Rainier Youth Choirs: Artistic Director

Rainier Youth Choirs (RYC) is celebrating its 20th season this year, along with the retirement of our founding Artistic Director, Leora Schwitters.

We are looking for a new Artistic Director to guide the organization's next chapter. The ideal candidate is someone who loves teaching young voices, and wants to build strong connections with singers, families, and the broader Southeast King County community.

This is a part-time independent contractor role based in Covington, WA, designed to fit alongside other work, such as school, church, or university teaching. The selected candidate will assume full leadership in July 2027, with an optional paid transition period beforehand to learn alongside Leora.

About Rainier Youth Choirs

Founded in 2007 in Kent, WA, RYC offers an affordable, family-friendly program where young singers build musical skill, confidence, self-discipline, teamwork, and pride. RYC currently serves roughly 70 singers in grades 2 through 12, with a wide range of musical experience, in four age-based ensembles that rehearse Monday evenings from early September through June.

A typical season includes:

- Three mainstage concerts (December, March, May) and two informal concerts
- Four or more community performances
- A local or national festival, retreats, and a summer workshop

Rainier Youth Choirs is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization governed by a highly engaged and supportive volunteer Board of Directors. The team also includes an Executive Director, Operations Manager, and other artistic staff. We are seeking a leader who wants to help us grow the organization and have an even greater impact on our community.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission: *To encourage the personal and social growth of our singers and to inspire our community through impactful performances and music education.*

Vision: *To sing, to build community, to change lives.*

Values: *Artistry, Excellence, Dedication, Teamwork, Integrity, Kindness, Inclusiveness*

- For more information about Rainier Youth Choirs, visit rainieryouthchoirs.org.
- Videos of our performances: youtube.com/@RainierYouthChoirs
- To request a copy of the RYC Member Handbook and 2026-27 calendar, email team@rainieryouthchoirs.org

Time commitment and compensation

Time commitment: Approximately 15-20 hours per week. That covers planning; rehearsal and event preparation; communication with families, staff, and the board; event leadership; monthly board meetings; and conducting one ensemble. Conducting a second ensemble is an option in addition to these hours. Weekly rehearsals are run in two sessions spanning a total of 3.5 hours.

Compensation: $30,800 – $33,700 annually for the Artistic Director role and conducting one ensemble, negotiable based on experience. With additional compensation for conducting a second ensemble the total range for this role can rise to $37,000 – $38,500.

Ensemble conducting: The Artistic Director will conduct one ensemble and may choose to conduct a second ensemble. Conducting a second ensemble will increase the compensation.

Optional paid transition period

As Artistic Director Designate, the new Artistic Director will meet singers, families, and board members, learn how the program runs behind the scenes with Leora, and begin planning the fall season.

- **Timing:** Scheduled with Leora around the candidate's availability, ideally beginning in April 2027
- **Pay:** $35 per hour
- **Hours:** About 5 hours per week

What you'll do

Artistic leadership

- Set the artistic direction for RYC, including repertoire, sheet music, and venues
- Coordinate weekly Monday rehearsals, September through June
- Prepare for and lead concerts, retreats, workshops, festivals, and community events
- Recruit and audition new singers
- Select and work with pianists, instrumentalists, guest artists, and artistic staff
- Build partnerships that increase RYC's visibility and impact in the community
- Plan the season's events
- Write program notes, produce the concert program booklet with the executive director, and oversee recordings

Administration

- Attend monthly board meetings and share artistic updates
- Develop budgets with the Board, and take part in fee negotiations with the executive director
- Maintain membership rosters and attendance, and communicate with singers and families
- Collaborate with staff and board members on marketing, fundraising, and publicity

Public representation

- Serve as a spokesperson for RYC and take part in community activities and media appearances
- Stay connected to local and national musical and professional organizations

What we're looking for

You'll be a great fit if you:

- Teach, inspire, and motivate singers with warmth and joy, and are committed to an inclusive, positive choir environment
- Have demonstrated success in youth choral conducting and music education
- Understand vocal pedagogy and care about healthy, age-appropriate vocal development in children and youth
- Have the musical knowledge to interpret a wide range of repertoire for youth choirs
- Communicate clearly in writing and in person, and manage your time well
- Are comfortable with digital tools (The Artistic Director will use Chorus Connection and Google Workspace; RYC also uses SignUpGenius, Givebutter, and Mailchimp; training is available)

Preferred:

- Five or more years of experience as a choral music educator and/or a master's degree in choral music education with a specialization in choral conducting
- Organizational leadership experience, including budget management

Not sure you check every box?

Inclusiveness is one of RYC's core values, and we want our leadership to reflect it. Many talented people hold back from applying unless they meet every qualification, and that includes women and people of color. If you feel qualified and deeply interested in this work, whatever your background, we encourage you to apply.

How to apply

Send the following to team@rainieryouthchoirs.org:

- A cover letter describing your goals and your interest in the position
- Your resume or CV

Those invited to a Round 1 interview will be asked to submit a video of their teaching and conducting, due before Round 2 interviews. Existing footage is welcome. Three references, with phone, email, and their relationship to the candidate, will be requested at Round 2 and are contacted only for finalists.

Timeline

Applications due	December 31, 2026
Round 1 Interviews	January 18-20, 2027
Round 2 Interviews; Videos due	January 25-26, 2027
Finalist Notification	January 28, 2027
Finalist Rehearsals with RYC	February 8, 22, & March 1
Final Selection	March 15, 2027
Optional paid transition period begins	April 2027
Full Leadership Begins	July 2027