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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Montgomery County Choral Society Welcomes

New Artistic Director, Dr. Bob Horton

CONROE, TX (Dec. 1, 2020) – The Montgomery County Choral Society (MCCS) and its Board of Directors today announced that Dr. Bob Horton has been appointed as the organization’s next Artistic Director. Horton, who is the Coordinator of Fine Arts for Conroe ISD and Past President of the Texas Music Educators Association, is recognized as a leader in Texas’ choral community. Horton will grow MCCS’ reputation as Montgomery County’s premier chorus, whose mission is to unite singers who celebrate their love of music through professional-quality performances and community outreach.

“On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to announce that Dr. Bob Horton has been selected to lead MCCS as the next Artistic Director,” said Board President, Matthew Ciesko. “Bob is a highly respected music educator, conductor, and clinician. As a longtime resident of Conroe and the greater Montgomery County, Bob understands the nuance of our local arts culture. He knows where MCCS has been and has a vision for where we can go as well as a plan of how to get us there. Bob is truly committed to building new partnerships with area organizations and solidifying MCCS’ position as a cornerstone of the Northern Houston area Arts Community. I am greatly looking forward to this organization’s growth under Bob’s artistic leadership.”

“I am so honored that I have been selected to be the Artistic Director for our organization,” Horton said. “MCCS is already positioned as a leader in the Arts community for Montgomery county. Based on its longevity and rich performance history, MCCS already has name recognition and consistent history of excellence in performance. I believe we have a strong Board and a committed group of singers, and better days are ahead for MCCS.”

With his appointment, Horton envisions a season of growth and development to be built upon MCCS’ foundation of rich history and commitment to excellence. This season of growth will be

marked by community outreach to the 600,000 residents in Montgomery County as well as collaboration with other area arts organizations and joint performances with other community choral and instrumental organizations when viable.

“This must be a concerted and strategic effort . . . furthered by the guidance of the Board, the excitement of the membership, an open and welcoming culture in the ensemble, and a commitment to musical excellence by the Artistic Director,” said Horton. “The joy of music and of singing together need to be present in every rehearsal.”

Horton’s appointment comes after an extensive search lead by a committee composed of three MCCA members who each have extensive experience leading choirs as either conductor or accompanist. At the end of the application period, the Search Committee had received applicants from multiple different states and a variety of backgrounds. The Executive Committee ultimately decided between the top two applicants as presented by the Search Committee.

“In addition to all of his music credentials, the Search Committee was drawn to Dr. Bob Horton’s enthusiasm about the possibilities of making music together as well as his ideas to grow the organization itself and enhance the MCCA ‘footprint’ in the community of Conroe and the greater Montgomery County area,” said Search Committee member and Soprano Section Leader, Julie Stone Cortez. “In rehearsal, he is clear and efficient in his instruction, and most importantly, he creates a connection with his singers both individually and collectively. I am extremely excited about singing under Dr. Horton’s direction.”

An award-winning director and arts leader, Horton began teaching music in the Fall of 1990 after graduating Magna Cum Laude from Sam Houston State University. He later returned to Sam Houston where he earned his Master of Music degree with an emphasis in Conducting in 2005 and his Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership in 2012. Horton spent 11 years as Head Choir Director of The Woodlands High School where he led a choral program of over 250 students who comprised six performing choirs. Prior to that position, Horton taught at McCullough Junior High for 8 years, York Junior High for 4 years, and elementary music and intermediate Choir in Klein ISD for 2 years. In 1996, 1998, and 2013 Horton’s choirs were selected to be Invited Performing Choirs for the TMEA Convention. In 2011 and 2014, The Woodlands HS Chamber Choir won the American Classics Madrigal Festival and presented Honor Concerts in 2012 and 2015. The TWHS varsity treble choir, conducted by Horton and his assistant Lynn Bull, was selected to perform at the Southwest American Choral Directors Association in March 2014. The York, McCullough, and Woodlands High School choirs under Horton’s direction were awarded consistent sweepstakes trophies and named “Best in Class” at various festivals and performed in Carnegie Hall.

Horton’s career has been marked by service to his colleagues. He had the privilege of serving the Region IX Junior High/Middle School division as its coordinator and has twice served as High School Region Vocal Chair. Horton is a highly sought-after adjudicator serving as a UIL adjudicator and clinician in Texas as well as multiple other southern states including Mississippi,

Louisiana, and Arkansas. Horton served a two-year term as the Middle School/Junior High Vice President, President of Texas Choral Directors Association, and is now Past President of Texas Choral Directors. In February of 2015, Horton was elected to the office of State Vocal Chair of TMEA and in 2017, was elected to the President track of TMEA, where he served for three years.

As Fine Arts Coordinator for Conroe ISD, Horton leads and works with a staff of over 300 teachers to implement curriculum for Choir, Band, Orchestra, Elementary Music, Art, Theatre, and Dance. Under Horton's leadership, Conroe ISD has been selected as one of the "Best Communities in Music Education" by the NAMM Foundation since 2015.

In addition to Horton's school duties, he has served the Woodlands United Methodist Church since 1996 as a Music Associate, where he co-directs the Adult Chancel Choir and directs the select A Cappella Choir. He and his wife Connie, an award-winning Junior High Choir Director in Conroe ISD, have two children who have both earned All-State Choir membership and are now employed in the world of Music. Andrea, a graduate of Baylor (BM, 2017) and LSU (MM, 2019) is the Community Initiatives Coordinator at Houston Grand Opera. Ben, Texas Tech University (BMusEd) 2019 is a choir director at Summer Creek High School in Humble ISD.

Horton's first task as MCCA Artistic Director will be planning the safe execution of an abbreviated 49th concert season.

ABOUT MCCA

Formed in 1972, the Montgomery County Choral Society is a non-profit organization whose mission is to unite singers who celebrate their love of music through professional-quality performances and community outreach. Originally numbering about 30 members, the society has steadily grown over the years in both numbers and performance quality. Our membership now averages about 80 members and includes people ranging in age from high-school students to retirees, encompassing varied professions, and blending many levels of musical training and experience.

In addition to performing four concerts per season in Conroe, TX, MCCA has a scholarship program through which we annually award scholarships to deserving students who wish to pursue collegiate studies in vocal music.

