



MEET OUR FIVE OUTSTANDING JUDGES & COMPOSER

Steve Parsons



Steve is a master composer, arranger, orchestrator, current music director at “The Players Guild”, instructor at Kent University, choral accompanist and arranger at Northwest Local Schools, founder of K! Music and former music director at “The Carousel Dinner Theater” in addition to be a worship director at his church. We are blessed to have him join our team of judges.

Julie Connair



Mrs. Connair is a trained singer, actor, teacher, director, and coach who calls northeastern Ohio home.

Mrs. Connair has performed in and produced musical, theatrical and other artistic productions for over 20 years.

Locally, you may have seen her work on stage at Malone University, University of Mount Union, North Canton Playhouse, Seat of the Pants Productions, Avenue Arts, Geauga Lyric Theatre Guild, Weathervane Playhouse, and the Players Guild Theatre. Most recently, she portrayed Fannie in “When Pigs Fly” at the Amish Country Theater, in Berlin, Ohio.

Internationally, as a Professional Keynote & Seminar Speaker, Talent Coach & Scout, Mrs. Connair has worked with outstanding talent featured in top industry projects from around the world.

Mrs. Connair and her husband own and operate Taylor Band & Orchestra in Akron, Ohio. They currently cherish 2 beautifully talented daughters, 1 somewhat naughty dog, and 4 rambunctious cats!

Joy Ellis



Joy Ellis is a North Canton based vocal instructor and acting coach. She has been training students since 2008. Specializing in vocal technique building for longevity, vocal health, performance and audition prep. Joy helps speakers, actors and singers find their confidence by helping them build solid skills that will allow for optimal performance. Joy believes that when you are equipped and prepared with solid instruction performance anxiety is replaced with excitement to share your gifts with the world!

Joy's students range from beginner to advanced. Her students have a wide range of performance experience (Musical theater, inspirational speaking, studio work, recording artists, television and voice overs). She is committed to helping performers get to the next level. She focuses on individual goals and takes time to develop each session to fit the performer. Creating a fun, relaxed environment to learn in is key to getting the best out of each student and session.

Joy received her BFA in Theater Arts from Livingstone College in Salisbury N.C. Prior to college her extensive training in competitive speech led her to compete and excel on the District, State and National Levels. She won 4th in the Nation for her humorous interpretation of Live and In Color. Her professional career has taken her all over the country and throughout Europe. Joy was a contestant on American Idol performing in Hollywood. Joy has led in musicals such as Once On This Island, The Wiz, Sister Act, Doubt, AIDA, Ragtime, and Memphis.

Joy is passionate about passing on the skills and knowledge that she has learned to the next generation. She is a firm believer in the fact that opportunity loves preparation. If you are prepared when your opportunity comes, you will SHINE!

Molly Weidig



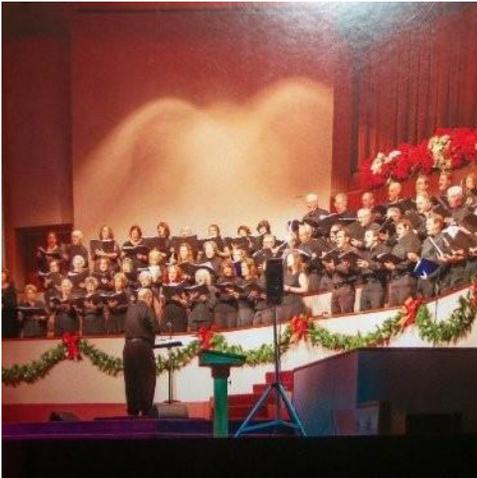
Molly Weidig has been studying Musical Theatre and Dance performance for nearly two decades. With her BFA in Musical Theatre Performance from Western Michigan University, she performed professionally across the country before returning to her hometown of Canton, OH. She is currently the Owner of Inspire Performing Arts Center as well as a Teaching Artist for Artful Living And Learning. She has choreographed for local theaters such as The Players Guild and North Canton Playhouse as Northwest High School, McKinley High School, Hoover High School, and Tuslaw High School. She is thrilled to be a part of the Holiday Heart Song Vocal Benefit Contest!

Brian Kieffer



Brian Kieffer, the founding musical and artistic director of VOX AUDIO, has been the lead choral music director at GlenOak High School in the Plain Local Schools for the past 30 years. Born and raised in North Canton, he received his undergraduate degree in music education from Bowling Green State University and a masters degree in choral conducting from Kent State University. In addition to his work at GlenOak, he is an adjunct fine arts faculty member at Malone University where he teaches applied voice and conducts the Women's Concert Choir as well as the High School Honors choir. An Ohio Music Educators adjudicator and clinician, Kieffer's vocal ensembles have received numerous awards at district, state and national competitions as well as accolades from leaders in the field of choral music. In 2018, he was honored as Stark County's "Music Educator of the Year" by the Canton Symphony Orchestra.

Hal Wright



Hal is an accomplished musician, composer, arranger, publisher, Worship Leader, choral conductor, recording engineer and producer and the President and Founder of greatchurchmusic.com. We are so blessed to have Hal Wright creating an original arrangement for our "Top Ten" finalists to sing-off and for the winner to record. He will also be the recording engineer and producer for the winner of the contest. Thank you, Hal, for your amazing musical skills that are only exceeded by your immensely kind heart and desire to minister to others through your music. You and your music are a blessing to us all!