

# Sea Change Chorale of Portland, Maine

## Statement on Social Justice Partnerships June 2017

### Mission of Sea Change Chorale

The mission of the Sea Change Chorale of Portland, Maine is to promote social justice through song. We are dedicated to musical excellence and to creating an experience that inspires, heals, offers visibility, and promotes a sense of community for our members and our audience. We come from a range of spiritual traditions, political values, life experiences and musical abilities. *Our unity comes from a deep and abiding love of song that honors the enduring spirit of all people and from a commitment to helping others.*

### Social Justice Partnership

One of our primary activities is our social justice partnership with a local organization, which culminates in a spring concert to raise funds and awareness for that organization. For an entire concert season (one year), the Sea Change Chorale partners with an organization that works on issues of social justice in Maine. While our primary goal is to raise awareness and funds for our partner organization at the annual spring concert, we also try to support their mission with service in other ways:

- As a choir, we may participate in our partner's events by singing, tabling, attending, or volunteering, as determined by our Board and Artistic Director.
- As individuals, we may volunteer to support our partner in their program activities, such as teaching English, leading groups, helping out in their office, shuttling members to events, etc.
- As individuals, we may also provide strategic help with operations, logistics, communications, or other areas, if our partner requests this type of assistance.

Volunteering time with our partners is encouraged, but not required, for choir members, and participation is dependent on our availability and interest. The Partnership Committee will work with the partner to announce volunteer opportunities to the choir as they arise.

Sea Change Chorale also encourages our partner to participate in our annual spring concert, in joint artistic collaboration. All members of our partner organization are invited to sing with us, either for the full concert, or for just one or two songs. The nature of the songs and performance will be determined in a conversation between our partner and our Artistic Director, and may require advance rehearsals.

However, singing with us is not the only type of participation possible. Our partner may decide that poetry, spoken word, theatre, public speaking, art and design, and orchestral or band instruments are a better fit with their organization. We believe that all types of artistic performance can serve as a means to build community and promote justice, and we encourage creativity in this respect.

Because we believe that our impact will be more substantial for new and less established organizations, we intend to seek out partnerships with smaller local organizations. But we also believe that inviting larger umbrella organizations to participate and support our concert will bring much-needed visibility to smaller organizations.

Once the concert season is finished, our formal partnership will end. But we believe that building community takes place over time and in moments of need, so we hope to participate in our former partners' events. This will be determined in conversation with our Board and Artistic Director, and will be based on the interest and availability of the choir.

### **Partner Selection Process**

The expected timeline for selecting a social justice partner begins after our spring concert in late spring and should be concluded by September.

- May: Board chooses a theme/cause after the spring concert.
- May/June: Call for nominees from Chorale for social justice partner organization
- July: Scoping interviews by Partnership Committee with potential partner organizations
- August: Selection of partner organization (either by Board or by Chorale vote)
- Sept-Dec: Meetings with partner organization to determine nature of engagement

The Board will formally announce the theme/causes (immigration, anti-racism, environment, etc) to the choir in May. Choir members will be provided with a nominee form to complete and submit to the Partnership Committee, which must include the nomination of a local organization that operates in the area decided for that concert season.

The Partnership Committee will draw up a shortlist of nominees and contact them to determine their interest and availability for the social justice partnership. In August, the organization will be selected and meetings will begin with the partner, Artistic Director, and Partnership Committee to decide the nature of our engagement during the concert season.