Cantabile
Youth Singers of Silicon Valley

CANTABILE YOUTH SINGERS OF SILICON VALLEY ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

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LOS ALTOS – Cantabile Youth Singers of Silicon Valley's Board Chair Usha Nesamoney today announces that the Board of Directors has appointed VanNessa Hulme Silbermann as Cantabile's next Executive Director, following an extensive national search. Founded in 1994 and today one of the nation's premier youth choral programs, Cantabile continues to strengthen its leadership in support of its mission and future growth with her appointment. Hulme Silbermann will join the organization in a strategic and management capacity, starting January 6, 2026, forming an executive leadership partnership with Elena Sharkova, its artistic director since 2004.

On the appointment and the organization's future trajectory, Cantabile's Board President and Search Committee Chair, Usha Nesamoney reflected, "We are thrilled to welcome VanNessa as our next Executive Director. I can confidently say that this is a step that reflects our confidence in her vision and leadership at a pivotal moment for Cantabile Youth Singers' future. Music has always been at the heart of our mission—empowering young singers to find their voices, build community, and lead with confidence—and this alignment strengthens that promise. I extend my sincere gratitude to the search committee for their thoughtful, dedicated work in guiding this important transition".

Artistic Director, Elena Sharkova, shared, "I am excited to partner with VanNessa – a passionate arts advocate and a like-minded, enthusiastic and experienced leader – as Cantabile moves into the next 30 years of excellence in music education, performance and community building."

Hulme Silbermann says she was drawn to Cantabile's mission, offering, "Cantabile is a place where young voices become leaders; where music becomes a force for change that reaches beyond the choir risers and into the world around us. I'm honored to join this extraordinary community and excited to help steward a bold, exciting future together. With the partnership of our donors and supporters, we will continue to expand access, deepen impact, and ensure Cantabile's music changes lives for generations to come."

Looking ahead to the organization's future, Cantabile parent, Board Treasurer, and Search Committee Member, Len Radzilowski stated, "I believe VanNessa's talents and experiences will enable Cantabile to develop and operationalize its artistic vision in ways that were not possible in recent years. I look forward to seeing Cantabile deservedly grow into an institution in our region."

The Board conducted a national search in partnership with the DeVos Institute of Arts and Nonprofit Management. The Search Committee included Board Chair Usha Nesamoney, Board Treasurer Len

Radzilowski, Artistic Director Elena Sharkova, Board member and parent Michael Ohliger, Board member and parent Shreenidhi Bharadwaj, and former Associate Conductor Jace Wittig. During the transition, Cantabile's Board and staff worked collaboratively to assume interim leadership responsibilities and strengthen internal operations, ensuring continuity and long-term stability.

Hulme Silbermann is an accomplished arts administrator, educator, and director with extensive experience leading student-centered programs, producing large-scale performances, and advancing innovative arts curricula. Her background spans operations, board and volunteer engagement, marketing, fundraising, and financial planning. She has held leadership roles at Hillbrook School (Los Gatos), Rossinca-Carden International STEAM Academy (Campbell), Phoenix Ranch School (Simi Valley), and The Laurence School and Founder's Forum (Los Angeles), and previously served as a Board Member and Assistant Director of The Verdi Chorus (Santa Monica). Across her career, she has produced more than 2,000 theatrical, musical, and educational events and is widely recognized for advancing equity, belonging, and collaborative creative practice.

Hulme Silbermann holds a Bachelor of Music in Voice from Grand Canyon University, a Master of Music in Opera Theater from California State University, Northridge, and a degree in Accounting from Foothill College. She is currently pursuing an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at San José State University, with a focus on equity-centered leadership and organizational development. In parallel with her administrative work, she is an accomplished professional vocalist, having performed more than 150 leading and supporting roles in opera, theatre, and chamber productions.

Cantabile Youth Singers provides world-class vocal music instruction and performance opportunities for youth ages 6 to 18 and is distinguished by its rigorous, globally focused repertoire; high-caliber performance opportunities; and a holistic choral curriculum that integrates vocal artistry, music theory and art history, movement and mindfulness, and leadership development.

Students study music across multiple languages, cultures, and styles, engage in embodied performance practices, and participate in robust leadership experiences.

Cantabile's top choirs tour and compete internationally and have performed stand-alone programs at renowned venues including Carnegie Hall, the Berliner Philharmonie, Notre Dame de Paris, St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, and St. Petersburg State Cappella, as well as with professional partners such as Symphony San José, Opera San José, Stanford Symphony, New Ballet, Kronos Quartet, and Conspirare. Recent highlights include performances with Symphony San José & Chorale's Holiday Spectacular, San Jose Opera's *The Magic Flute* and *La Bohème*, and the Stanford Live Concert Series at Bing Concert Hall, where Cantabile premiered *We Are the Garden*, a commissioned work by Jocelyn Hagen. Committed to establishing collegial connections with choirs around the world, Cantabile has hosted singers from France, England, Estonia, Germany, and most recently the St. Catherine's Girls' Choir of Cambridge.

Cantabile's spring season begins with its Annual Gala on March 14, 2026, at the Los Altos Community Center and continues with Spring Concerts on May 16, 2026, at Mission Santa Clara de Asís, featuring more than 180 singers across all ensembles. More information and tickets are available at cantabile.org. Singers of Vocalise and Bravi will conclude the exciting 2025-2026 season with a concert tour to London, Cambridge, Shernbourn, and York.

As VanNessa Hulme Silbermann begins her tenure with Cantabile, she plans to attend rehearsals of all the choirs during the week of January 26 in order to meet the parents of the singers. For additional information or to schedule interviews, please email info@cantabile.org.