

City Choir Welcomes New Assistant Conductor Katie Jagielski

City Choir bid a fond and tearful farewell last spring to beloved Assistant Conductor and Director of City Singers Rachel Binger. Rachel is moving on to focus on her teaching career, but leaves the chorus in the capable hands of newly appointed Assistant Conductor and Director of City Singers Katie Jagielski. As assistant conductor, Katie helps Maestro Shafer lead rehearsals, and runs sectionals when the chorus is divided in parts. One of her biggest

responsibilities and joys is conducting the City Singers, TCCW's outreach chorus. Katie tells *Allegro*, "I'm really looking forward to a fantastic year with the City Singers and am excited to bring our joy and love of music to our many different audiences. We have a great season planned and I am eager to work on our new music with all of our singers - both returning and new!"



The City Singers
Photo credit: Emmilu Olson

City Choir's Al Bradford recently caught up with Katie to learn more about her musical journey:

Katie Jagielski first met and worked with Bob Shafer at Shenandoah University when she was a music education major there. "I sang in the conservatory choir and the chamber choir," Katie says, "and was on the Italian tour of the conservatory choir the year I graduated. Because

of Bob's encouragement, I went on to Catholic University and achieved a master's in vocal pedagogy. Bob has been a huge influence on my career as a singer and music educator."

In 2005, during her last semester at Shenandoah, Katie joined the Washington Chorus, and she followed Bob to City Choir when it began in 2007. "Singing in City Choir brings me joy, challenges me, makes me a better musician, and helps me develop my passion for music and singing, which I share with my students. It is important to me to continue performing music, and I rely on City Choir to help me do that."

Katie began performing music in elementary school when she studied clarinet. "But I always wanted to be a singer. Since young girls often want to be singers, my parents just thought I was going through a phase and didn't take my yearning to sing seriously. So I carried on with clarinet in middle school and also studied the piano. Finally, in high school, my parents realized how important singing was to me and I began voice lessons. Maybe that's because they heard me sing and said to themselves, 'There is something there.' No one else in my family is a musician, so they were completely unfamiliar with the process of becoming one. They have been very supportive and have learned about that process along with me."

Katie's music activities outside City Choir include her job at Trailside Middle School in Ashburn, VA, where she is a music teacher, chorus director, and music director of last May's musical, *The Little Mermaid*. Somehow, she still has the time and energy to work on her 18th (!) marathon. Her goal is to participate in at least one marathon in every state. "I'm also trying to keep up my German, which I learned in graduate school. But," she acknowledges, "that effort has taken a back seat for now."



Katie Jagielski rehearses the City Singers
Photo credit: Rachel Tester