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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Indianapolis Symphonic Choir launches major endowment campaign as part of milestone 80th anniversary season

Citing strong financial growth over the last decade, Choir's first endowment campaign runs through 2019

INDIANAPOLIS (March 20, 2017) – The Indianapolis Symphonic Choir announces the launch of a \$3.75 million endowment campaign, a first for the 80-year-old institution as it celebrates a milestone anniversary season of continued commitment to excellence in the creation and performance of choral music.

The “Giving Voice to Tomorrow” campaign endows the Artistic Director position with a \$2 million goal and partially endows the performance of choral masterworks with \$1.75 million. Of the total \$3.75 million goal, more than \$2.5 million has been raised through cash and planned gifts. The launch of the public phase will expand the opportunity for community support in this endeavor.

“An institution of the artistic level and organizational health like that of the Symphonic Choir really must have an endowment to provide for its financial stability for generations to come,” said Indianapolis Symphonic Choir Executive Director Michael Pettry. “Our artistic programming is both quality and visionary, and we need to be looking 10, 15, 25 years down the road if we are to be leaders at home, nationally, and for the overall choral art form.”

The Indianapolis Symphonic Choir’s operating budget for the current fiscal year is \$1,244,000, and the Choir consistently ends fiscal years with a balanced budget while also building strategic reserves. Overall budget growth, including an income increase of more than 400 percent over the last seven years, has simultaneously increased concert production and community outreach initiatives. The Choir attributes the bulk of the last decade’s growth to increased ticket sales and individual donations.

The “Giving Voice to Tomorrow” campaign is co-chaired by Dr. Paul and Martha Schmidt, involved with the Symphonic Choir for more than 25 years and among the first to make a visionary gift to establish the endowment fund. “It matters deeply to us to offer an opportunity to give something very special, even spiritual, and a chance to gather others to join us in this remarkable step forward,” said Dr. Schmidt.

Founded in 1937, the Choir is recognized as one of the most active and widely respected choruses in the United States. The current season included a performance at the famed Carnegie Hall in October 2016, television broadcasts of *Festival of Carols*, and marks the Choir’s ninth year as the official choral partner of Indianapolis Public Schools, providing teacher training, educational resources, performance experiences and free printed music.

“The Symphonic Choir has a tradition of dreaming big, aiming high and then delivering,” said Artistic Director Eric Stark. “Whether programming massive musical works like the Britten *War Requiem* or newly commissioned works, performances at Carnegie Hall, or television broadcasts of our concerts, we are at our best when we aim high. This endowment campaign ensures the Choir is always reaching for the musical stars.”

For more information, visit indychoir.org/support/endowment.

About the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir

The Indianapolis Symphonic Choir is honored to be one of the nation's established and dynamic musical institutions, marking its 80th Anniversary Season in 2016/2017. Among the most active symphonic choruses in the United States, the Choir reaches in excess of 25,000 people each season with more than 25 performances and a comprehensive educational outreach program. The 200 volunteer singers demonstrate the Choir's commitment to musical excellence through their talent and dedication during each 42-week season. The choral partner of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Symphonic Choir was founded in 1937 at the ISO's request to perform the great choral-orchestral repertoire. This continued partnership exhibits the very best of collaborative ideals – two independent arts organizations combining their strengths to create beautifully lasting musical results. The Choir is dedicated to excellence in the performance of choral music, the creation of new choral masterworks, and to community outreach and education throughout the community. The Choir is now in its ninth year as the official choral partner of the Indianapolis Public Schools, providing teacher training, educational resources, performance experiences and free printed music. The Symphonic Choir also presents the All-City Honor Choir, a partnership with IPS for musically gifted students. For more information about the Symphonic Choir, visit www.indychoir.org.

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