



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING

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"Between Us"

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ASSOCIATION NOTES

A Decade

It seems that there are natural periods of time upon which reflection and evaluation are called for and such has recently occurred as I recently passed the ten-year mark of serving in the capacity of executive director of NATS. In 2007 when I assumed this office on an "interim" basis for a year it certainly did not occur to me that the arrangement would become permanent and continue for ten years but here we are. During this time we have been through five election cycles and experienced the guidance of some excellent leaders of our organization.



Allen Henderson
NATS Executive Director

Non-profit organization leadership in associations like NATS involves an engaged and working board of directors that is dedicated to the mission of NATS and thoughtful in its deliberations, using resources wisely to advance the mission. I am happy to report that our board members are working hard on your behalf and are always open to conversation with you.

Ten years ago there were no National Student Auditions; no *So You Want to Sing* book series; no National Music Theater Competition; no Vocapedia.info; our Emerging Leaders Program had no benefactor; our Intern Program did not include collaborative pianists; our Art Song Composition Award was biennial and not annual; there were no NATS Lifetime Achievement Awards; our 2006 National Conference had a total of 639 attendees; we had a rudimentary website; we only had three full-time staff members; our total active and emeritus members were 6,133 in July 2007; and we had no student and very few collaborative pianist members.

All of the enhancements to our programs and services over the past ten years have been accomplished with leadership from our staff and board. Sometimes the seed of an idea generated by an individual member has led to a new program or initiative. Recently our 2016 National Conference had more than 1,300 attendees, our largest ever and doubling the number of attendees in 2006.

continued: Association notes

Every conference since 2006 we have set new records for involvement and attendance at our national conferences. Our active membership peaked at 7,371 and has hovered above 7,000 since 2010. We also have a larger staff to support the increased activity in our association. We helped foster a number of international associations in our field over the past decade and have strengthened our international profile through conversation and interaction with our international colleagues.

Most recently, for the first time in NATS history, all of our student auditions across the association are aligned so that both teachers and singers can expect the same structure as they move around the continent and we launched a new auditions registration system to facilitate the work of chapters and regions in this area. Even though a large organization, NATS has become more adaptable to change and fosters a climate of openness to new and innovative ideas.

What will the next decade hold? As we reflect on the changes in our profession in the past decade it is important for us to think ahead to what might occur in the next decade. What will the careers of our students look like in ten years? What will the profession of teaching voice be like in ten years? How



NATS' profile in the global community has grown over the past decade. Last summer, NATS Executive Director Allen Henderson (right) and NATS President-elect Karen Brunssen (second from left) traveled to China as invited lecturers and clinicians for two festivals with the International Federation for Choral Music. They are pictured with Beverly Shangkuan-Cheng and Philip Brunelle.

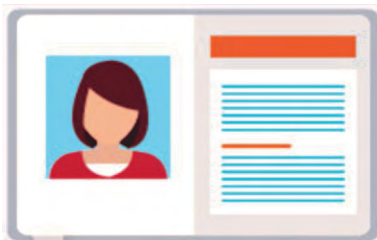
will the way we work, the way we perform, and the modes in which we communicate as a profession change? How will voice education be structured and how should it be structured? How will our international profile as a leader in voice education for all evolve?

As your executive director I regularly ponder these and other questions and seek to represent our profession in conversation with our sister organizations so that we can partner on critically important issues within the field. I encourage you to ponder these questions as well and send me your thoughts. We have some great minds in NATS and we truly have the ability to impact our profession in significant ways.

Probably, our greatest challenge in the next decade is to converse more, pontificate less, be seekers of truth, listen with discerning ears, serve our students and our profession, and enjoy deeply the joy and satisfaction of making great art. I don't know about you, but I think the next decade will be one of the best ever for NATS as we move through our 75th anniversary and beyond. I am looking forward to being a part of it. I hope you are looking forward too and encouraging your voice colleagues who are not members of NATS to come along for the ride. As always I welcome your comments at allen@nats.org.

Stay plugged in to NATS!

Have you moved, changed your contact information, or your email?



Members: The fall membership renewal period is a good time to update your information on NATS.org. Keeping your contact information up-to-date ensures that you won't miss any of our member benefits or upcoming events.

Log on to your [Member Home Page](#) (your email address for NATS correspondence is your Login). Click the "My Profile" link on the left. From there you can update your profile, make sure you're included in the Find-A-Teacher directory, review or add a new address card, and more. You can also call the NATS National Office at 904-992-9101 for assistance.