

# 2023 Membership Briefing



*Sweet Adelines*  
INTERNATIONAL

Over the last three years, Sweet Adelines have been presented with intense and complex challenges. Like most people in the world, our members were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through innovation, collaboration, and the strength of our incredible musical bonds, Sweet Adelines have come through the experience with new knowledge and a greater appreciation for what our music means to us as singers and to our audiences as well.

In 2022, the organization completed a Member Perception Survey. [View the results of this survey on the the Sweet Adelines International website.](#)

Among many insights provided by the survey, we learned that our members want increased membership engagement and outreach, continuing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) work, and more singing, performance, and educational opportunities. The international organization prioritizes those results when developing goals and strategic plans.

The ongoing support of our members has allowed the organization to transform and expand programs for singers. The ***2023 Membership Briefing*** is designed to give members an overview of the organization's activities, benefits, and goals. We hope it reflects Sweet Adelines International's commitment to members and to the musical genre that brings us together.







# INTERNATIONAL

***2023 International Champion**  
**Rich-Tone Chorus** wowed the crowd  
and the judges at our International  
Convention & Competition in Phoenix,  
Arizona (USA).*

# Watch us Grow!

The inaugural *Ignite the Sound membership growth initiative* focused on recruiting new members, retaining current members, and creating an archive of resources from Sweet Adelines choruses and regions.

***The Contest:*** The Ignite the Sound grand contest ran from June 1, 2022 through April 30, 2023 with a goal of recruiting 1,078 members. We exceeded that goal, **gaining 1,750** new members by the end of the contest!

Throughout the grand contest, we also held micro-contests in which Sweet Adelines choruses and quartets won a combined total of **\$13,000 USD**, plus virtual coaching (for chapter with greatest net percent growth and for region with greatest net percent quartet growth) and, of course, glory!



## Ignite the Sound

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*A Membership Growth Initiative*

[www.sweetadelines.com/membership](http://www.sweetadelines.com/membership)



*Since June 6, 2022,*  
**Our Sweet Adelines Family** has grown by...

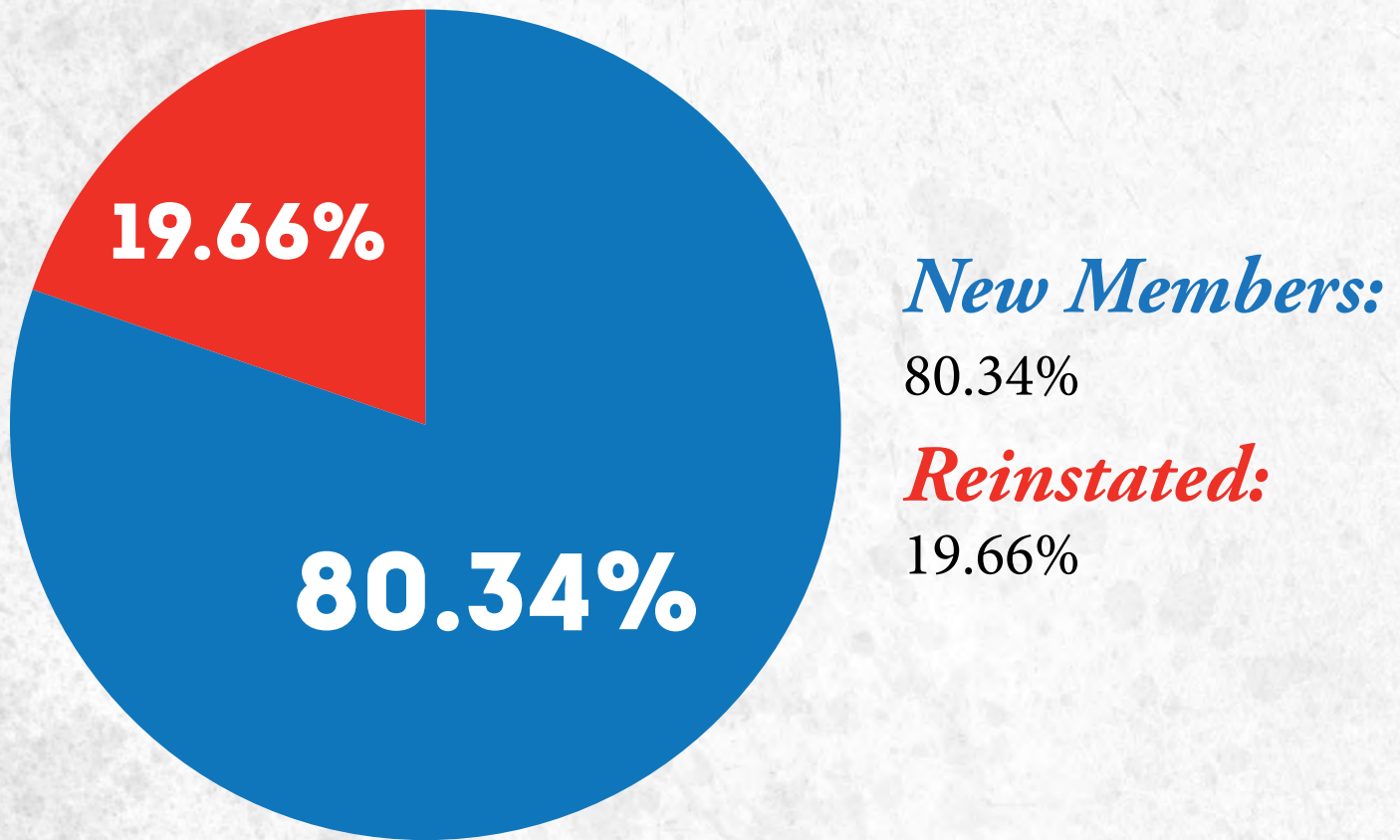
**1750** *singers!*

*Goal  
Exceeded  
by 62%!*



# New Members

## (by Type)



# Getting To Know Our New Members...

*As part of Ignite the Sound*, brand new Sweet Adelines were invited to a series of Meet the President sessions (planned with our many time zones in mind!). At these lively sessions, new members could ask questions and speak with International President Thérèse Antonini about what they can expect from joining our organization. Quarterly sessions for new members will continue with our Membership Retention Committee and HQ Membership Department.





# Resource Library

All the great recruitment/retention resources created by members were collected into the *Ignite the Sound Resource Library* which remains available on the Sweet Adelines International website for members to access and use.



[www.sweetadelines.com/membership](http://www.sweetadelines.com/membership)



# Archived Resources

<i>Resources</i>	<i>Contributing Chorus</i>
Open Auditions	Talk of Tulsa Show Chorus
Open Auditions	OK City Chorus
The Power of Exit Surveys	HQ Staff
Create A Chorus Commercial	Endeavour Harmony, Grand Rapids and Lions Gate Chorus
Bring on a Chorus Intern	High Desert Harmony Chorus
“Members-First” Approach	Lone Star Chorus
Member Recognition Ideas	HQ Staff
Fundraising Ideas	HQ Staff
Cultivating Your Chorus Culture	Membership Retention Committee
MeetUp • Account Creation and Adding Event	HQ Staff
Create event graphics in a flash...using Canva! (A FREE design program). Watch tutorials to create graphics for your social media channels and upcoming events!	HQ Staff
Redefining the Visual Voice	Upper Chesapeake Chorus
Take the Guess Work Out of Your Next Guest Night	Bridges of Harmony Chorus
Make Your Singing Valentines Even Sweeter!	HQ Staff
Rebranding (Before and After)	Vocal Harmonix Chorus



**GOAL:**  
**1,750**  
**NEW**  
**MEMBERS**

***Ignite the Sound, Vol. 2:*** Following the success of the first Ignite the Sound initiative, we launched Ignite the Sound, Vol. 2 in June 2023 to continue the momentum. Once again, we are offering monetary and other prizes through a series of new ***Micro-Contests*** and the ***Grand Contest***. This time, our goal is to gain **1,750 new members** by April 30, 2024. We will also continue to collect, curate, and publish recruitment and retention ideas from our members for inclusion in the ***Ignite the Sound Resource Library***.

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[www.sweetadelines.com/membership](http://www.sweetadelines.com/membership)



# Regional Competition

*After two years of cancelled or virtual Regional Competition during the pandemic, Sweet Adelines were overjoyed to return to the stage.* Our return to live, in-person competition was marked by enthusiastic engagement and participation – and, of course, incredible barbershop music! The information below represents the numerical story of our return to the regional risers.

## 2022

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**8,320**

*Total Participants in all contests*

**258**

*Total Competing Quartets*

**257**

*Total Competing Choruses*

## 2023

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**11,412**

*Total Participants in all contests*

**338**

*Total Competing Quartets*

**337**

*Total Competing Choruses*

**GOAL**

**\$200K**

**RAISED**

**\$260,893**





The *Support Life on a High Note Campaign* provides the opportunity for members to support Sweet Adelines by giving to their passion through one or more of the following funds: Education, Scholarship, Young Singers, or Greatest Need. The Campaign officially kicked off just prior to the 2022 International Convention and concluded in April 2023. In total, Sweet Adelines has raised nearly \$511,000 (USD) in philanthropic support in fiscal year 2022/2023.

Our Support Life on a High Note Campaign exceeded the \$200,000 (USD) goal and raised \$260,893 in pledges and cash gifts received from over 761 generous donors. The generosity of our donors enabled Sweet Adelines to award 31 inaugural scholarships to the directors of small and mid-sized choruses, to offer five music education grants for programs providing barbershop education and performance opportunities to young singers in local communities, and to award one Bev Sellers Scholarship. With an additional extraordinary gift of \$250,000 (USD) received from one of our members, our goal to provide high-quality, accessible education vital to the Sweet Adelines mission was realized with the acquisition of a new Learning Management System (LMS). This platform will improve access and transform the way in which we are able to provide education for our members.

**Additional**  
**\$250K GIFT**  
**for a Learning Management System.**





The *Sweet Adelines International Board of Directors* adopted a goal in the 2019 Strategic Plan to expand access to educational opportunities by providing members with a Learning Management System (LMS). Within the next year, this goal will become a reality thanks to a generous gift of \$250,000 USD from Sarah Nainan-Newhard, a member of Sweet Adelines International.

The *LMS* provides Sweet Adelines with an e-learning program to create and deliver interactive content, monitor participation, and assess progress within created courses. The first program that will be made available to members on the LMS will be the Directors Certification Program. The curriculum has already been created. In the future, we will have the ability to build and craft new educational curriculum in a fully interactive setting.

# Website Enhancements

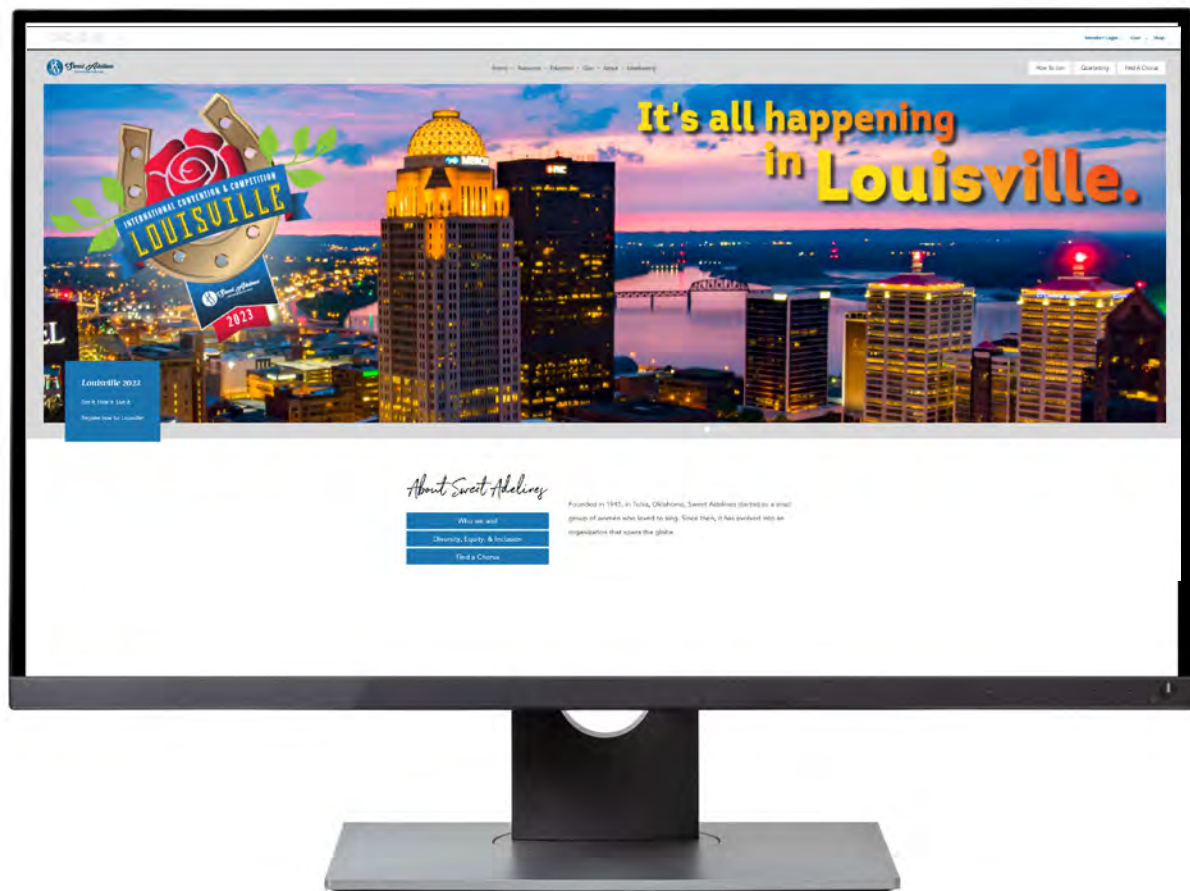
The *Sweet Adelines International website* is the virtual home for thousands of members all over the world. There, members can find education, register for events, and so much more. The website, which receives hundreds of thousands of views annually, is also where we first encounter potential members. Here are a few of the enhancements we've made to our web presence in the last 12 months.

*Song Assessment Tool (SAT)* and *Song Evaluation Database (SED)*: The SAT and SED were designed to provide ensembles with tools to learn about the songs they are singing and to highlight inclusion aspects to consider in selecting their repertoire. The SAT and SED is also utilized as an official evaluation method of a song's appropriateness for public performance by groups or individuals representing Sweet Adelines International.

*Regional, International Competitor Portals*: Online portals streamline the registration process and house important information for regional and international competitors.

*Quartet Portal*: The Quartet Portal provides an individual space for each registered quartet to access essential information, receive and submit forms, documents, and other information.

*Judge Portal*: The Judge Portal keeps all resources for judges, panel secretaries, and panel chairs in one place for ease of use.





# Increased Online Presence

***TikTok:*** Our TikTok presence welcomes a new audience to Sweet Adelines. Since we first joined the platform, we have gained over 8,000 followers. Our most popular TikTok has over 1 million views and counting, but the most exciting thing about our presence on this platform is the many positive interactions with young singers who want to be Sweet Adelines someday.

***Competition Coverage:*** Our marketing and communications department dedicates a writer to social media posting during the Diamond Division and Rising Star Quartet Contests and all international performances. We receive extremely positive feedback from members and fans.

***Diamond Division/Rising Star Livestream:*** Hundreds of people attended our Rising Star and Diamond Division Quartet Contests, and thousands more tuned into our popular livestream.



[@SweetAdelinesIntl](#)



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[@SweetAdelineIntl](#)



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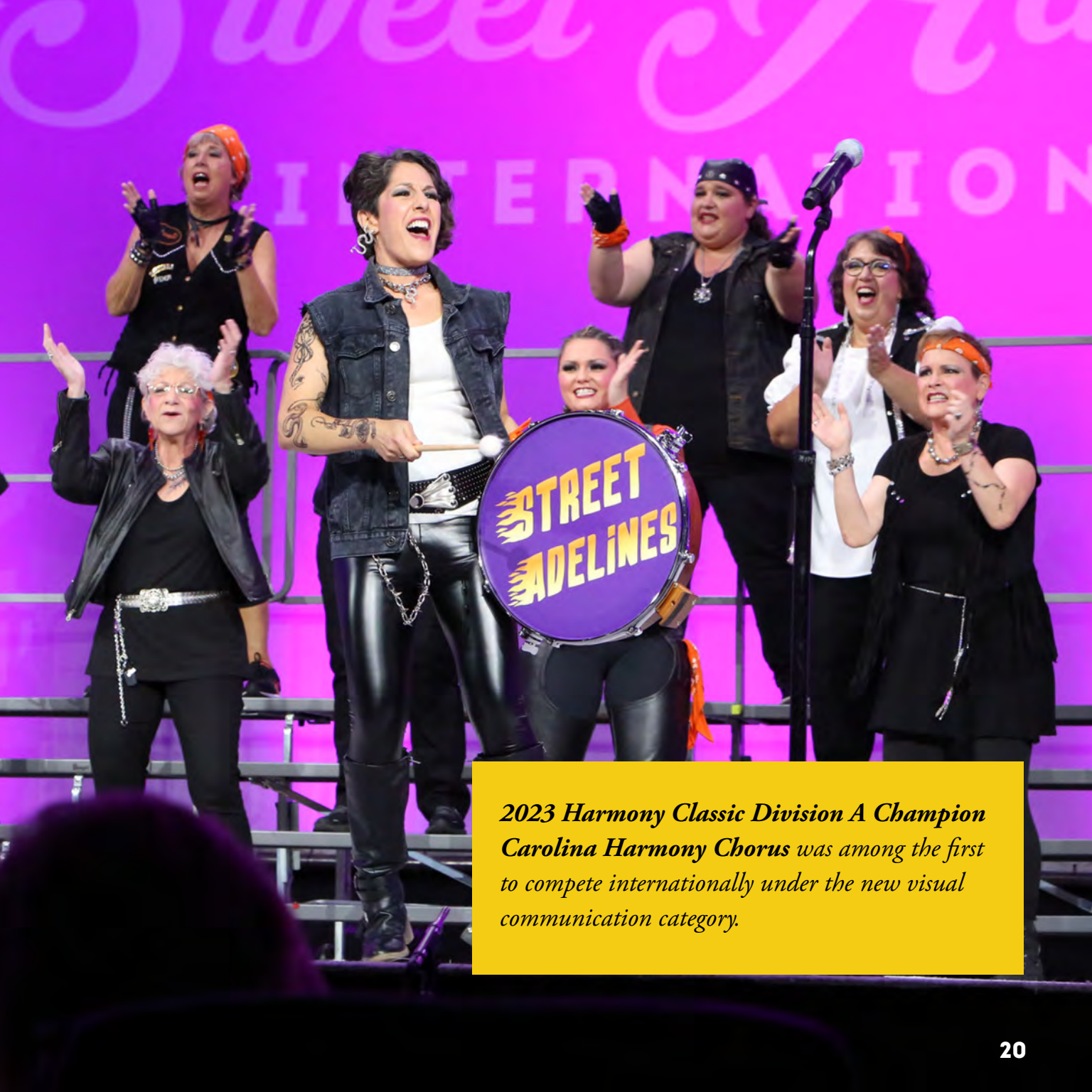


*Over*  
8,000 followers  
*since August*  
*2022!*

# Visual Communication Category

In 2020, the Sweet Adelines International Judging Program assessed what was then the “Showmanship” category following member feedback. Ultimately, the category was updated and renamed *Visual Communication* to reflect a more contemporary Sweet Adelines and encourage creativity and innovation in the way music is communicated to audiences through visual means. The new category took effect in October 2021.





*2023 Harmony Classic Division A Champion  
Carolina Harmony Chorus was among the first  
to compete internationally under the new visual  
communication category.*

# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

***DEI Council:*** As part of the organization's ongoing commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the Sweet Adelines International Board of Directors appointed the first cohort of members of the new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council. The DEI Council works closely with other International Committees and Headquarters and has two subcommittees that report to it: the Chorus Toolkit Subcommittee and the Song Assessment Tool Subcommittee.

***Chorus Toolkit:*** The Chorus Toolkit was created to provide actionable resources for regions, choruses, and quartets to examine their individual cultures and to take steps towards an organization-wide culture of belonging.

***Song Assessment Tool (SAT) and Song Evaluation Database (SED):*** The SAT and SED were designed to provide ensembles with tools to learn about the songs they are singing and to highlight inclusion aspects to consider in selecting their repertoire. The SAT and SED are also utilized as official evaluation methods of a song's appropriateness for public performance by groups or individuals representing Sweet Adelines International.



***DEI Council Member Charity Jordan***  
*presented “Happy Together: Bravely  
Bringing Sweet Adelines Together Through  
Inclusion” at the 2022 International  
Education Symposium (IES).*



# Celebrating Longevity



*Barbershop singing is a lifelong endeavor.* Sweet Adelines often remain in the organization for 60+ years. Each year, we celebrate the enduring friendships and invaluable contributions of our 50- and 60-year members during our International Convention & Competition. The international organization hosts a breakfast during convention, and 50- and 60-year members are also honored on stage during the chorus competition. Each member receives a commemorative pin and letter from Sweet Adelines International, and the Marketing and Communications Department creates a video showcasing these dedicated singers.







# Member Benefits

The *Director Certification Program (DCP)* is an educational, self-paced program, designed to provide opportunities to validate the skills and knowledge required to direct a Sweet Adelines chorus. Philanthropy helps to fund director education.

The *Arranger Certification Program (ACP)* is an educational program designed to provide additional training and further develop skills for Sweet Adelines International potential arrangers, as well as directors, quartet members and musical leaders who would like a better understanding of how to analyze and arrange music in the barbershop style. Philanthropy funds scholarships here.

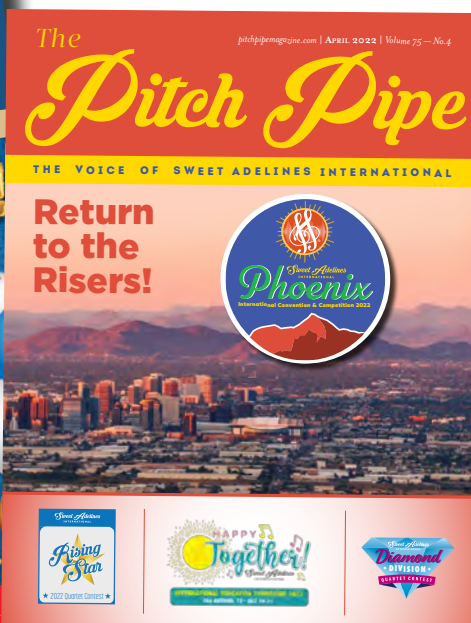
The *International Judging Program (IJP)* trains and certifies judges for Sweet Adelines International competition. Thanks to our generous donors, the judging scholarship was increased from \$750 to \$1,000 USD.





***The Sweet Adelines Judging Program ensures a continuing slate of knowledgeable judges for the future of our organization. Shown is the official Judging Panel from the 2022 International Convention & Competition in Phoenix, Arizona (USA).***





***The Quarter Note:*** In 2022, the former *BarbershopNOW* newsletter was updated and rebranded as *The Quarter Note*. Published quarterly in between issues of *The Pitch Pipe* magazine, *The Quarter Note* provides a quick, accessible snapshot of important deadlines, news, and information from the Sweet Adelines world.

***The Pitch Pipe:*** *The Pitch Pipe* magazine transitioned to a digital format in 2021. This new format means that our popular and long-running magazine now includes video clips, interactive features, and links to resources. The digital magazine enhances accessibility for those who use screen readers and other aids. Archiving past issues of *The Pitch Pipe* is an ongoing project.

The ***Overtone Visionaries Report*** is the result of an update and rebranding of the *Donor Honor Roll*. This online publication is produced bi-annually to recognize our generous donors and share the impact philanthropic support is making possible for Sweet Adelines.

### ***International Education Symposium (IES):***

Open to Sweet Adelines members and non-members, IES provides a full weekend of world-class barbershop music education.

### ***Directors and Visual Leaders Seminar (DVLS):***

Designed to provide education and inspiration for musical directors and visual leaders, DVLS offers a weekend of classes and bonding for these hard-working leaders.

***Rising Star/Diamond Division:*** The Rising Star and Diamond Division Quartet Contests offer opportunities for a variety of age groups. Many Rising Star quartets have gone on to become international competitors (and champions!). The Rising Star Quartet Contest awards and other costs associated with producing this contest are provided through generous donations. Our inaugural Diamond Division Quartet Contest in 2022 was so popular that competitor slots for 2023 filled up almost immediately!







*Singers from Region 25 had a great time at the **2022 International Education Symposium**. Philanthropic support provides \$1,000 USD scholarships for directors of small and mid-sized choruses to attend IES and DVLS.*





*The popular Sweet Adelines International Convention & Competition webcast brought performances like this one from **Pearls of the Sound Chorus** to viewers around the world.*



### *International Convention & Competition:*

During the pandemic lockdown, Sweet Adelines International cancelled all in-person competitions, including our historic international convention, for the safety of our members and audiences. We held our first online convention, with education and activities, during the 2020 lockdown. In 2022, we returned to in-person gatherings with the International Convention & Competition in Phoenix, Arizona (USA). Over 3,500 performers and supporters attended this mindfully-organized event to experience the joy of barbershop harmony, friendship, and education.

*Webcast:* For the first time, Sweet Adelines International charged a fee (\$25 USD) for our 2022 International Convention & Competition. It was a resounding success, with 4,000 unique viewers per day from 19 countries, many representing watch parties of barbershop fans gathered to enjoy the performances.



### ***International Faculty Program (IFP):***

The IFP is comprised of members of Sweet Adelines International who are proficient in vocal and visual performance, organizational management, and leadership development. Members accepted into the program have demonstrated the ability to teach and train in music and/or administrative aspects of Sweet Adelines International. International Faculty serve as ambassadors of the organization in all capacities. The IFP Directory was recently updated for improved user experience and accessibility.

***Scholarships:*** The generosity of our donors enabled Sweet Adelines to award 31 inaugural scholarships for directors of small and mid-sized choruses and one Bev Sellers Scholarship.

***Youth outreach grants:*** Thanks to generous donors, Sweet Adelines International provided \$25,000 USD in youth outreach grants. These music education grants provided barbershop education and performance opportunities to young singers in local communities. These grants help ensure the future of our musical genre and our organization.





*Thanks to generous donors, Sweet Adelines International funded scholarships to send directors of small and mid-sized choruses to the 2022 International Education Symposium.*



# Thank You!

*Sweet Adelines* are incredibly generous with their financial resources, spirit, time, and energy. Each year, members accomplish incredible things as individuals, ensembles, and as an international organization.

In our *2022 Member Perception Survey*, Sweet Adelines reported that “they feel they are receiving great value for their Sweet Adelines membership compared to the costs of being a member.” Many of the benefits of being a Sweet Adeline are impossible to measure – like friendship, bonding, fun, creative expression, so much more. We hope this Membership Briefing illustrates some of the concrete ways Sweet Adelines International utilizes our members’ and donors’ resources, from dues to donations, volunteer hours to social media shares. Members make it happen, and we are proud to be stewards of the many gifts you share with Sweet Adelines International.