



From International President, Joan Boutilier
April 2021

Throughout this challenging time, I have had to bring you so much news that has been hard to hear, but today I am here with good news updates about the many ways we continue to lift each other up with support and innovation.

First, I have an update on the 2022 International Convention in Phoenix, Arizona. As you know, the initial date interfered with Rosh Hashanah, and we thank Sweet Adelines for calling our attention to the scheduling mistake. Headquarters staff immediately went to work to rectify it by negotiating a change of date for the convention. We appreciate our staff for their quick response and professionalism, and thank our Phoenix partners for working with us to accommodate this complicated scheduling request. The new dates are September 12-17, 2022. I know this is a bit earlier in the year than when we normally meet but after being apart for the past two years, I am eager to see everyone and hear those beautiful ringing chords!

We also have good news for directors. The International Board of Directors recently approved a Director Affiliate Membership effective May 1. This membership option is available to all active directors not previously eligible for membership, of chartered and prospective Sweet Adelines choruses. As part of this membership option, directors will receive a subscription to *The Pitch Pipe*, discounts to International convention and educational events, and access to the members-only educational content on the Sweet Adelines website. For complete details, please visit our website and click on the "How to Join" button on the right side of the screen.

Also for our directors and one item I am especially excited about is a brand new scholarship offering for directors of small and mid-size choruses which will begin with IES in July 2022. We will share more information about how to apply for the scholarships in the coming months.

At the start of the pandemic, the IBOD approved a \$400 stipend for each region to help with the costs of a virtual meeting platform. As we transitioned to virtual events, our regions accomplished incredible things with these stipends and we are excited to be able to make these funds available to the regions once again for 2021!

Speaking of incredible work by our regions, I know many of you are gearing up for adventure with the new Travel in Tune project! Our regions have lots of fun planned for you and after social distancing for a year, I am so excited to travel the Sweet Adelines world with everyone even if it is just virtually for now.

If you haven't already, make sure you download the app or learn how to access Travel in Tune via the members-only section of the Sweet Adelines website. Video and written instructions for logging in can be found on the website under the Education tab.

I am also excited to announce that the much anticipated Chorus Toolkit is in the final review stage and will be rolled out to everyone in the coming weeks. Thank you to the members that have invested many hours in creating these materials and the choruses that participated in the pilot program to help us refine this content. The Chorus Toolkit is an important step in creating the Culture of Belonging we identified as one of our Guiding Principles.

We are about to wrap up a successful Support 75 Years of Life on a High Note campaign for this fiscal year. We are grateful to all who were able to contribute. We set a goal of \$200,000 USD for this year's campaign, which was kicked off with a generous \$25,000 challenge gift from Judy Gordon, baritone of the 1981 International Champion Quartet, All Star Jubilee.

Thanks to your donations, we not only met our goal but exceeded it! As of April 9, 2021, \$306,583 has been raised from 1,240 donors. Your generosity is not surprising because I know how much our members care about Sweet Adelines, but it is a bit breathtaking, nonetheless! These donations to Sweet Adelines will be used for a variety of projects including the director scholarships I mentioned a moment ago for IES 2022. Gifts will also go to support education and youth outreach.

And lastly, I am excited to announce the development of a Leadership Development Certification Program. The program, partly funded by donations, will support leadership development for ALL interested members, including members serving in areas of musical, performance, and administrative areas at the chapter, regional, and international areas, as well as those members seeking to increase leadership skills as professional development. The outstanding response to the survey requesting feedback for the program further demonstrates your passion for all Sweet Adelines offers to our members. Watch for more information coming on this new program in the future.

As I reflect on all that has happened during the past year, I am so very proud of all that Sweet Adelines members do to move the organization forward every day. With the support of our very generous community of donors, our International Faculty members, our regional leaders, directors, and all our many wonderful singers, the future looks brighter than ever for advancing the mission of our organization. I look forward to continuing our journey together and making new memories with you as we stay Sweet Adelines Strong.