



2013
CHORUS OPERATIONS SURVEY
REPORT

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Chorus America 2013 Chorus Operations Survey Report

Introduction

Chorus America continues its long-running service to the choral field with the *2013 Chorus Operations Survey Report*, with recent data showing operational and financial trends in participating chorus organizations. Chorus leaders need this information to stay on top of important changes in choral music operation, and to help them build the overall capacity of their own choruses. The report provides data and analysis to help illustrate how the choral field operates as a whole, and also within particular types of choruses.

The 2013 report describes activity during the 2011/2012 season, following several years of economic downturn. In general, this year's report shows respondents to the Choral Operations Survey to be in improved condition over last year's respondents. In other areas of the arts, 2010/11 and 2011/12 has been a time of stabilization, but not retrenchment. Choruses are adapting, becoming more adept, and doing more with less. Resilient and creative chorus organizations have passed the hard tests, but many others may yet be vulnerable. This report shows that range of success and struggle.

The data for this report came via an online survey that was made available to choruses in the spring of 2013. In total, 208 chorus organizations responded with usable survey data – 31 percent more respondents than the previous year's 159. This report is only possible through the work done by staff and volunteers of member choruses who provided the valuable data contained herein. We gratefully acknowledge the many individuals who compiled and submitted the data and the choruses that make participating a priority.

All in all, this year's *Chorus Operations Survey Report* offers more than 40 different analyses. The report offers five years of trend data on a number of long-running analyses, and adds another year's data to a series of questions begun in recent years track programming, education and community engagement expenditures, planned giving, children/youth chorus governance practice, and sources of contributed income.

The Survey Population

The report categorizes the 208 responding choruses in two ways: by chorus type, and by overall budget. Chorus America's members are organized into four main constituency types of which 5 percent are volunteer choruses, 20 percent are children/youth choruses, 13 percent are professional choruses and 7 percent are symphony choruses.¹ This year's *Chorus Operations*

¹ "Symphony chorus" refers to in-house choruses for orchestras (like the Chicago Symphony Chorus) as well as choruses that self-designate as symphonic because of their repertoire and frequency of performance with orchestras.

Survey Report draws data from proportionally more professional choruses and a smaller share of volunteer choruses. Still, volunteer choruses are more than half of all respondents, and the overall distribution constitutes a reasonable representation of Chorus America’s membership.

Responding choruses are also classified by budget ranges, determined by their total expenses, as shown in Table A. Budgets of responding choruses range from under \$1,000 to \$4.2 million, with more than 69 percent of responses from choruses with budgets over \$50,000. Thirty two percent (66) of respondents did not provide financial information, so financial analyses use data from 142 responding choruses. Figure A shows the numbers of choruses in each budget group and chorus type. [Table A]

A. Survey Population			Budget Size	Number	Share of Respondents
Type of Chorus	Number	Share of Respondents	\$1 million and over	17	8%
			\$500,000 - \$999,999	8	4%
			\$250,000 - \$499,999	19	9%
			\$150,000 - \$249,999	22	11%
			\$100,000 - \$149,999	14	7%
			\$50,000 - \$99,999	19	9%
Professional	42	20%	\$25,000 - \$49,999	23	11%
Symphonic	11	5%	Under \$25,000	22	11%
Volunteer	119	57%	Budget not reported	64	31%
Children/Youth	36	17%			
Total Choruses	208	100%			

As in past years, the fact that there are small numbers of responses (with no choruses in some combinations) means that readers should be cautious about extrapolating from these results to wide-ranging conclusions about Chorus America’s membership or the choral field. Outliers and response biases in the data can affect the link between these results and what the typical chorus is experiencing. In some cases, group averages can be pulled some distance up or down by a single outlier. There is, especially, a self-selection bias: the report is based only on choruses who choose to respond to the online survey.

These inherent limitations are not new, and do not appear to have more impact on this report than on earlier reports. The general findings are consistent with what members tell us anecdotally. Trend tables show how 2011/12 data compare to as far back as 2005/06.

Key Findings for the 2011/12 Performing and Fiscal Years

- The median chorus offers 12 **programs** and 13 **performances**.
- Overall, most choruses perform a mix of **concert programs**, of which 54 percent are self-produced, with the balance presented by others.
- Median paid **audiences** for the 2011/12 season were 2,100, and median total audiences were 2,400 (both higher than the last year).
- Almost all (88 percent) respondents have **education and community engagement activities**, which account for about six percent of their overall program costs.
- On average, choruses have 114 **singers**; the median chorus has 66 singers.
- Most choruses combine full- and part-time **staff**; the median chorus has seven paid staff, much more than in previous years.
- The **boards** of responding choruses range in size from four to 71 and boards meet eight to nine times a year on average.
- Sixty-five percent of board members of responding choruses are also chorus singers.
- In 59 percent of choruses, board members are asked to make financial contributions.
- Board members contribute 4.3 percent of the total expenditures of the median chorus.
- The average responding chorus spent \$7.79 on **marketing** for each ticket sold, while the median chorus spent \$5.56.
- On average, responding choruses spend \$0.18 to raise one dollar; the median chorus spends \$0.13.
- The median responding chorus has total **expenses** of \$132,669.
- The median responding chorus had total **revenue** of \$136,268.
- Both revenue and expense are down from the 2010/11 *Report*; median total revenue a year earlier was \$156,000
- Median **net income** of \$708 is about 2.2 percent of total revenue, about the same as the prior year; overall, 62 percent of responding choruses have a positive net income.
- Eighty percent of respondents have either a cash **reserve or endowment**.
- The median endowment is \$127,500 and the median cash reserve is \$22,000

Common Chorus Attributes

Many tables in this report provide details on individual indicators of chorus activity. This section is a top-level view of important financial and operational issues across all types and budget ranges. This makes multiple comparisons possible at a glance in Tables B and C:

B. Common Chorus Attributes by Chorus Type					
Group Average	Professional	Symphony	Volunteer	Children/Youth	All Choruses
Year Founded	1972	1946	1978	1989	1977
Performing Members	64	141	81	230	106
Total Paid Attendance	6,162	4,252	3,692	4,911	4,394
Concert Programs	17	11	8	19	12
Maximum Ticket Prices	\$47.77	\$57.25	\$29.73	\$24.90	\$33.47
Minimum Ticket Prices	\$12.67	\$12.00	\$11.07	\$9.04	\$11.07
Earned Share of Total Income	37%	45%	43%	57%	44%
Program Share of Total Expense	59%	68%	63%	62%	62%
Development Share of Total Expense	14%	7%	9%	4%	9%
Marketing Share of Total Expense	7%	5%	8%	7%	8%
Administrative Share of Total Expense	18%	19%	17%	24%	19%
Other Share of Total Expense	15%	5%	15%	8%	14%
Net Income Share of Total Income	3.7%	3.8%	1.7%	1.5%	2.2%
Full-time Staff	6.9	8.8	8.6	8.4	8.3
Part-Time Staff	4.9	2.8	2.4	3.6	3.5

C. Common Chorus Attributes by Budget Size									
Group Average	\$1 million and over	\$500,000 - \$999,999	\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$150,000 - \$249,000	\$100,000 - \$149,000	\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$25,000 - \$49,999	under \$25,000	Budget not reported
Year Founded	1955	1968	1967	1976	1970	1986	1985	1994	1977
Performing Members	270	146	149	105	83	61	53	32	112
Total Paid Attendance	13,971	5,146	7,638	3,298	1,689	1,328	2,616	972	3,445
Concert Programs	34	15	14	10	8	6	6	6	8
Maximum Ticket Prices	\$72.88	\$67.13	\$37.21	\$33.77	\$25.69	\$23.47	\$23.14	\$15.14	\$25.56
Minimum Ticket Prices	\$14.18	\$14.25	\$12.17	\$9.81	\$10.15	\$11.00	\$9.43	\$10.69	\$10.39
Earned Share of Total Income	42%	40%	53%	40%	45%	41%	46%	44%	
Program Share of Total Expense	65%	58%	66%	50%	62%	56%	73%	64%	
Development Share of Total Expense	7%	11%	6%	9%	7%	10%	9%	16%	
Marketing Share of Total Expense	10%	7%	5%	9%	7%	8%	4%	12%	
Administrative Share of Total Expense	16%	26%	22%	21%	16%	12%	12%	19%	
Other Share of Total Expense	3%	9%	5%	20%	14%	14%	14%	25%	
Net Income Share of Total Income	-2.9%	1.9%	2.4%	-7.2%	-0.8%	3.3%	5.2%	13%	
Full-time Staff	8.9	2.8	1.9	1.3	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	1.8
Part-Time Staff	9.2	5.8	8.3	3.7	3.8	2.4	2.1	1.8	4.1

Trend and Detail Tables

Two types of tables are commonly used in this report. One type shows trend data from 2006/07 to 2011/12, with a “placemaker” for 2007/08, when there was a one-year hiatus in the *Report*. These tables usually show historic and 2011/12 average, median, minimum, and maximum values, along with average values for each budget group and chorus. A second type of table shows 2011/12 data only, such as share of choruses using a particular practice. Tables 1.01 and 1.02 below are examples of each. The “n.d.” means no data for that measure.

We report both averages and medians for the survey population. The average number reported for any survey question is based on all responses and gives them all equal weight. The median is the middle value: half the responses are greater than, and half less than the median. It is a figure from one responding chorus (though not the same one for each question), and can be thought of as the “typical” response, least affected by the extreme responses.

The tables show averages for all respondents and for the chorus types or budget groups. Table A and Figure A show that some categories have few respondents, so we encourage care in interpreting these results. The median reported is for all respondents.

The tables with trend results help to put unusually high or low averages for one year into historic context. Refer to Table A and Figure A on page 4 to determine the number of organizations providing data for a particular analysis. There are some budget group and chorus types where only a handful of organizations have provided data. This should be considered when drawing general conclusions from the data.

1. Performances, Audiences, and Tickets

Concert Programs

Starting in 2009/10, responding choruses specified which of their concert programs were self-produced, and which were presented by another group, such as when an orchestra or performing arts series invites a chorus to perform.

The increase in total concert programs in last year’s *Report* continued into this year, which may be due in part to the way in which the new question compares to the old. The typical chorus performed eight different concert programs in 2011/12, compared with seven in 2010/11 and fewer still in earlier years. Children/youth choruses continue to maintain the highest levels of performance activity, and professional groups had more concert programs than in prior years. [Table 1.01].

1.01 Number of Concert Programs	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses					
Average	6	6	9	10	12
Median	4	4	6	7	8
Min	0	1	0	0	2
Max	50	57	61	73	126
Chorus Type					
Professional	5	5	8	14	17
Symphony	8	9	10	10	11
Volunteer	5	4	7	7	8
Children/Youth	10	13	18	15	19
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	7	12	15	18	34
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	17	12	16	15	15
\$250,000 - \$499,999	10	11	17	14	14
\$150,000 - \$249,999	8	7	14	13	10
\$100,000 - \$149,999	6	7	8	6	8
\$50,000 - \$99,999	4	5	6	7	6
\$25,000 - \$49,999	4	4	6	5	6
Under \$25,000	4	3	7	7	6
Budget not reported	5	4	10	9	8

In 2009/10, answers to a new question showed that responding choruses performed in response to requests by others (for hire or for free) just as much as in self-produced programs. In 2011/12, this continued with 55 percent of the programs being self produced. [Table 1.02]

1.02 Self-Produced Share of Concert Programs		Budget Size	
		Over \$1,000,000	46%
	\$500,000 - \$999,999	61%	
	\$250,000 - \$499,999	56%	
Type of Chorus	\$150,000 - \$249,999	53%	
All Choruses	54%	\$100,000 - \$149,999	60%
Professional	46%	\$50,000 - \$99,999	62%
Symphony	58%	\$25,000 - \$49,999	58%
Volunteer	46%	Under \$25,000	51%
Children	54%	Budget not reported	51%

Performances

The tally of “performances” differs from the count of “programs,” in that a given program can be performed more than once as often happens with holiday concerts. A typical responding chorus gave eight concert performances, returning to the longer-term level. However, there are noticeably higher numbers, depending on chorus type, and among larger budget choruses. [Table 1.03]

1.03 Total Performances	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses					
Average	12	12	12	13	13
Median	8	8	8	9	8
Min	0	0	0	1	2
Max	124	85	102	73	143
Chorus Type					
Professional	16	12	11	16	18
Symphony	15	16	13	14	13
Volunteer	9	8	9	9	9
Children/Youth	22	24	21	20	21
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	35	29	19	25	40
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	31	24	18	21	16
\$250,000 - \$499,999	22	19	21	16	16
\$150,000 - \$249,999	18	15	15	18	14
\$100,000 - \$149,999	15	10	11	8	9
\$50,000 - \$99,999	8	9	7	9	7
\$25,000 - \$49,999	9	7	6	6	7
Under \$25,000	6	5	7	8	7
Budget not reported	8	10	15	11	8

Education and community engagement Programming

A recent addition to the *Report* last year shows education and outreach activities in the field. Table 1.04 shows the percentage of respondents offering such programs is growing. In 2009/10, 54 percent of reporting choruses offered education and community engagement programming, which grew to 68 percent in 2010/11 and 88 percent for 2011/12, with children's choruses contributing to that growth (91 percent compared to prior year 81 percent). [Table 1.04]

1.04 Choruses with Education Outreach Programs		Budget Size	
		Over \$1,000,000	94%
	\$500,000 - \$999,999	88%	
	\$250,000 - \$499,999	95%	
Type of Chorus		\$150,000 - \$249,999	86%
All Choruses	88%	\$100,000 - \$149,999	93%
Professional	90%	\$50,000 - \$99,999	89%
Symphony	83%	\$25,000 - \$49,999	78%
Volunteer	87%	Under \$25,000	86%
Children	91%	Budget not reported	100%

Audiences

The median audiences for 2011/12 respondents were 2,100, reversing a drop in prior years. While children/youth choruses had lower average attendance, partly because of very large audiences reported in prior years from children/youth choruses performing in major public events with hundreds of thousands in the audience. There are often wide swings in averages from year to year, so long term trends rather than simple annual comparisons are more informative recommended; most 2011/12 attendance figures are below the prior several years.

Most audiences pay for tickets, but choruses of all types offered many performances at no charge. Since 2009/10, only about ten percent of the audience of the typical respondent had free admission. Children/youth choruses showed a decrease in free (which means an increase in paid) admissions in 2010/11 to only nine percent, with other chorus types offering free admission to between 13 percent and 23 percent of the audience. [Tables 1.05, 1.06, and 1.07]

1.05 Total Audiences	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses					
Average	7,209	14,869	6,009	7,366	5,293
Median	2,400	2,500	1,700	1,600	2,100
Min	-	-	-	-	160
Max	84,000	806,101	270,000	280,228	53,905
Chorus Type					
Professional	11,328	15,177	3,179	4,182	7,633
Symphony	18,881	20,270	16,904	14,747	4,737
Volunteer	3,615	6,099	3,837	3,807	4,386
Children/Youth	14,054	39,666	11,024	17,174	5,997
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	31,751	96,791	37,783	15,639	17,820
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	24,510	10,286	33,568	48,553	6,278
\$250,000 - \$499,999	18,826	33,549	6,206	5,797	8,598
\$150,000 - \$249,999	12,658	6,951	3,119	3,842	4,871
\$100,000 - \$149,999	7,646	10,030	3,479	8,379	2,222
\$50,000 - \$99,999	2,631	4,158	2,213	5,375	1,503
\$25,000 - \$49,999	2,010	3,693	1,033	783	2,391
Under \$25,000	1,496	1,250	1,629	631	1,176
Budget not reported	2,688	2,957	3,952	5,267	4,023

1.06 Paid Attendance				Budget Size	
				Over \$1,000,000	13,971
				\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	5,146
				\$250,000 - \$499,999	7,638
				\$150,000 - \$249,999	3,298
				\$100,000 - \$149,999	1,689
				\$50,000 - \$99,999	1,328
				\$25,000 - \$49,999	2,616
				under \$25,000	972
				Budget not reported	3,445
All Choruses		Type of Chorus			
Average	5,293	Professional	6,162		
Median	2,100	Symphony	4,252		
Min	160	Volunteer	3,692		
Max	53,905	Children	4,911		

1.07 Portion of Audience That Purchased Tickets	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses					
Average	74%	70%	77%	77%	84%
Median	83%	84%	89%	89%	92%
Min	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Max	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Chorus Type					
Professional	77%	78%	79%	77%	87%
Symphony	96%	81%	81%	89%	78%
Volunteer	77%	73%	67%	0%	77%
Children/Youth	50%	54%	82%	100%	91%
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	67%	76%	85%	77%	82%
\$500,000 -	57%	70%	85%	89%	82%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	64%	70%	84%	0%	85%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	70%	74%	78%	100%	77%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	75%	73%	79%	79%	81%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	81%	77%	79%	79%	87%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	78%	79%	81%	81%	92%
Under \$25,000	69%	50%	65%	65%	85%
Budget not reported	79%	61%	70%	70%	82%

Pricing

The following tables show ticket pricing arrangements. Table 1.08 shows average low and high prices for different chorus types. The average of minimum ticket prices is less than the \$14.63 reported last year, while the average of maximum ticket prices is essentially the same as the \$33.61 reported in the prior year. Choruses also told us the number of subscription packages they offer. Thirty eight percent of respondents offer multiple packages, with professional, symphonic, and larger-budget choruses of all types more likely to offer more than one. [Tables 1.08 and 1.09]

1.08 Single Ticket Price Average Ranges					
	All Choruses	Professional	Symphony	Volunteer	Children/Youth
Minimum	\$ 11.07	\$ 11.07	\$ 12.00	\$ 11.07	\$ 9.04
Maximum	\$ 33.47	\$ 29.73	\$ 57.25	\$ 29.73	\$ 24.90

1.09 Fraction with Multiple Subscription Packages		Budget Size	
Type of Chorus		Over \$1,000,000	82%
		\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	88%
All Choruses		\$250,000 - \$499,999	47%
		\$150,000 - \$249,999	55%
Professional	38%	\$100,000 - \$149,999	64%
Symphony	50%	\$50,000 - \$99,999	53%
Volunteer	64%	\$25,000 - \$49,999	39%
Children	39%	under \$25,000	9%
	14%	Budget not reported	11%

2. Operating Finances

Financial management of operations and programs is always a pressing matter for chorus leaders, as for arts managers of all kinds. Every year, we ask choruses about where their revenue comes from and how it is used for programming, education and community engagement, development, marketing and administration. We also ask about their overall net income and their reserves and endowments. Section 2 examines data on operating finances from 142 choruses that provided adequate financial data; endowments and reserves are examined in Section 3.

Revenues

These 142 reporting choruses as a group had lower total revenues than in 2010/11, but higher than in recent earlier years. Median total revenue stayed in the upper part of the range of most prior years. Symphony and children/youth choruses led this increase, with professional chorus revenues falling back after big growth in 2010/11. [Table 2.01]²

Like most nonprofit performing arts organizations, choruses finance their programs and operations activity with a mix of earned, contributed support, and investment income. Choruses can earn revenue from ticket sales, performance contract fees, rental income, dues and tuition, program advertising and sales income, and the like. For respondents as a whole, earned income declined, with a smaller slice of the overall revenue pie. This reversed a multi-year growth trend in the earned revenue share. This would be consistent with many reports from the field of declining contributions during the recession and more contributions since. The mean and median are identical, a sign that there are few outliers on either the low or high ends. Children/youth choruses depended more on earned income than other types. Choruses in the \$250,000-\$500,000 budget range tended to have higher shares of earned revenue in their revenue mix. [Table 2.02]

² There is a self-selection bias among respondents that should be considered especially when thinking about total revenues. Choruses that respond and provide data are not only willing to help, but are often more able to do so. Overall, respondents to the survey overall represent a higher-income slice of the overall chorus field. Correspondingly, the *Report* cannot provide any insight into lower revenue organizations that did not respond.

2.01 Total Revenue	2006/07		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Chorus						
Average	\$222,820		\$271,694	\$276,938	\$417,353	\$389,839
Median	\$75,367		\$92,841	\$99,800	\$156,000	\$136,268
Min	\$4,950		\$166	\$2,495	\$2,400	\$3,500
Max	\$3,729,915		\$3,739,211	\$4,022,353	\$4,625,799	\$4,262,756
Chorus Type						
Professional	\$464,727		\$ 414,154	\$ 489,781	\$ 904,922	\$ 720,157
Symphony	\$155,039		\$ 869,482	\$ 985,198	\$ 452,158	\$ 569,135
Volunteer	\$145,301		\$ 142,289	\$ 121,129	\$ 211,419	\$ 210,181
Children/Youth	\$311,870		\$ 413,300	\$ 440,797	\$ 446,555	\$ 598,339
Budget Size						
More than \$1,000,000	\$2,024,674		\$ 2,046,795	\$ 1,734,582	\$ 2,067,449	\$ 2,051,447
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	\$711,719		\$ 603,328	\$ 633,186	\$ 726,772	\$ 692,712
\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$335,609		\$ 335,078	\$ 375,742	\$ 403,769	\$ 375,520
\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$210,583		\$ 190,749	\$ 200,770	\$ 205,139	\$ 187,184
\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$134,342		\$ 123,955	\$ 133,204	\$ 117,544	\$ 134,206
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$77,685		\$ 68,895	\$ 77,786	\$ 76,530	\$ 73,359
\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$39,370		\$ 43,274	\$ 37,654	\$ 36,343	\$ 38,200
Under \$25,000	\$18,781		\$ 15,206	\$ 16,053	\$ 14,358	\$ 14,375

2.02 Earned Portion of Total Revenue	2006/07		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Chorus						
Average	43%		48%	50%	48%	44%
Median	44%		47%	48%	46%	44%
Min	0%		0%	1%	10%	1%
Max	96%		100%	100%	100%	100%
Chorus Type						
Professional	38%		39%	33%	37%	37%
Symphony	35%		44%	37%	37%	45%
Volunteer	42%		47%	51%	43%	43%
Children/Youth	57%		59%	65%	57%	57%
Budget Size						
More than \$1,000,000	52%		33%	45%	42%	42%
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	50%		44%	40%	40%	40%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	41%		49%	51%	53%	53%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	46%		48%	59%	41%	40%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	39%		49%	49%	45%	45%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	43%		51%	49%	42%	41%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	47%		52%	45%	44%	46%
Under \$25,000	37%		47%	57%	46%	44%

Expenses

This section of the report shows total spending by responding choruses in 2011/12, and how they allocated their funds to key operational areas.³ Total expenses declined for respondents as

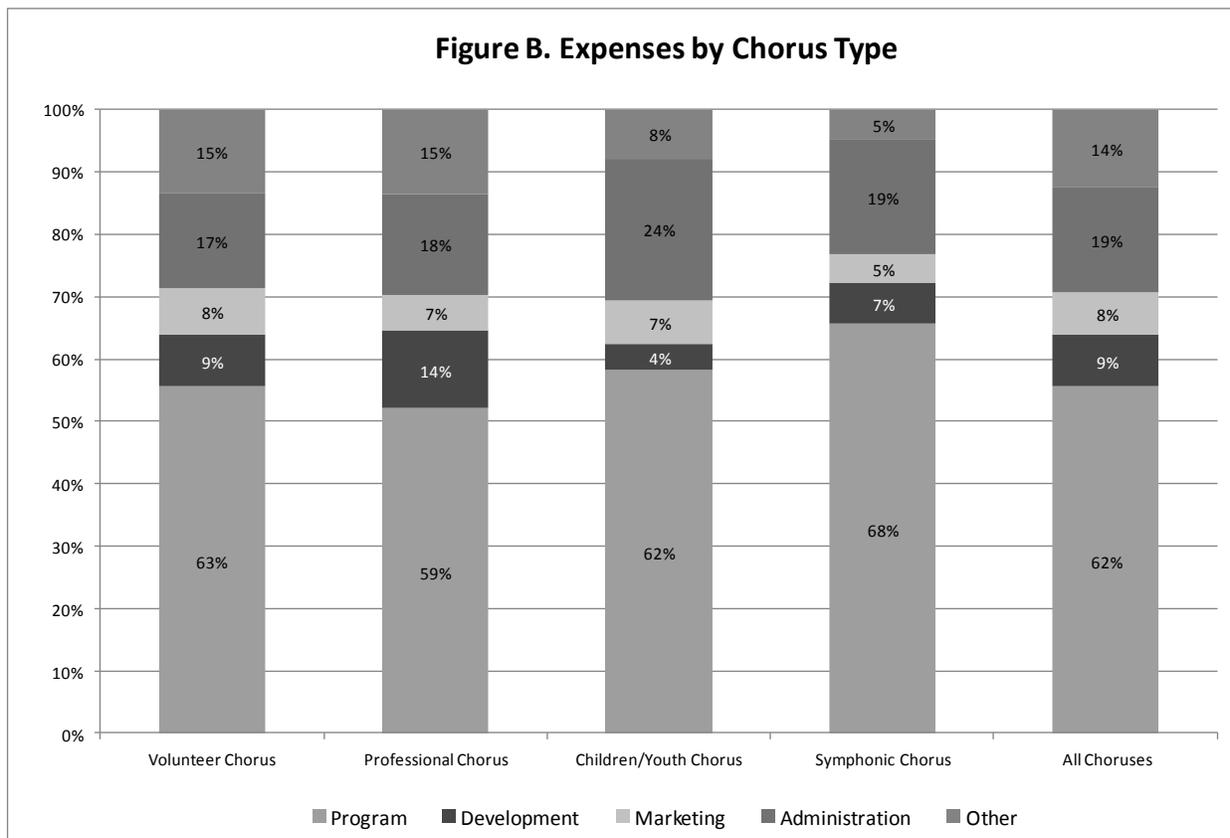
³ Note that total expenses in table 2.03 are used to assign responding choruses to the budget range groups used in this report.

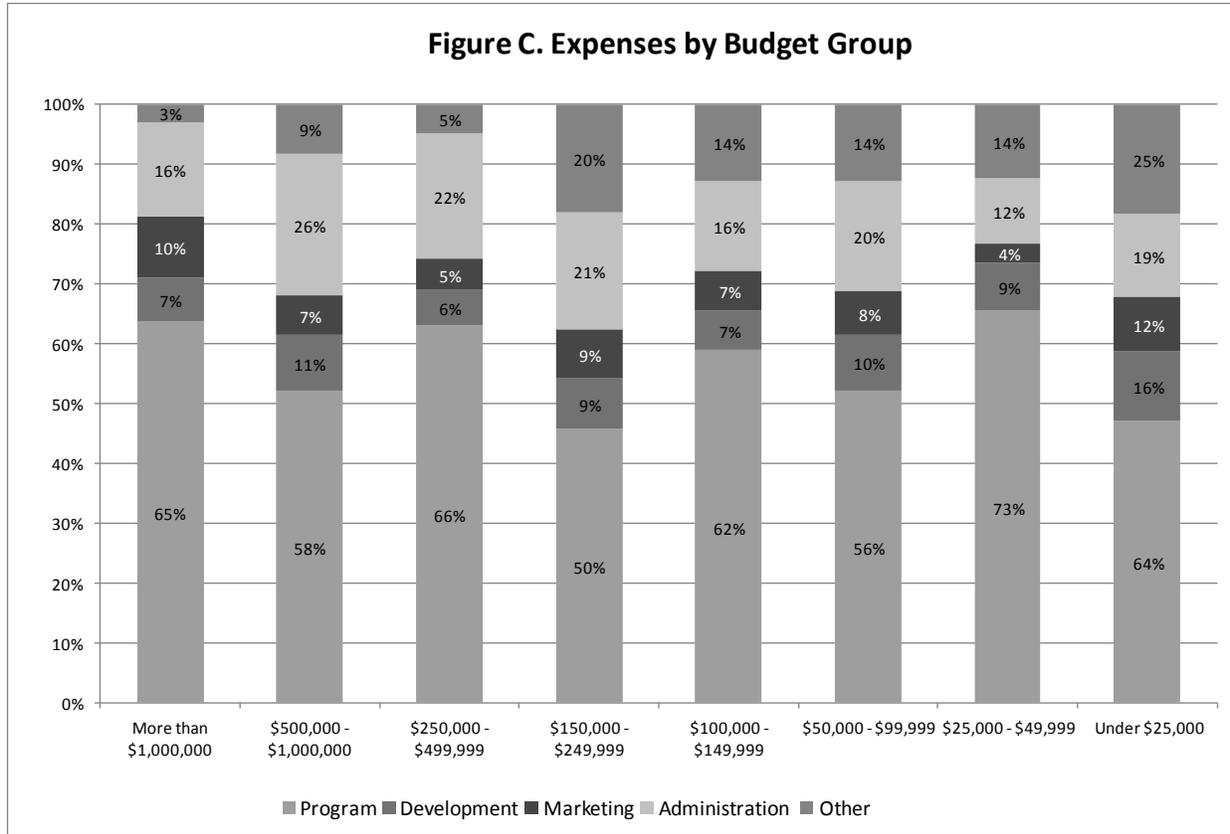
a whole, and also for the typical respondent as shown in Table 2.03. This is an expected outcome given the lower revenues and programming levels of respondents. [Table 2.03]

2.03 Total Expenses	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Chorus					
Average	\$208,380	\$282,066	\$288,623	\$381,700	\$378,505
Median	\$78,842	\$98,500	\$88,914	\$158,623	\$132,669
Min	\$0	\$177	\$0	\$2,400	\$500
Max	\$3,175,581	\$3,903,908	\$4,290,187	\$3,914,307	\$4,557,668
Chorus Type					
Professional	\$425,846	\$483,494	\$438,877	\$801,190	\$730,837
Symphony	\$205,806	\$879,466	\$1,085,041	\$447,855	\$568,950
Volunteer	\$133,454	\$141,328	\$149,397	\$188,974	\$189,237
Children/Youth	\$306,281	\$424,086	\$426,900	\$444,357	\$592,278
Budget Size*					
More than \$1,000,000	\$1,850,330	\$2,186,909	\$2,003,803	\$1,888,350	\$2,005,437
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	\$695,403	\$602,811	\$648,817	\$702,432	\$675,344
\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$348,700	\$345,599	\$352,663	\$356,874	\$340,894
\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$203,871	\$197,911	\$190,520	\$194,184	\$195,488
\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$123,464	\$131,462	\$126,189	\$116,280	\$130,615
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$75,661	\$70,657	\$71,514	\$72,942	\$68,591
\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$35,867	\$38,854	\$35,470	\$35,152	\$35,673
Under \$25,000	\$14,687	\$12,918	\$12,492	\$13,350	\$12,706

Additional details on how responding choruses use their funds are shown below. Table 2.04 shows the share of total expenses choruses allocated to five main types of spending: programming, development, marketing, administration, and other. Consistent with their missions, choruses routinely spent the largest share of their resources—62 percent in all—on programming. In the last three reports, this has ranged between 59 and 62 percent, again, a consistent and stable ratio. The shares of expenditure on development, marketing, and administration have similarly stayed close to the prior levels. Figures B and C show 2011/12 data graphically, illustrating the distribution of expenses across the budget ranges and chorus types. [Table 2.04, Figures B and Figure C]

2.04 Expense Distribution		Program	Development	Marketing	Administration	Other
All Choruses						
Average		62%	9%	8%	19%	14%
Median		64%	8%	6%	15%	8%
Minimum		9%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Maximum		96%	100%	34%	100%	80%
Chorus Type						
Professional		59%	14%	7%	18%	15%
Symphony		62%	9%	8%	19%	14%
Volunteer		63%	9%	8%	17%	7%
Children/Youth		62%	4%	7%	24%	8%
Budget Size						
More than \$1,000,000		65%	7%	10%	16%	3%
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000		58%	11%	7%	26%	9%
\$250,000 - \$499,999		66%	6%	5%	22%	5%
\$150,000 - \$249,999		50%	9%	9%	21%	20%
\$100,000 - \$149,999		62%	7%	7%	16%	14%
\$50,000 - \$99,999		56%	10%	8%	20%	14%
\$25,000 - \$49,999		73%	9%	4%	12%	14%
Under \$25,000		64%	16%	12%	19%	25%





Education and community engagement Expenditures

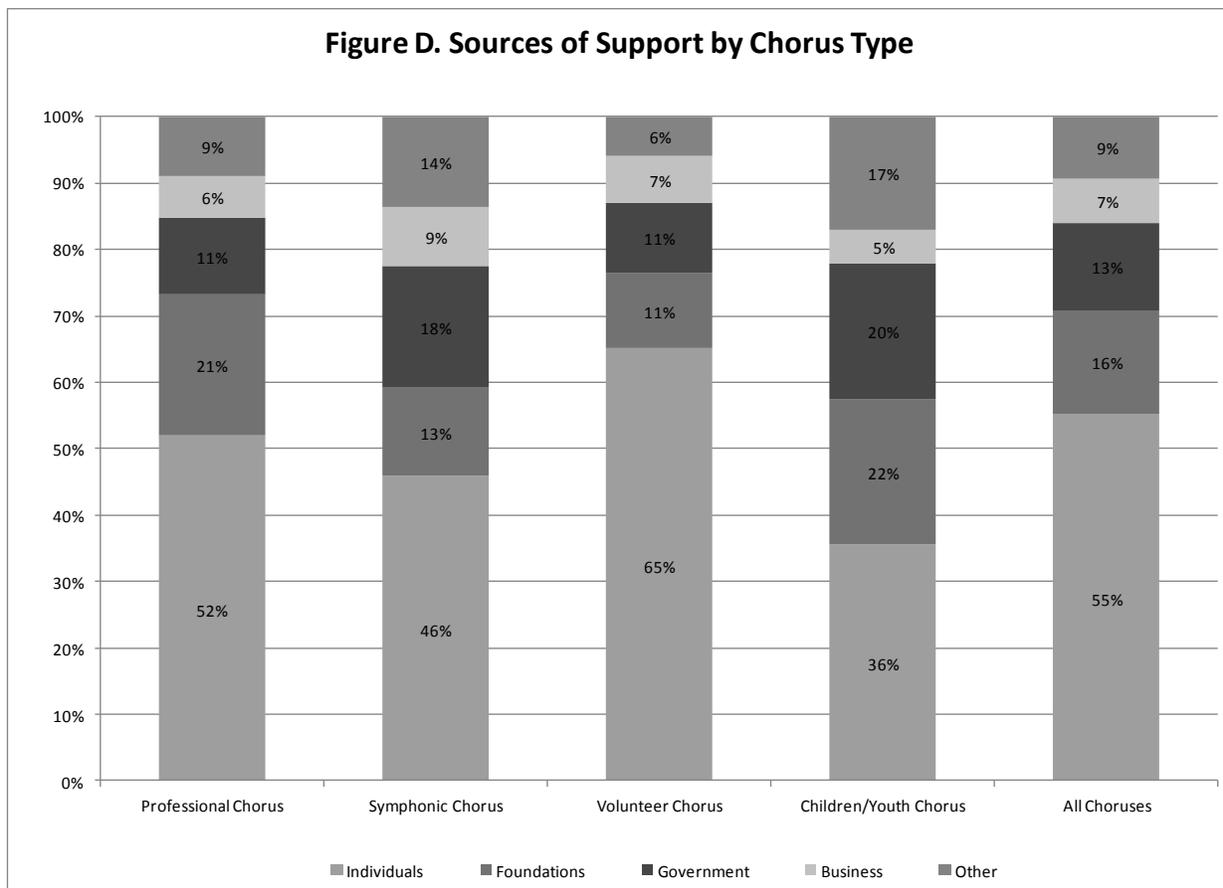
In recent *Reports*, we requested data on how choruses used resources for education and related outreach. Just over half (52 percent) of respondents provided data for this year's *Report* on these activities. Table 2.05 shows how much was spent on education and community engagement; Table 2.06 shows that those expenditures made up six percent of responding choruses' overall program spending. This is a decrease from 14 percent the prior year. Larger budget choruses spend proportionally more resources on education and community engagement compared than smaller ones that emphasize performances in their programming. [Tables 2.05 and 2.06]

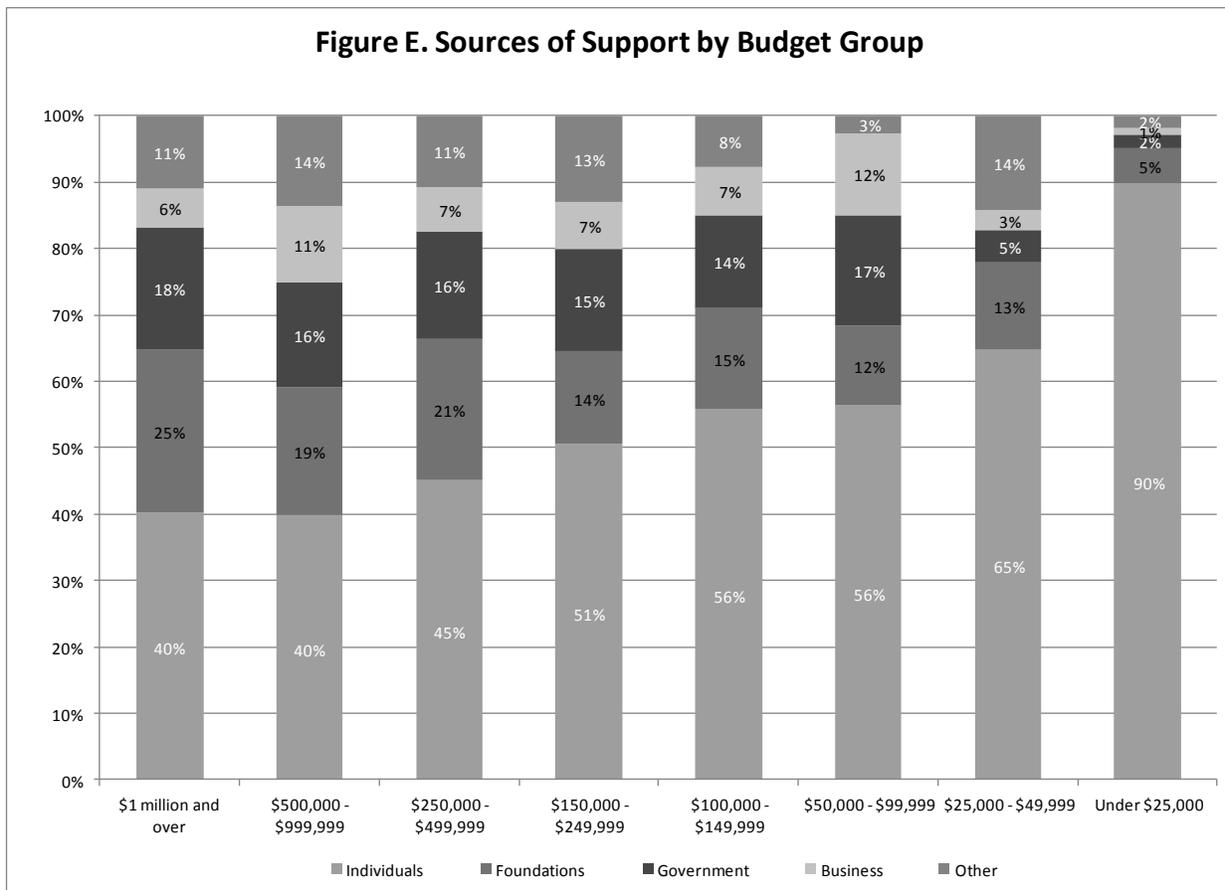
2.05 Education and Community Outreach Expenditures		Budget Size	
		Over \$1,000,000	\$115,733
		\$500,000 - \$999,999	\$ 63,910
		\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$ 31,629
		\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$ 5,869
Type of Chorus		\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$ 8,300
All Choruses	\$ 36,938	\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$ 3,126
Professional	\$ 58,984	\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$ 1,406
Symphony	\$ 52,603	Under \$25,000	\$ 550
Volunteer	\$ 16,574	Budget not reported	n.d.
Children/Youth	\$ 59,129		

2.06 Education Outreach Share of Program Expenditures		Budget Size	
		Over \$1,000,000	7%
		\$500,000 - \$999,999	10%
		\$250,000 - \$499,999	10%
Type of Chorus		\$150,000 - \$249,999	3%
All Choruses	6%	\$100,000 - \$149,999	7%
Professional	4%	\$50,000 - \$99,999	4%
Symphony	12%	\$25,000 - \$49,999	4%
Volunteer	6%	Under \$25,000	5%
Children/Youth	9%		

Sources of Support

To supplement revenues from operations (mainly ticket sales), choruses finance their activities with contributed income from private and public sources. The *Report* now includes information from respondents on the sources of that support, and the shares from individuals, businesses, foundations, and government. Figures D and E show that result graphically for the different chorus types and budget groups. As is the case for the arts and other nonprofit causes, individuals provide the majority of support, especially to volunteer choruses. Community support by individuals seems to be especially strong for small budget choruses. Government, business, and foundations all provide modest but very useful shares of the overall support, and are especially important to larger-budget and children/youth choruses. [Figures D and E]





Net Income

Overall net income is calculated as “total revenue less total expense,” and is a key indicator of sustainability. Certainly choruses have more than one “bottom line,” but this is the financial one. The distribution of surplus or deficit is shown in three tables that follow. Overall, the results show a good year but leave some concerns.

Table 2.07 shows net income in dollar terms. The average stayed positive, which is encouraging after the recession years. Median net income was positive, though lower than the last *Report*. As the table shows, year-to-year changes are erratic for individual budget groups and chorus types. Every year, many choruses struggle to remain in the black; the median net income for the field is only \$708. Table 2.08 shows this net as a percentage of total revenue; margins are positive, but narrow, for all chorus types. Table 2.09 shows a majority of respondents (about 55 percent) had surpluses in 2011/12 (though the concern remains about many others that did not).

Changes in net income can result from increases or decreases in revenues, expenses, or both; for 2011/12 they both dropped, but average revenues fell more than average expenses.

In addition to the previous note of caution regarding self-selection bias among respondents related to larger budget sizes, it is also important to mention that accounting for symphony choruses are affected by the orchestras with which they’re affiliated, and the specific figures that we request may not be precisely comparable. [Tables 2.07, 2.08, and 2.09]

2.07 Net Income	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses					
Average	\$8,089	(\$11,979)	\$9,262	\$33,360	\$11,333
Median	\$588	\$0	\$1,580	\$1,500	\$708
Min	(\$416,883)	(\$1,008,529)	(\$879,948)	(\$278,070)	(\$706,608)
Max	\$554,334	\$166,433	\$635,201	\$726,573	\$1,088,662
Chorus Type					
Professional	\$37,540	(\$69,340)	\$31,093	\$103,733	(\$10,681)
Symphony	(\$42,534)	(\$8,169)	(\$99,843)	\$4,304	\$185
Volunteer	\$7,073	(\$372)	(\$26,290)	\$21,123	\$20,945
Children/Youth	\$4,541	(\$9,651)	\$11,703	\$2,197	\$6,061
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	\$174,344	(\$140,113)	(\$269,221)	\$179,098	\$46,010
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	\$16,317	\$517	(\$15,631)	\$24,341	\$17,368
\$250,000 - \$499,999	(\$13,090)	(\$10,521)	\$23,079	\$46,895	\$34,626
\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$6,712	(\$7,163)	\$10,250	\$10,955	(\$8,303)
\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$3,808	(\$7,507)	\$7,015	\$66	\$3,591
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$32	(\$1,762)	\$6,272	\$3,588	\$4,769
\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$3,503	\$4,421	\$2,184	\$1,192	\$2,527
Under \$25,000	\$3,398	\$1,763	\$3,561	\$1,008	\$1,668

2.08 Net Income as a Share of Total Income				Budget Size	
All Choruses				Over \$1,000,000	-2.9%
				\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	1.9%
Type of Chorus				\$250,000 - \$499,999	2.4%
				\$150,000 - \$249,999	-7.2%
Average	2.2%	Professional	3.7%	\$100,000 - \$149,999	-0.8%
Median	0.5%	Symphony	3.8%	\$50,000 - \$99,999	3.3%
Min	-88.9%	Volunteer	1.7%	\$25,000 - \$49,999	5.2%
Max	92.0%	Children	1.5%	under \$25,000	13.1%

2.09 Choruses with Positive Net Income	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses	62%	44%	60%	70%	55%
Chorus Type					
Professional	59%	32%	69%	76%	68%
Symphony	25%	45%	63%	70%	60%
Volunteer	56%	48%	54%	67%	55%
Children/Youth	41%	39%	50%	69%	39%
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	75%	45%	75%	71%	47%
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	50%	33%	43%	71%	63%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	50%	40%	31%	73%	68%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	56%	44%	45%	52%	36%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	53%	26%	65%	45%	43%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	62%	41%	74%	50%	58%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	66%	75%	52%	64%	56%
Under \$25,000	70%	66%	64%	67%	64%

3. Financial Reserves

We always gather data on cash reserves and endowments that offer a measure of safety in difficult years, as well as dollars to invest in future opportunities. Respondents tell us if they had either endowments, cash reserves, or both. To be clear, what a given chorus calls an endowment could be permanently restricted by donors, or just designated as an endowment by the board. A cash reserve is unrestricted and can be used in full, unlike true endowments, where only a portion of the interest can be drawn each year. Table 3.01 shows that an even-larger share of choruses (almost 90 percent) have either an endowment or reserve, or both. Not surprisingly, larger budget groups lead the way in this area. [Table 3.01]

3.01 Portion of Choruses with Endowment or Cash Reserve	2006/07		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses						
Cash Reserve	58%		73%	70%	69%	80%
Endowment	31%		37%	27%	39%	51%
Reserve or Endowment	67%		76%	77%	86%	80%
Chorus Type						
Professional	62%		82%	68%	83%	76%
Symphony	58%		82%	100%	88%	78%
Volunteer	67%		75%	76%	86%	80%
Children/Youth	75%		76%	81%	100%	100%
Budget Size						
More than \$1,000,000	100%		91%	94%	92%	100%
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	100%		100%	86%	100%	80%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	85%		70%	94%	91%	87%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	78%		94%	95%	95%	86%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	84%		95%	61%	82%	90%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	67%		78%	72%	78%	72%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	68%		67%	84%	86%	77%
Under \$25,000	52%		72%	56%	67%	59%

We also asked about the levels of their reserve and endowment funds. Responses, shown in Tables 3.02 and 3.03, are generally good: Average endowments for three of four types of chorus grew in 2011/12, while all but one of the budget groups had higher average endowments. Looking at Table 3.02 over a period of years, average endowments reported have has wide swings from year to year, reflecting the fact that respondents are often different for each *Report* rather than that choruses are exhausting their endowments. Positive net income, increases in charitable giving, and a good stock market are all favorable for endowment growth. Cash reserves shown in Table 3.02 also look strong.⁴ [Tables 3.02 and 3.03]

⁴ Endowments tend to be long-lived; one could assume that a chorus that *ever* said “yes” to either of these questions still has its endowment and/or reserve. So the share of \$100-\$150K choruses with these resources is higher than just the 61% of this year’s respondents. Last year’s 95% of respondents are still likely to have theirs, and may not have completed this year’s survey.

3.02 Average Endowments	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2009/10	2011/12
All Choruses					
Average	\$395,050	\$337,445	\$526,384	\$689,671	\$859,433
Median	\$40,000	\$61,900	\$51,000	\$106,247	\$127,500
Min	\$258	\$46	\$0	\$5,925	\$504
Max	\$3,400,000	\$3,561,768	\$5,563,674	\$6,799,643	\$9,023,066
Chorus Type					
Professional	\$1,316,971	\$1,139,596	\$327,028	\$1,355,063	\$1,090,875
Symphony	\$282,250	\$621,169	\$1,534,330	\$1,069,044	\$2,414,960
Volunteer	\$311,673	\$253,920	\$153,067	\$532,361	\$717,702
Children/Youth	\$75,114	\$114,033	\$1,133,525	\$242,551	\$260,896
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	\$2,059,446	\$1,614,993	\$2,088,079	\$2,534,740	\$2,227,628
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	\$747,800	\$268,901	\$1,067,529	\$422,600	\$580,549
\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$163,210	\$134,025	\$33,302	\$107,811	\$176,842
\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$50,917	\$45,156	\$77,171	\$71,463	\$55,233
\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$108,188	\$57,100	\$47,933	\$35,000	\$117,800
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$36,081	\$54,182	\$31,865	\$45,047	\$188,847
\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$19,057	\$25,214	\$20,194	\$8,000	\$24,600
Under \$25,000	\$6,667	\$3,523	\$30,600	n.d.	\$25,749

3.03 Average Cash Reserves	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2009/10	2010/11
All Choruses					
Average	\$41,800	\$54,163	\$58,472	\$71,103	\$59,797
Median	\$17,500	\$20,000	\$26,898	\$30,934	\$22,000
Min	\$0	\$618	\$1,000	\$500	\$1,000
Max	\$651,550	\$395,653	\$554,846	\$727,713	\$679,343
Chorus Type					
Professional	\$33,176	\$61,315	\$30,301	\$86,797	\$83,452
Symphony	\$67,800	\$121,242	\$88,967	\$139,293	\$55,007
Volunteer	\$38,287	\$31,993	\$129,830	\$47,421	\$41,439
Children/Youth	\$54,236	\$106,202	\$48,884	\$102,513	\$103,708
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	\$224,635	\$201,621	\$243,984	\$248,950	\$259,617
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	\$93,983	\$146,126	\$95,992	\$112,740	\$161,196
\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$52,274	\$101,953	\$90,839	\$84,731	\$66,081
\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$59,576	\$41,865	\$47,063	\$69,665	\$42,991
\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$53,818	\$53,267	\$52,540	\$31,949	\$38,167
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$22,369	\$22,595	\$33,758	\$80,130	\$15,397
\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$17,058	\$13,160	\$14,352	\$8,258	\$13,914
Under \$25,000	\$7,364	\$8,372	\$7,610	\$3,873	\$4,637

4. Operating Measures

This section of the *Report* has additional analysis of chorus finance and operations using ratios that measure effectiveness and efficiency. These indicators help choruses compare to others in similar categories (and of other types and sizes), and set their own targets. While there may be differences between the scale of decisions made by the leader of a small-budget volunteer chorus compared with a large-budget professional one, the character of the decision may be very similar—how much to spend on marketing to sell tickets, on development to raise funds, on programming that will attract higher or lower levels of sales. This section shows sources of contributed support. Ratios in this section put those decisions and sources into similar units, making it easier to compare between choruses and over time.

Marketing Efficiency

How much does it cost to put a patron into a seat? Data provided by respondents enable us to see how choruses spent marketing dollars in 2011/12 in pursuit of audiences. The central measure here is calculated as total marketing dollars divided by paid attendance. This is an incomplete measure of marketing effectiveness, because marketing dollars have other purposes besides selling tickets, but it does provide some guidance for setting marketing budgets. Median spending per ticket in 2011/12 grew again (to \$5.56), but less rapidly than the last several years. Marketing costs relative to attendance show that audience development continues to be especially costly for the largest-budget choruses, not surprising when those same choruses have the highest ticket prices and are rewarded by higher earned revenue. [Table 4.01]

4.01 Average Cost to Sell One Ticket	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses					
Average	\$ 5.11	\$ 5.66	\$ 9.75	\$ 7.71	\$ 7.79
Median	\$ 3.09	\$ 2.99	\$ 4.00	\$ 5.14	\$ 5.56
Min	n.d.	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0.05	\$ 0.03
Max	\$42.52	\$55.58	\$664.70	\$53.56	\$35.23
Chorus Type					
Professional	\$ 7.50	\$ 9.58	\$ 10.89	\$11.01	\$12.40
Symphony	\$ 0.85	\$ 8.08	\$ 10.31	\$ 8.19	\$12.40
Volunteer	\$ 5.33	\$ 4.95	\$ 5.23	\$ 6.14	\$ 6.14
Children/Youth	\$ 3.16	\$ 4.73	\$ 12.01	\$ 8.00	\$ 7.24
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	\$16.56	\$16.12	\$ 62.95	\$14.40	\$14.38
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	\$ 5.94	\$10.08	\$ 13.49	\$11.22	\$13.33
\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$ 6.23	\$ 6.21	\$ 5.80	\$ 9.00	\$ 5.94
\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$ 5.09	\$ 3.52	\$ 6.75	\$ 6.36	\$ 9.91
\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$ 4.92	\$ 6.94	\$ 6.07	\$ 3.25	\$ 6.32
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$ 6.15	\$ 4.52	\$ 6.72	\$ 7.33	\$ 6.86
\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$ 3.85	\$ 4.56	\$ 4.81	\$ 6.67	\$ 3.51
Under \$25,000	\$ 4.16	\$ 5.47	\$ 2.43	\$ 2.50	\$ 4.17

Fundraising Efficiency

Another effectiveness measure for nonprofits of all types is development efficiency, i.e. the cost to raise each contributed dollar. This has generally been increasing; the median chorus spent 13 cents to raise every dollar—more than any prior year, and only half as productive as in 2006/07 when it was six cents. Declines in fundraising efficiency can be caused by higher spending, lower giving, or both. Average resource development costs varied widely across most chorus types, requiring an average \$0.18 per dollar raised. The median chorus was more efficient, needing only \$0.12 to raise a dollar. Fundraising is especially expensive for the smallest- and largest-budget choruses and for volunteer choruses. [Table 4.02]

4.02 Average Cost to Raise One Dollar	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses					
Average	\$0.10	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.21	\$ 0.14	\$ 0.18
Median	\$0.06	\$ 0.07	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.09	\$ 0.13
Min	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Max	\$1.43	\$ 4.50	\$17.18	\$ 0.80	\$ 0.97
Chorus Type					
Professional	\$0.08	\$ 0.13	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.13	\$ 0.18
Symphony	\$0.07	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.09	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.15
Volunteer	\$0.10	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.68	\$ 0.20	\$ 0.23
Children/Youth	\$0.10	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.13	\$ 0.14	\$ 0.15
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	\$0.20	\$ 0.13	\$ 0.19	\$ 0.18	\$ 0.23
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	\$0.18	\$ 0.11	\$ 0.16	\$ 0.20	\$ 0.17
\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$0.11	\$ 0.13	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.14	\$ 0.17
\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$0.07	\$ 0.26	\$ 1.03	\$ 0.14	\$ 0.20
\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$0.06	\$ 0.16	\$ 0.09	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.17
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$0.11	\$ 0.07	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.18
\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$0.09	\$ 0.11	\$ 0.08	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.08
Under \$25,000	\$0.09	\$ 0.22	\$ 0.11	\$ 0.08	\$ 0.24

Financial Sustainability

This section compares financial reserves to annual spending, an indicator of how choruses can sustain themselves in difficult economic times. These ratios are in Tables 4.03 (endowments) and 4.04 (cash reserves). For a typical chorus with an endowment, the fund's value is 49 percent of its annual budget, more than in the recent past. At typical payout rates of 5 percent, such an endowment might support about 1.5 percent of total annual expenditures. The average support that endowment provides to budgets dropped to 26 percent from 39 percent in the prior year's *Report*, but the median stayed stable. Table 3.01 showed more choruses with reserves than endowments. Table 4.04 shows that the reserves of a typical chorus could cover about 14 percent of annual expenses, also above prior levels. On balance, these results show that chorus organizations have been able to build up resources to support programming and increase financial security. [Tables 4.03 and 4.04]

4.03 Ratio of Endowment to Expenses	2006/07		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses						
Average	63%		70%	66%	67%	98%
Median	39%		37%	31%	33%	49%
Min	1%		2%	0%	3%	0%
Max	419%		1000%	443%	407%	767%
Chorus Type						
Professional	107%		91%	71%	86%	77%
Symphony	184%		41%	137%	79%	268%
Volunteer	57%		98%	26%	34%	40%
Children/Youth	18%		23%	68%	77%	107%
Budget Size						
More than \$1,000,000	115%		88%	116%	147%	189%
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	93%		42%	166%	67%	86%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	49%		45%	7%	35%	66%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	22%		23%	41%	35%	29%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	88%		44%	40%	27%	98%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	46%		77%	44%	59%	10%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	51%		66%	43%	31%	63%
Under \$25,000	36%		513%	80%	n.d.	n.d.

4.04 Ratio of Cash Reserves to Expenses	2006/07		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses						
Average	34%		34%	28%	39%	26%
Median	23%		20%	14%	20%	19%
Min	1%		0%	0%	2%	0%
Max	262%		857%	338%	580%	112%
Chorus Type						
Professional	13%		11%	33%	33%	21%
Symphony	145%		11%	21%	21%	31%
Volunteer	36%		37%	23%	23%	29%
Children/Youth	23%		21%	10%	10%	20%
Budget Size						
More than \$1,000,000	8%		7%	10%	10%	13%
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	5%		25%	14%	14%	23%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	23%		20%	20%	20%	18%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	8%		17%	20%	20%	23%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	13%		32%	22%	22%	29%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	26%		20%	32%	32%	22%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	34%		28%	35%	35%	40%
Under \$25,000	30%		66%	47%	47%	36%

Planned Giving

Planned giving programs are used to solicit funds from donors interested in securing a chorus' long-term success and the ability to make a planned gift. In 2010/11, we asked choruses if they had planned giving programs in effect to establish a baseline understanding level of how the practice is used. Table 4.05 shows that about one in four (24 percent) of choruses have a planned giving program in effect, more often in professional and symphony choruses. [Table 4.05]

4.05 Planned Giving Program in Effect		Budget Size	
		Over \$1,000,000	76%
Type of Chorus		\$500,000 - \$999,999	57%
		\$250,000 - \$499,999	21%
All Choruses		\$150,000 - \$249,999	23%
		\$100,000 - \$149,999	23%
Professional	28%	\$50,000 - \$99,999	21%
Symphony	44%	\$25,000 - \$49,999	9%
Volunteer	23%	Under \$25,000	5%
Children	14%	Budget not reported	16%

5. Chorus Organization and Management Practices

Chorus membership levels (i.e., the number of singers) are shown in Table 5.01 for responding choruses; they're very similar to prior years (in the *Report* for 2010/11, the average number of singers across all choruses was 114, and the median was 66). [Table 5.01]

5.01 Number of Chorus Members		Type of Chorus		Budget Size	
				Over \$1,000,000	270
All Choruses		Professional		\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	146
				\$250,000 - \$499,999	149
Average		Symphony		\$150,000 - \$249,999	105
				\$100,000 - \$149,999	83
Median	66	Volunteer		\$50,000 - \$99,999	61
Min	8			\$25,000 - \$49,999	53
Max	950	Children		Under \$25,000	32
				Budget not reported	112

Table 5.02 shows what choruses told us about how members help cover the costs of maintaining a performing chorus. About three quarters of responding choruses asked choristers to pay dues, except for children/youth choruses, which more routinely charge tuition compared to other chorus types. About one third (30 percent) asked singers to pay for their music. Annual auditions were standard in about 32 percent of responding choruses, with volunteer choruses least likely to require an audition. Table 5.03 shows what singers paid in tuition and dues. Median tuition was over \$535, charged most often by children/youth choruses. Median dues were \$125 as in 2010/11. [Tables 5.02 and 5.03]

5.02 Chorus Requiring Members to ...	Provide Apparel	Pay Dues	Pay Tuition	Purchase Own Music	Audition Annually
Type of Chorus					
All	73%	41%	69%	30%	32%
Professional	62%	62%	79%	12%	36%
Symphony	82%	27%	73%	45%	36%
Volunteer	83%	24%	85%	43%	24%
Children	50%	75%	3%	3%	42%
Budget Size					
Over \$1,000,000	65%	82%	71%	18%	53%
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	88%	63%	88%	38%	38%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	79%	74%	47%	21%	53%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	82%	36%	82%	41%	36%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	93%	21%	93%	50%	43%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	89%	47%	95%	32%	42%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	100%	22%	100%	30%	17%
Under \$25,000	91%	45%	91%	50%	18%
Budget not reported	44%	27%	36%	19%	22%

5.03 Annual Member Fees	Tuition	Dues
All Chorus		
Average	\$ 133	\$ 787
Median	\$ 125	\$ 535
Min	\$ -	\$ 5
Max	\$ 450	\$ 2,600
Type of Chorus		
Professional	n.d.	n.d.
Symphony	\$ 125	\$ 178
Volunteer	\$ 125	\$ 133
Children	\$ 800	\$ 108
Budget Size		
Over \$1,000,000	\$1,181	\$132
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	\$ 500	\$205
\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$ 840	\$154
\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$ 695	\$132
\$100,000 - \$149,999	n.d.	\$145
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$ 400	\$124
\$25,000 - \$49,999	n.d.	n.d.
under \$25,000	\$ 135	\$101
Budget not reported	\$ 865	\$109

6. Governance

This section presents data on the governance practices of responding choruses, including board meeting activity and membership, contribution policies, and singer participation. There is also new data for 2011/12 on an issue first explored in 2010/11: parent and alumni participation on children/youth chorus boards.

Board Practices

The boards of responding choruses ranged in size from two to 62 members. Boards generally met eight to nine times a year. These numbers have been stable for some years, and are comparable to practices in other arts and other nonprofit organizations of a similar size. Generally, larger-budget chorus boards had more members but met less often. [Table 6.01]

6.01 Board Activity	Board Size	Annual Meetings
All Choruses		
Average	12	8
Median	11	9
Min	4	1
Max	71	20
Type of Chorus		
Professional	12	8
Symphony	16	7
Volunteer	16	9
Children	11	9
Budget Size		
Over \$1,000,000	24	6
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	16	7
\$250,000 - \$499,999	13	8
\$150,000 - \$249,999	12	9
\$100,000 - \$149,999	12	9
\$50,000 - \$99,999	10	8
\$25,000 - \$49,999	9	9
under \$25,000	7	7
Budget not reported	11	9

Singer Participation on Boards

Choruses benefit from their singers' contribution to governance, as shown in Table 6.02. For all choruses, 65 percent of board members are singers; the percentage for volunteer choruses is 77 percent. It is not surprising that board members are singers in responding smaller-budget and volunteer choruses, but even in the largest-budget choruses, significant numbers of board members are also chorus singers. [Table 6.02]

6.02 Singers as a Fraction of Chorus Boards				Budget Size	
				Over \$1,000,000	31%
				\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	33%
				\$250,000 - \$499,999	50%
				\$150,000 - \$249,999	64%
				\$100,000 - \$149,999	70%
All Choruses		Type of Chorus		\$50,000 - \$99,999	62%
Average	65%	Professional	39%	\$25,000 - \$49,999	78%
Median	69%	Symphony	57%	under \$25,000	77%
Min	3%	Volunteer	77%	Budget not reported	86%
Max	100%	Children	45%		

Board Member Contribution Policies

Tables 6.03 through 6.07 show how responding chorus board members financially supported their choruses. Fifty nine percent of responding choruses explicitly asked or made direct suggestions to board members for support. Fewer smaller-budget and volunteer chorus boards had this policy, but it is the case for a majority of all types and sizes (except one budget range), and is the case for all responding choruses with budgets over \$500,000. [Table 6.03]

6.03 Choruses that Suggest a Board Contribution		Budget Size	
			Over \$1,000,000
	\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	100%	
	\$250,000 - \$499,999	84%	
Type of Chorus		\$150,000 - \$249,999	55%
All Choruses	59%	\$100,000 - \$149,999	64%
Professional	70%	\$50,000 - \$99,999	58%
Symphony	78%	\$25,000 - \$49,999	35%
Volunteer	47%	Under \$25,000	23%
Children/Youth	83%	Budget not reported	55%

Seventeen percent of respondents had a suggested “give and get” amount that choruses expect board members will bring to the organization. Board members solicit funds from others to meet the “get” goal, which supplements their own “give.” Table 6.04 shows the share of choruses that implement a “give and get” policy, and Table 6.05 shows the suggested amounts for both “give and get” policies and general board contributions. Both the average and median amounts are higher than the last *Report*, pulled upwards by a big increase in fundraising expected of volunteer chorus Board members. [Tables 6.04 and 6.05]

6.04 Choruses that Suggest a "Give and Get" Amount		Budget Size	
			Over \$1,000,000
	\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	0%	
	\$250,000 - \$499,999	37%	
Type of Chorus		\$150,000 - \$249,999	18%
All Choruses	18%	\$100,000 - \$149,999	7%
Professional	21%	\$50,000 - \$99,999	16%
Symphony	11%	\$25,000 - \$49,999	9%
Volunteer	14%	Under \$25,000	9%
Children/Youth	28%	Budget not reported	16%

6.05 Suggested Board Giving Levels	Suggested "Give and Get" Amount	Suggested Contribution
All Choruses		
Average	\$1,202	\$612
Median	\$500	\$5
Min	\$0	\$0
Max	\$5,000	\$5,000
Type of Chorus		
Professional	\$1,569	\$621
Symphony	\$1,418	\$1,349
Volunteer	\$2,000	\$429
Children	\$853	\$288
Budget Size		
Over \$1,000,000	\$3,143	\$2,550
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	n.d.	\$813
\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$1,275	\$338
\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$344	\$115
\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$500	\$28
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$183	\$259
\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$538	\$75
Under \$25,000	\$800	\$24
Budget not reported	\$250	\$153

Support from Board members is typically a major cornerstone of total fundraising. Total board giving in dollars is reported in Table 6.06, showing steady growth in the average, and the impact of those gifts in defraying total expenses is in Table 6.07. Averages fluctuate from year to year, but Table 6.06 shows that Board giving in 2011/12 was on the high end of recent years' figures. Table 6.07 shows that the Board of the median chorus donated four to five percent of budgets in recent years including for 2011/12. It is not surprising that the Boards of the smallest budget choruses also provide proportionally more support than their counterparts in larger-budget groups. [Tables 6.06 and 6.07]

6.06 Total Board Financial Contribution	2006/07		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses						
Average	\$16,827		\$15,903	\$21,124	\$25,165	\$25,679
Median	\$4,500		\$3,012	\$4,200	\$4,000	\$5,000
Min	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Max	\$585,000		\$562,288	\$654,560	\$611,156	\$694,000
Chorus Type						
Professional	\$57,563		\$46,455	\$6,710	\$74,990	\$67,510
Symphony	\$6,962		\$32,970	\$69,775	\$14,204	\$18,236
Volunteer	\$8,754		\$8,374	\$13,057	\$11,963	\$14,463
Children/Youth	\$7,096		\$15,664	\$67,870	\$9,147	\$20,614
Budget Size						
More than \$1,000,000	\$177,251		\$152,369	\$181,633	\$172,329	\$186,813
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	\$21,745		\$ 32,004	\$ 36,604	\$ 72,272	\$ 19,861
\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$17,551		\$ 16,281	\$ 13,847	\$ 13,914	\$ 14,294
\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$12,271		\$ 9,502	\$ 11,307	\$ 11,558	\$ 11,983
\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$7,754		\$ 5,503	\$ 6,246	\$ 5,507	\$ 13,229
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$6,702		\$ 3,376	\$ 5,888	\$ 3,624	\$ 5,488
\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$4,272		\$ 3,399	\$ 1,878	\$ 3,409	\$ 2,638
Under \$25,000	\$1,687		\$ 1,245	\$ 1,491	\$ 1,992	\$ 1,520
Budget not reported	\$6,941		\$ 4,561	\$ 4,090	\$ 6,394	\$ 7,753

6.07 Board Contributions as a Portion of Total Expenses	2006/07		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses						
Average	7%		9%	10%	8%	9%
Median	4%		4%	5%	5%	4%
Min	0%		0%	0%	0%	0%
Max	82%		386%	427%	95%	120%
Chorus Type						
Professional	12%		9%	10%	10%	12%
Symphony	4%		4%	4%	4%	8%
Volunteer	7%		11%	9%	9%	9%
Children/Youth	2%		3%	6%	6%	4%
Budget Size						
More than \$1,000,000	8%		7%	8%	11%	10%
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	3%		5%	10%	6%	3%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	4%		5%	4%	4%	4%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	5%		5%	6%	5%	6%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	6%		4%	5%	5%	11%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	8%		5%	5%	8%	7%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	9%		8%	10%	5%	8%
Under \$25,000	8%		24%	19%	29%	17%

Parent and Alumni Involvement in Children/Youth Chorus Governance

This is the third year reporting answers to new questions about how parents and alumni participate in the governance of children and youth choruses, and there is data from 35 choruses on involvement of parents of current or alumni singers, along with alumni themselves. Table 6.08 shows that, in almost all cases (97 percent), parents of current singers serve on chorus boards, and alumni singers and parents also frequently serve on governance or advisory boards. Table 6.09 shows that in their various roles, parents and alumni have significant shares of overall Board membership in children/youth choruses. [Tables 6.08 and 6.09]

6.08 Parent and Alumni Participation in Chorus Boards		2013
Parents of one or more current singers serve on the board	97%	34
Parents of one or more alumni parent serve on the board	80%	28
One or more alumni singer(s) serve on the board	43%	15
Parents serve on a Parents Advisory Board/Council	26%	9

6.09 Parent and Alumni Participation in Chorus Boards			
Budget range	Average Board Size	Parents or Alumni on Board	Parent/Alumni Share of Board
\$1 million and over	18	9	50%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	7	10	56%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	12	7	54%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	11	7	54%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	7	4	57%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	18	10	67%
Under \$25,000	7	6	86%
Budget not reported	9	8	78%

7. Staffing and Compensation

Chorus Staffing

This section summarizes chorus responses regarding paid and volunteer staff, including part- or full-time work status. Overall, paid staff numbers from responding choruses grew considerably over 2010/11 levels. Most all choruses (77 percent) reported at least one full- or part-time paid staff person. Across all types, configurations for responding choruses were:

Zero paid staff: 23%
 Full-time only: 3%
 Part-time only: 44%
 Full-and part-time: 30%

Overall, median paid staff was seven, more than for most prior years. The great majority of staff members in responding choruses work part-time and most of the growth total staff comes from higher numbers of part-timers. Full-time staff members were most common in the largest budget groups. Almost half (45 percent) reported at least one volunteer staffer, and overall volunteering levels were stable from past years [Tables 7.01, 7.02, and 7.03].

7.01 Total Paid Staff	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Chorus					
Average	4	5	5	6	10
Median	2	3	3	3	7
Min	0	0	0	0	2
Max	64	57	60	53	44
Share of respondents	78%	88%	87%	85%	31%
Chorus Type					
Professional	4	4	3	6	8
Symphony	3	7	4	5	9
Volunteer	3	3	12	3	8
Children/Youth	9	11	6	13	14
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	23	16	16	16	18
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	10	9	6	6	9
\$250,000 - \$499,999	7	8	8	11	10
\$150,000 - \$249,999	6	5	6	5	4
\$100,000 - \$149,999	5	4	4	3	5
\$50,000 - \$99,999	2	3	4	2	n.d.
\$25,000 - \$49,999	2	1	2	3	3
Under \$25,000	1	1	1	1	n.d.
Budget not reported	2	3	6	4	9

7.02 Fraction of Paid Staff that is Full-Time	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Chorus					
Average	18%	16%	14%	19%	39%
Median	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%
Min	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%
Max	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%
Chorus Type					
Professional	36%	38%	6%	34%	53%
Symphony	19%	28%	27%	16%	43%
Volunteer	11%	9%	19%	12%	42%
Children/Youth	24%	18%	49%	21%	26%
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	54%	60%	47%	34%	55%
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	51%	37%	58%	16%	45%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	29%	29%	33%	12%	29%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	23%	15%	9%	21%	38%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	14%	3%	8%	8%	23%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	10%	8%	4%	4%	n.d.
\$25,000 - \$49,999	8%	8%	3%	3%	34%
Under \$25,000	0%	5%	8%	8%	n.d.

7.03 Volunteer Staff	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
All Choruses					
Average	5	8	7	12	12
Median	1	0	0	1	5
Min	0	0	0	0	1
Max	190	400	240	600	100
Share of respondents	58%	45%	48%	49%	45%
Chorus Type					
Professional	1	4	5	7	11
Symphony	4	3	3	5	8
Volunteer	5	3	22	11	10
Children/Youth	12	27	1	24	18
Budget Size					
More than \$1,000,000	0	10	7	2	4
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	1	1	20	7	12
\$250,000 - \$499,999	7	27	25	39	15
\$150,000 - \$249,999	13	4	13	6	23
\$100,000 - \$149,999	3	3	3	4	16
\$50,000 - \$99,999	6	4	2	4	14
\$25,000 - \$49,999	3	4	1	5	9
Under \$25,000	3	1	2	2	3
Budget not reported	6	9	20	10	9

Accompanist and Singer Compensation

Choral singers and accompanists rehearsed and performed under a variety of compensation arrangements. We asked specifically about payment practices such as annual salaries, stipends, and pay by rehearsal and/or performance, or by the hour for rehearsals and/or performances. Table 7.04 shows the employment status of accompanists, and singers (employee vs. independent contractor) among respondent choruses; almost all accompanists are reported as employees, and all singers are reported as independent contractors. Just over one fifth (21 percent) of choruses pay accompanists an annual salary, with a median of \$7,000. Choral singers were compensated by 39 percent of responding choruses, an increase over 21 percent the prior year. [Tables 7.04, 7.05, and 7.06]⁵

7.04 Payment Status of Accompanists, and Singers		
	Accompanists	Singers
Respondents	38	17
Independent Contractor Share	3%	100%
Employee Share	97%	0%

⁵ Compensation data reported here for accompanists and singers are in aggregate. We also capture compensation data for chief artistic and administrative leaders. These figures are available to member choruses on request. To request a salary study, contact at Chorus America via email at membership@chorusamerica.org.

7.05 Accompanist Payment Practices	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Fraction paying accompanists in some form	75%	82%	77%	77%	57%
Paying annual salary	25%	27%	35%	26%	21%
Minimum annual salary	\$1,500	\$260	\$0	\$125	\$125
Maximum annual salary	\$45,176	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000
Median annual salary	\$7,407	\$5,920	\$4,192	\$6,824	\$7,000
Paying per performance	28%	33%	46%	41%	8%
Minimum performance fee	\$28	\$40	\$0	\$32	\$20
Maximum performance fee	\$575	\$1,500	\$600	\$600	\$4,360
Median performance fee	\$125	\$147	\$125	\$150	\$100
Paying per rehearsal	28%	31%	39%	32%	31%
Minimum rehearsal fee	\$0	\$15	\$0	\$15	\$20
Maximum rehearsal fee	\$150	\$100	\$1,850	\$1,850	\$300
Median rehearsal fee	\$80	\$40	\$35	\$40	\$40
Paying hourly rehearsal fee	24%	19%	30%	20%	16%
Minimum hourly rehearsal fee	\$15	\$25	\$0	\$15	\$20
Maximum hourly rehearsal fee	\$140	\$150	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$130
Median hourly rehearsal fee	\$35	\$50	\$35	\$46	\$40
Paying hourly performance fee	11%	30%	40%	35%	22%
Minimum hourly performance fee	\$25	\$25	\$0	\$30	\$125
Maximum hourly performance fee	\$200	\$235	\$235	\$235	\$70,000
Median hourly performance fee	\$56	\$90	\$75	\$83	\$6,350
Paying hourly fee for recording / other	n.d.	5%	17%	14%	21%
Minimum fee for recording / other	n.d.	\$25	\$0	\$15	\$15
Maximum fee for recording / other	n.d.	\$159	\$1,000	\$125	\$65
Median fee for recording / other	n.d.	\$68	\$0	\$34	\$40

7.06 Choral Singer Payment Practices	2006/07	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Percentage paying singers in some form	18%	17%	16%	21%	39%
Paying rehearsal fee	28%	10%	18%	7%	8%
Minimum rehearsal fee	\$0	\$9	\$10	\$15	\$18
Maximum rehearsal fee	\$150	\$200	\$110	\$125	\$950
Median rehearsal fee	\$80	\$48	\$52	\$50	\$18
Paying per performance	28%	13%	13%	13%	6%
Minimum performance fee	\$28	\$17	\$35	\$30	\$25
Maximum performance fee	\$575	\$375	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$10,005
Median performance fee	\$125	\$95	\$18	\$100	\$51
Paying hourly rehearsal fee	24%	6%	8%	6%	1%
Minimum hourly rehearsal fee	\$15	\$8	\$8	\$18	\$475
Maximum hourly rehearsal fee	\$140	\$1,850	\$50	\$40	\$2,185
Median hourly rehearsal fee	\$35	\$23	\$22	\$25	\$1,330
Paying hourly performance fee	11%	3%	4%	3%	7%
Minimum hourly performance fee	\$25	\$11	\$10	\$18	\$15
Maximum hourly performance fee	\$200	\$100	\$100	\$125	\$950
Median hourly performance fee	\$56	\$36	\$20	\$40	\$23

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About the Author

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About Chorus America

Chorus America is the advocacy, research, and leadership development organization that advances the choral field. We support and serve choral conductors, administrators, board members, and singers with tools, training, peer networking, and access so that choruses are better able to contribute to their communities.

More than 2,000 choruses, individuals, businesses, and organizations are members of Chorus America and have access to a wide array of programs, publications, research, and personal services developed for their benefit. These services strengthen their ability to build strong organizations that foster quality choral performances.

Chorus America is governed by a diverse board of accomplished arts leaders from across North America, and the executive staff is headquartered in Washington, DC. Learn more at www.chorusamerica.org.

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