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For Immediate Release

Cincinnati Youth Choir Founding Artistic Director, Robyn Lana, to conclude her outstanding 32-year tenure in June 2025

Cincinnati, Ohio (April 3, 2024) – The **Cincinnati Youth Choir, Ensemble in Residence at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM)**, has announced that Founder **Robyn Lana** will conclude her outstanding career with the Cincinnati Youth Choir (CYC) at the conclusion of the 2024-2025 season, after which she will be named Director Emerita and will continue to lead and engage the alumni choir and network.

Recognized as one of the leading children's and youth choir conductors in the United States, **Robyn Lana** has actively worked with choruses ranging from children to adult for more than 40 years. Lana began CYC in 1993 with a small 35-voice ensemble. The program has blossomed into one of the most revered youth choral programs in the USA currently serving nearly 1000 singers each year. Beginning as an independent program, **Lana** collaborated with **Dr. Earl Rivers** in 2001 to bring CYC into the fold of the **University of Cincinnati** where the program was enhanced by the unmatched artistry and reputation of the **College-Conservatory of Music**. CYC has continued to grow while serving as the resident children's choir for all of CCM's choral, orchestral, and operatic works and offering internships and assistantships to choral and music education students.

Dr. Rivers, now a professor emeritus of conducting at CCM, venerated this partnership as an example for others to follow. "**Robyn Lana** created and developed the Cincinnati Youth Choir (CYC) into a world-class organization that over 30+ years has nurtured hundreds of greater Cincinnati children and youth in developing their musical, intellectual, and social skills. The CYC's relationship with the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) as 'Ensemble-in-Residence at CCM' is a nationally unique partnership between an all-city Youth Choir and an internationally recognized Conservatory of Music. This partnership has become the gold standard role model for other youth choir organizations, and it has allowed several generations of CCM choral, music education, and voice students to develop their skills by engaging with the CYC as conductors, assistant conductors, accompanists, mentors, and administrators. Robyn's legacy will have left Cincinnati with a crown jewel in the pantheon of Cincinnati's outstanding musical organizations."

CCM's current director and professor of choral studies, **Dr. Joe Miller**, mirrored these praises. "It is a powerful monument to our singing community to have the Cincinnati Youth Choir as a leading voice of musical excellence and education for our region. Robyn is an inspirational leader, and her vision and tireless dedication are having a direct impact on our quality of life. It has been my honor to dream and build a vision for our choral community with Robyn, and I know that with her continued support CYC and the University of Cincinnati will continue to be a place where magical

musical moments and lifetime friendships are possible. I am grateful for Robyn and will miss her presence, but I know that the roots that she has fostered in this organization will continue to grow and bring another generation of inspiring music to our community.”

Robyn Lana shared, “The **Cincinnati Youth Choir** has been an integral part of my life and my family. It has been the joy of a lifetime to share so many years with the finest people. Considering the best steps for a succession plan for the organization I have loved so deeply has been a priority over the past three years. I know the search committee will find the best in the nation to lead the program into the future. I am excited for the choir program and VERY excited to announce the first phase of succession planning staffing very soon.”

The president of CYC’s board of directors, **David Sherrard**, expressed his confidence that Lana has positioned the organization well for future success. “I feel certain that Robyn did not foresee the amazing organization that would become CYC when she began this program 32 years ago. Through her vision, dedication and leadership, CYC has become a model for choirs across the country and around the globe. Our CYC family will miss her.”

Anne Cushing-Reid, CCM’s assistant dean and director of CCM Prep, shared, “The Cincinnati Youth Choir exists because of Robyn Lana. Her vision and commitment to her students has made CYC the organization it is today. While she is stepping down as CYC Artistic Director, I know Robyn will continue to be a force for music and choral education for many years to come!”

Robyn Lana has held many national leadership roles, proudly representing the exceptional choral community in Cincinnati and the Tri-state region. From 2007-2013, Lana served the **American Choral Directors Association (ACDA)** as National Chair of Children’s and Community Youth Choirs. She continued to serve the national choral community as ACDA Standing Committee Chair for Advocacy and Collaboration from 2016-2021. She is currently in her 9th and final year serving on the **Chorus America** Board of Directors.

“It has been a privilege to work with Robyn,” said **Chorus America’s** President and CEO **Catherine Dehoney**, “especially during her tenure on the Chorus America Board. I have so admired her leadership in the children/youth choral community in all facets of its success: artistic, administrative and advocacy. Thanks to Robyn, countless young people have been enriched by the joy and innumerable benefits of choral singing. On behalf of a grateful Chorus America, congratulations, Robyn!”

Dr. Craig Hella Johnson, artistic director of **Conspirare** and Cincinnati’s **Vocal Arts Ensemble**, praised Robyn’s regional and national contributions, her artistry, and her inspired teaching. “She is a rare and special artist-teacher whose work has made an indelible mark on this arts community and on the lives of thousands of young musicians. I have had the tremendous opportunity to collaborate with Robyn on some memorable partnerships with CYC and Vocal arts Ensemble as well as on the national board for Chorus America. To say she will be greatly missed is an understatement. But what she has built will continue long into the future and will carry on from her legacy.”

Lana will continue to teach in the **Miami University** (Oxford, OH) Department of Music where she began in August 2022. Prior to teaching at Miami, she taught choral music education and women’s choir at Xavier University and was honored to teach at her alma mater, CCM for a semester in 2017. Since 2001, **Lana** has mentored CCM graduate and undergraduate interns and assistants. She takes great pride in the success of so many who were impacted by their work with CYC.

Having led **commission projects for nearly 80 premiers**, Lana has a rich history of pioneering new music. She maintains a choral series with Santa Barbara Music Publishing. In addition to being published in several national professional magazines, Lana has served three times as guest editor for **ACDA's Choral Journal** in which she has been published eight times. Her book, ***Voices in Harmony: Youth Choir Leadership, Education and Artistry*** with Alfred Publishing focuses on children's and youth choirs utilizing and collaborating with some of the most respected youth choir leaders in the world.

Ms. Lana has served as a clinician and conducted honor choirs and festivals on 4 continents and in over 35 states including several appearances at Carnegie Hall and Kennedy Center. Under her artistic leadership, CYC has performed in some of the most prestigious venues in the world. In addition to those listed above, the choir has performed for a mass at St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City, the Forbidden City Concert Hall, and throughout China, Costa Rica, Denmark, England, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden, and Wales.

Since the inception of CYC, **Robyn Lana** has prepared her choirs for over 65 large work performances with **CCM**, the **May Festival**, and **Cincinnati Symphony** including *On the Transmigration of Souls* under the baton of **John Adams** and the artistic leadership of **James Conlon, Robert Porco, Earl Rivers, Mark Gibson, Joe Miller, Louis Langree, and John Morris Russell** among many others.

Ms. Lana's work has earned many awards including **CCM's Distinguished Alumna Award** (2012), a gold medal in the **World Choir Games** (2012) placing first in the United States, the **American Prize for Choral Performance** (2015), the **Chorus America ASCAP Award** for Adventurous Programming (2016), **Chorus America Award for Education and Community Engagement** (2018), and **Cincinnati CityBeat's Best Local Vocal Arts Group** (2015 and 2017). Most recently she was celebrated in the book ***Imagineers • Impresarios • Inventors: Cincinnati's Arts and the POWER OF HER*** which tells the inspiring stories of the formidable influence of women in the arts throughout Cincinnati's dynamic history.

Robyn Lana Biography

Interpreting choral music for diverse audiences in a way that is relevant to young people while maintaining the highest standards of music education and performance sums up the work of **Robyn Reeves Lana**.

When not leading the **Cincinnati Youth Choir, Ensemble-in-Residence at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music**, over the past 31 years, **Ms. Lana** has served as conductor and clinician across the United States and at internationally acclaimed venues such as The Forbidden City Concert Hall (Beijing), The World Expo (Milan), St. Peter's Basilica (Vatican City), Minatomirai Hall (Yokohama). Internationally she has served as a clinician in Malacca, Malaysia; Singapore; Italy; Ireland; and China. Closer to home, she has been a featured guest conductor at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center and Cincinnati's Music Hall. She has served as clinician or guest conducted state and regional choral events in over 25 states. Lana has served on the choral faculty at Xavier University, has been a guest professor in the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music's choral department, and is currently a visiting professor on the choral faculty at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

Lana is the editor of a choral series with Santa Barbara Music Publishing. Her book, *Voices in Harmony*, published in 2017, is a collaborative effort that celebrates many successful philosophies in choral education. She is also published in Chorister Guild's *The Chorister*, Chamber Music America's *CMA Matters*, and ACDA's *Choral Journal* for which she also served as guest editor for three issues.

Achieving an extensive list of orchestral and operatic repertoire for children and praise from collaborating conductors including Craig Hella Johnson, John Adams, Louis Langrée, John Morris Russell, Robert Porco, Marcus Huber, James Conlon, Earl Rivers and Mark Gibson among others, Lana regularly prepares her choirs for collaborations with the Cincinnati Symphony, the Cincinnati Pops, the Cincinnati May Festival, Cincinnati Opera, and CCM choirs and orchestras. She prepared CYC for two Telarc label recordings with the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra under the direction of the late Maestro Erich Kunzel.

Nationally, **Lana** has served ACDA as Children's Choir and Community Youth Repertoire and Standards Chair and Chair of ACDA Advocacy and Collaboration. She currently serves on the Chorus America Board of Directors.

Robyn Reeves Lana earned her bachelor and master's degrees in music education with a cognate in voice and a concentration in choral conducting from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. She holds Level III Orff-Schulwerk Certification and has done focused study on children's choirs at Butler University with Henry Leck.

The Cincinnati Youth Choir, Ensemble-in-Residence at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, is a nationally celebrated, award-winning choral organization in its 31st season. Each year, hundreds of Greater Cincinnati youth in grades one through twelve grow in choral artistry in this educationally based organization. CYC's Bel Canto Choir has been a featured ensemble in China, Japan, Italy, England, Wales, Ireland, Austria, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Canada, Costa Rica, and across the United States. CYC choirs have had the distinct honor to perform in some of the world's best concert venues such as Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, The Forbidden City Concert Hall, St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City and the World Expo in Milan, Italy. CYC has performed with the Cincinnati's Symphony, Pops, Opera, and May Festival while regularly collaborating with CCM's ensembles and operas. CYC has commissioned over 80 works for treble voices.

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