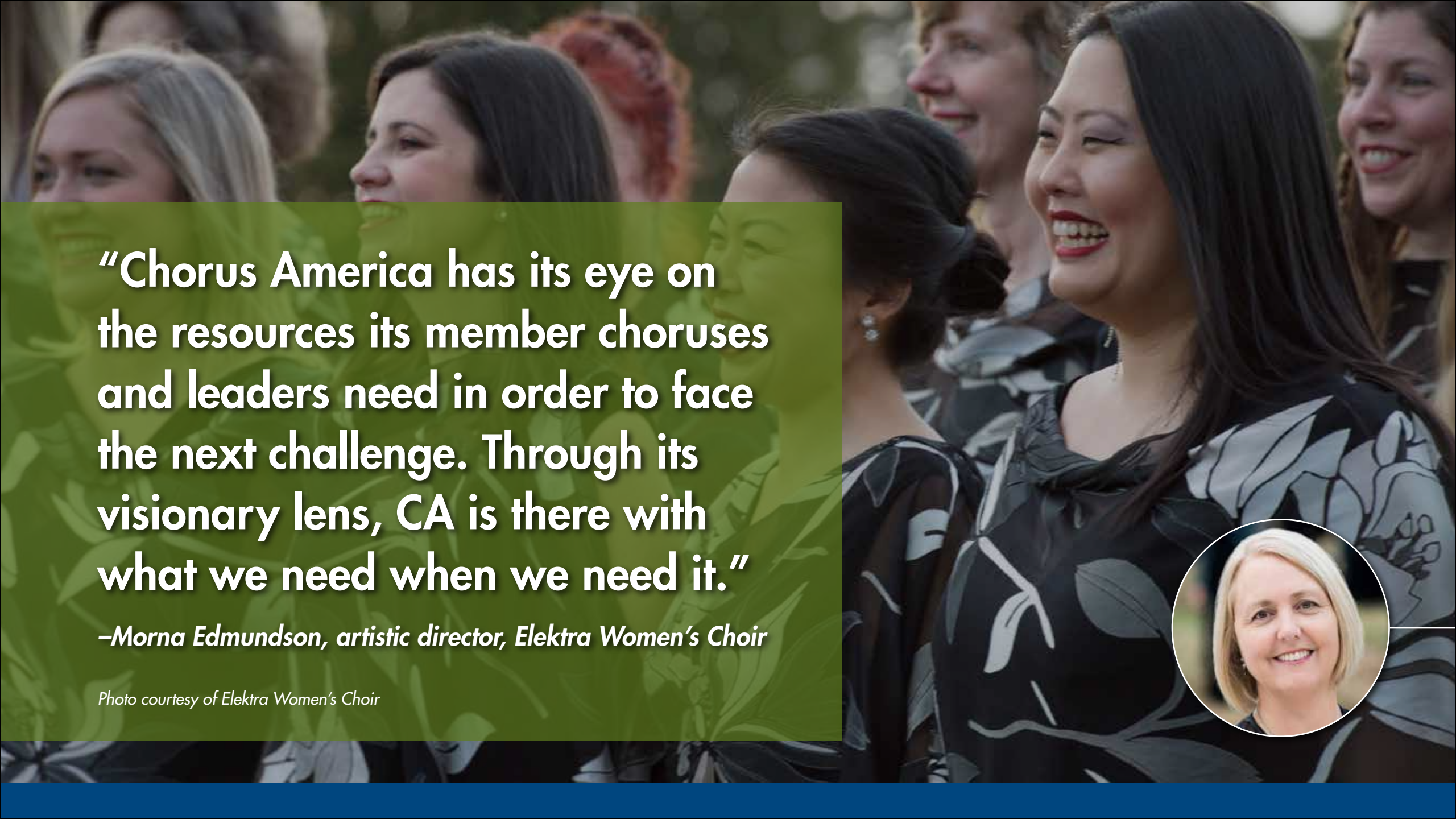
Mission

Chorus America strengthens singing communities with the advocacy, connections, and resources they need to be a vital part of society.



*Photo courtesy of Seattle Women's Chorus
© Conrado Tapado*





“Chorus America has its eye on the resources its member choruses and leaders need in order to face the next challenge. Through its visionary lens, CA is there with what we need when we need it.”

—Morna Edmundson, artistic director, Elektra Women’s Choir

Photo courtesy of Elektra Women’s Choir





Strategic Framework

Three high-level Strategic Objectives and their associated Goals will form the framework of the staff and Board's work during FY 2023 – 2025. Our Strategic Framework ([linked in full here](#)) provides the background and intent behind each Strategic Objective.

The Strategic Framework prioritizes these key areas of development:

- Providing direct service to our community
- Ensuring the future strength and relevance of the choral field
- Investing in our organizational capacity

Each objective is grounded in our commitment to centering ADEI and advancing a culture of belonging in all that we do.

“Chorus America has been very instrumental in my life since becoming the executive director of the Brazeal Dennard Chorale. When I struggle with situations that arise, I look to their resources. The Online Community gives me the opportunity to ask any questions regarding anything choral and get answers.”

—Yvonne Turner, executive director, Brazeal Dennard Chorale

Image courtesy of the Brazeal Dennard Chorale.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1

In partnership with and centering the voices of individuals and communities that have been marginalized because of race and ethnicity, Chorus America will use quantitative and qualitative data-informed strategies to become more measurably inclusive, accessible, and equitable.

FY23 – FY25 Goals:

- Determine primary needs, interests, and potential service areas for racially diverse communities not previously served by Chorus America
- Engage more racially diverse voices in the work of Chorus America
- Share learnings and advocate with choruses to help them make ADEI a central component of their post-pandemic recovery strategy and chart their way into a new level of audience engagement and reach
- Build upon Chorus America's ADEI-centered Music Education Partnership Grants Program

“The future of our field lies in embracing the many ways we sing together to express our common humanity. By centering access, diversity, equity, and inclusion in our work and supporting the emerging leaders who will build the path forward, we ensure our field’s continued relevance.”

**–Anton Armstrong, Tosdal Professor of Music,
St. Olaf College and board chair, Chorus America**

*Stanford Thompson’s plenary at Chorus America’s 2019 Conference in Philadelphia.
Photo credit: MG Pictures*



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2

Through inclusive strategies and exchanges of ideas, Chorus America will nurture the skills and amplify the perspectives of emerging artistic and administrative choral leaders who will shape the future of our field.

FY23 – FY25 Goals:

- Using the proven practice of learning within affinity groups, develop a new Choral Executive Leadership Academy to create an executive pathway in the choral field and foster a sense of belonging for those who have been marginalized because of race and ethnicity
- Increase access to foundational chorus management training by re-developing the Online Management Institute into an asynchronous program
- Continue refining the Choral-Orchestral Conducting Academy to be more equitable and inclusive of those who have been marginalized in choral conducting, especially those who identify as women and those who have been marginalized because of race and ethnicity
- Create robust online peer learning communities for students and early career professionals through the Chorus America Online Community Platform

“Chorus America’s work is targeted to the needs of our choruses, especially small community ensembles that need all the resources they can get to ensure stability and success for their singers, patrons, and community.”

*–Mitch Menchaca, executive director,
Phoenix Office of Arts & Culture*

Photo courtesy of Phoenix Boys Choir

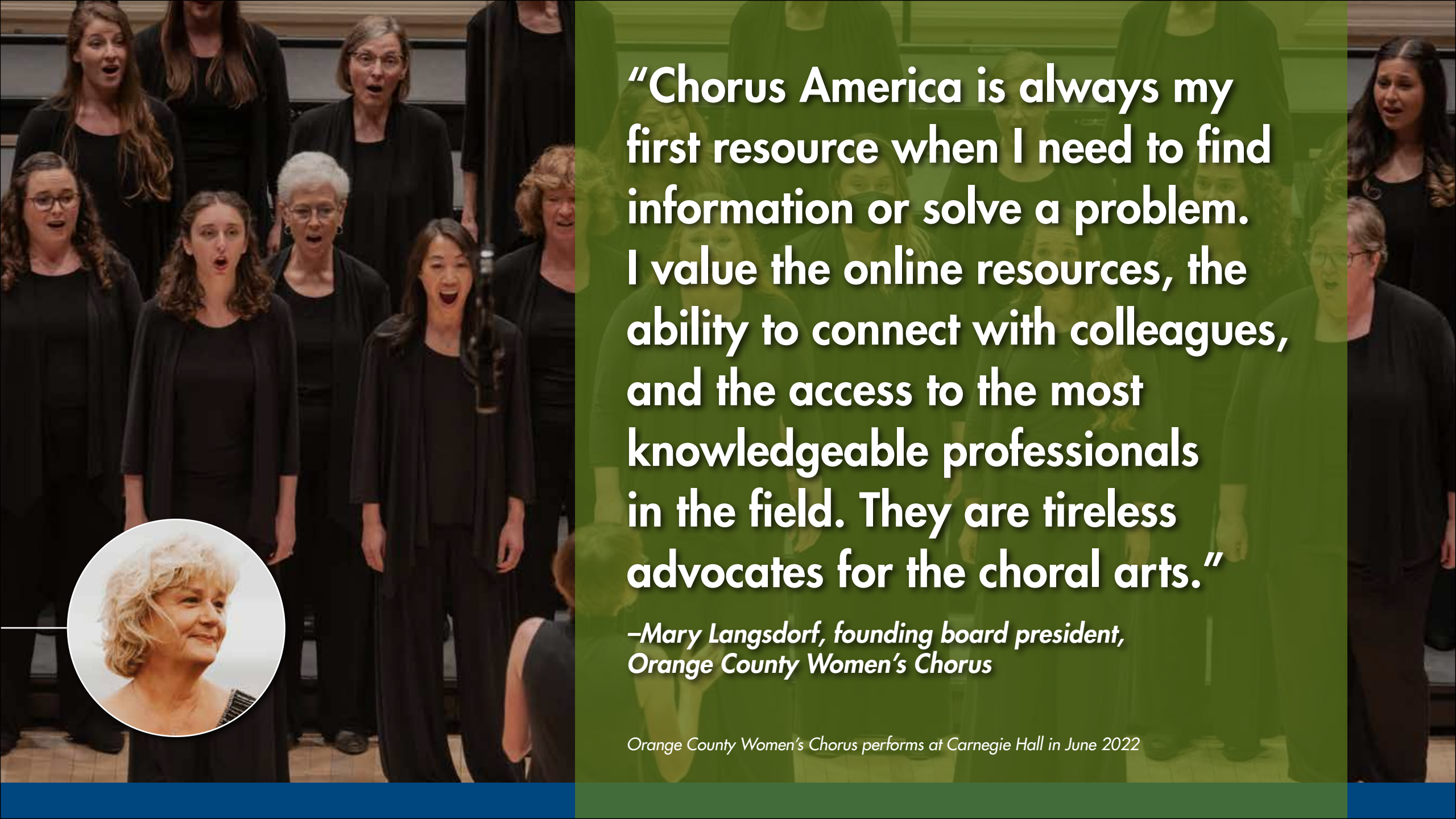


STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3

Sustain and build Chorus America's human, financial, and operational resources, with a focus on building revenue streams and updating digital infrastructure to increase efficiency and better support online services and operations, while retaining and expanding our staff.

FY23 – FY25 Goals:

- Infuse ADEI principles in all areas of Chorus America's operations
- Determine Chorus America's appropriate and attainable financial model in terms of earned/contributed revenue balance, reflective of the 3–5 year projected operating environment
- Through new funding partnerships, continue and expand Chorus America's regranting program as an ongoing service area
- Explore new international partnerships and/or membership options—especially with Canada—where Chorus America services can be additive
- Implement new Association Management Software that improves constituents' online experience, increases staff efficiency, and reduces the use of standalone software solutions

The background of the slide features a photograph of the Orange County Women's Chorus performing. The women are dressed in black and are singing. In the bottom left corner, there is a circular inset portrait of Mary Langsdorf, a woman with short, curly blonde hair, smiling.

“Chorus America is always my first resource when I need to find information or solve a problem. I value the online resources, the ability to connect with colleagues, and the access to the most knowledgeable professionals in the field. They are tireless advocates for the choral arts.”

*—Mary Langsdorf, founding board president,
Orange County Women's Chorus*

Orange County Women's Chorus performs at Carnegie Hall in June 2022