



## State High School Choral Performance Assessment

Thursday, April 18, 2024 – Murfreesboro

Friday, April 19, 2023 – Knoxville

### ADJUDICATOR BIOGRAPHIES



Dr. Elizabeth (Libby) Hearn is Assistant Professor of Choral Music Education at the University of Mississippi where she conducts Women's Glee & University Chorus. She also teaches graduate & undergraduate courses in choral music education, conducting, & qualitative research. Additionally, Dr. Hearn serves the MidSouth Music Organization as conductor of the Mississippi River Chorale, an adult community choir.

Prior to joining the faculty at Ole Miss, Dr. Hearn received a Ph.D. in music education from the University of Alabama, where she served as assistant conductor of the UA Women's Chorus and taught courses in music education. She previously held the position of Assistant Professor of Music and director of Choral Activities at Marian University in Indianapolis. Her

career in secondary education began in Alabama, where she served as the choral teacher at Hueytown High School.

In addition to teaching & conducting, Dr. Hearn has presented her research in published journals and at international, national, regional, and state conferences. Her research interests include treble/SA choirs, job mobility in music education, assessment, and ACDA history. She is the current president-elect for the Mississippi American Choral Directors Association.



**A. Jan Taylor**, educator, pianist, singer, and choral conductor is a native of Houston, Texas. Dr. Taylor received the Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Houston, the Master of Arts degree from Prairie View A&M University, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the University of Houston. She served as Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Prairie View A&M University from 1996 until her retirement in 2022.

As an educator, Dr. Taylor has taught general music, piano, and trained choirs in elementary, middle, and high schools in the Houston Independent School District. She has served as adjudicator and choral clinician for numerous choral competitions, festivals, and regional choirs throughout the United States. Taylor frequently lectures on the performance practices and preservation of the Negro Spiritual.

Dr. Taylor has traveled throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia as a singer and conductor, is former Assistant conductor of the Houston Symphony Chorus, serving under Charles Hausmann, and has prepared choruses and collaborated with renowned conductors and composers. For the Houston Ebony Opera Guild, she has coached and accompanied singers, and

has conducted the Guild' Chorus in concerts of spirituals, African American choral art music, and operatic works. Dr. Taylor has conducted the "105 Voices of History" HBCU National Choir in performances at the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville, the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, and in Memphis for the performance on the nationally televised MLK50 Commemoration event presented by the National Civil Rights Museum.

Under Taylor's direction, the Prairie View A&M University Concert Chorale and PV Chamber Singers have performed throughout the United States and abroad, including performances with the Houston Symphony Orchestra, international music festivals in Poland, Germany, and in South America. Taylor holds memberships in the Texas Music Educators Association, American Choral Directors Association, Texas Choral Directors Association, and Sigma Alpha Iota Music Fraternity or Women.



**Christopher M. Walters** is Director of Choral Music at The Westminster Schools of Atlanta and leads an active choral program in grades 3-12. Dr. Walters conducts the Upper School Chorale and the Ensemble (a select chamber chorus) and advises two student-led "a cappella" groups. Choral Music at Westminster features two annual choral-orchestral masterwork concerts as well as an international performance tour every spring break. He also serves as Organist/Choirmaster at St. Catherine's Episcopal Church in Marietta.

Dr. Walters' career spans positions in public and private secondary schools, university teaching and conducting, as well as work with community and professional ensembles. He has performed and conducted at state,

regional, and national ACDA and NAFME conventions, and at prominent venues across the U.S. and Europe. His research is in the intersection of rehearsal technique and “flow theory” and his scholarship is published in *The Choral Journal* and *The Cambridge Companion to Choral Music*. He holds degrees in music education and sacred music from Vanderbilt University and Emory University, and completed the D.M.A. in choral conducting from Boston University in 2014. Dr. Walters was awarded the Schoen Faculty Excellence award by the Westminster Schools in 2021.