

## Alumni Testimonials

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My name is David Mallari and I was blessed to serve as Choir President for the 1996-1997 academic year. The choir was bonded by many experiences that year and became very close that year--quite a way to end my high school career.

Choir was a second family to me, fostering many friendships that I still maintain today, and it helped me tremendously to develop leadership skills and the ability to work in small and large groups. It helped to develop my appreciation for music, opening me up to the non-verbal and non-tonal nuances (i.e., emotion through crescendos, rhythmic precision), as well as beauty in the words and melodies of various styles of music, not just contemporary/pop music.

The "family vacation" that year took us to New York City, where we performed as part of the National Youth Choir, as well as the feature choir by ourselves, at Carnegie Hall. Two things I remember most:

1) I had almost not made it to New York, as I was involved in a near-fatal car accident the summer before. I survived in large part thanks to continuous support from my choir family, including a hospital visit from Mr. Raddin and his wife. Mr. Raddin was not only my favorite teacher from high school, but also one of the best persons I am fortunate enough to know, and I really looked up to him. He inspired me so much that, upon graduating, I went to UNT to possibly pursue a music education degree. (However, with very little instrumental background, I eventually decided against it.)

After we finished rehearsing our solo program backstage, members of the choir visited with each other as Mr. Raddin made some mental preparations to take the stage. As Mr. Raddin paced about the room, he paused near me. I smiled a huge smile and gave him a big bear hug. He smiled back as he told me something along the lines of, "Glad you could be here." I was glad, too--what a once in a lifetime opportunity!

2) One of the songs we sang on stage as the feature choir was "Ubi Caritas" by Durufle, an a capella piece. The song ended with an "Amen;" the last note was held for some duration. As we tapered the note and it faded away, it seemed to float as it echoed through Carnegie Hall. The moment was completely magical and I will never forget it.

I often recall my experiences in choir to be the fondest I have from my high school years--probably, aside from specific people, choir is one of the few things I can honestly say I miss from those years. It was an extremely huge part of who I am today, and for that, I am eternally grateful.

- David Mallari, Class of 1997

Being a part of the Klein Choir was one of the most rewarding and important experiences from high school. Through the teachings and passion of P.Radd and company, I learned how to appreciate music in a way that I had no idea existed. Not to mention I had a blast doing it! (I still remember us basses keeping an official tally of P.Radd's musical analogies).

Frankly, Klein Choir helped me become a well-rounded person, and I left high school a better person because of it. If you commit to it, it will be one of the best memories for you, too.

- Deymond Gibbs, Class of 1992

Being in choir for 4 years has definitely molded me and formed me into who I am today. I graduated in 2007 and I truly loved and miss the Klein choir family. I enjoyed choir not just because of singing and being with my friends in one class period out of the day. I loved choir simply because of the directors; who they were and what they taught. They taught lessons about life, perfectly connected with music. They truly came into the calling of what a teacher is and ought to be.

Choir was to me, an unforgettable experience that I have now and will always come to cherish.

- Shara De Leon, Class of 2007

The Klein Choir was a place to experience music in a way that touched both the performers and the audience. I was proud to be a members of the Chorale Choir at the first TMEA concert and a member of the first season of the Chamber Choir. How exciting it was to be with the best singers Klein had to offer. To the current Choir - Phil Raddin, if you let him, will take you to the highest level of choral performance that is possible. His attention to detail and his love for you all is not found in many conductors/teachers. Have fun and LOVE THE MUSIC!!

- Doug Rogers, Class of 1992

I was in your choir several years ago (I graduated 1996). I really appreciate the memories I have of choir, and this year I have been able to use a little of what you taught me.

I am now married and live in Dugway Utah (a military post in the middle of the desert, some of us lovingly refer to it as "the end of the earth"). I play the piano for the local high school choir. I think this year's graduating class has about 20-25 students, just to give you an idea of the size of the school. The director is actually a band director, but does a good job with the choir. The few times he has left me in charge of choir, I have been able to teach them some of the things I remember you teaching us about singing (breath support, how to stand, how to shape vowels, some warm-up exercises etc), and have been able to brag about how amazing our choir was, what with winning nationals, never getting less than a 1 at UIL and solo and ensemble and all that.

I miss choir, and wish that I could get out there on occasion to attend the Christmas concert or the Pop concert, but living so far away with kids in school makes that rather difficult. I still listen to our Christmas tapes every year.

I hope everything is going well and that your current students realize the opportunities that lie ahead if they learn well from you. I regret greatly that I didn't take advantage of the opportunities I had to become much better than I am by participating more in solo and ensemble.

- Allison Warner (formerly Allison Romney)

Throughout High School, Choir was always my favorite class. In fact, many days I found myself counting down the minutes in each class knowing that each one brought me closer to choir.

Choir was my home at Klein and I spent as much time as I possibly could in the building and with the directors, but now that that's gone I find myself wishing I had spent more. Choir taught me so much about music but more importantly it gave me an incredible work ethic, a passion for music, and the capacity to love my choir family without end. I know that each of these qualities that choir has given me will be able to help me so much throughout my life. I loved each and everyday in choir, some more than others, and I'm sad to have to leave. I could spend the rest of my life

searching for another organization better than Klein Choir, and I probably wouldn't be able to find one. Mr. Raddin is the greatest man I have ever had the pleasure of knowing and if you let him, he will teach you more than you could ever think was possible.

- Taylor Morris, Class of 2007

I'm a 1976 graduate of Klein High School. During my high school years, our chorale was directed by Bill Chambless. My experience was one to cherish as I enjoyed every moment of the chorale. All the hard work and dedication, auditions and site reading experience were a blast. I enjoyed all the competitions, concerts and being a part of the Bicentennial performance at the football game in 1976. My favorite piece that I learned and still remember today is "The Lord Bless You and Keep You". I can assure you that I will always have music in my heart and tons of memories as I received a "1" rating at state solo competition my senior year at KHS.

- Gary Mazyn, Class of 1976

Hello there all you choir folk. I can tell you from personal experience that you are involved in one of the most amazing organizations available for high school students. I was a member of Klein choir for only three of my high school years because I moved to Houston as a sophomore in 1996. I participated in the All-State choir audition process and I was a member of Chorale and Chamber choir. After graduation (1999) I have continued singing and now, having experienced adult choirs, I am continually surprised at the caliber of music I was singing in high school. Some of my closest friends are those I met while singing in the practice rooms, getting ready for solo and ensemble, and traveling to New York and Chicago to compete or show off our skill. Music continues to be a significant part of my life and I attribute most of my musical education to Mr. Raddin and Klein choir. Enjoy yourselves and know that you are part of something really special.

- Sarah Brisiel Class of 1999

I took choir later than most everyone else. I signed up my junior year and got in the freshman level all girls choir (Die Rosensänger). I didn't anticipate liking it at all, I just needed to get an art credit out of the way before I graduated. That year was the first year Mrs. Luedecke (then, Ms. Kruse) taught at Klein High School...and she was the main director for the Die Rosensänger choir. Looking back, I see this as a huge twist of fate. Her patience, her love, and her passion for music inspired me in a way that I feel no other director could have. I appreciated the way she brought a sometimes apathetic group of young girls together as a family, her attention to detail, and her utmost sensitivity towards every girl. One time I watched her spend a good five minutes with one girl who had a hard time rolling her "s" and NOT ONCE did Mrs. Luedecke ever lose her patience. Up until that year I never felt like I fit in anywhere, but even though I was a couple of years older than everyone in my choir, I finally knew that I'd found my place. I now place great value in my voice and improving it, and I now have a deeper respect for music and the people who study it. But most importantly, I still look back at Mrs. Luedecke and aspire to be as kind and thoughtful as she was. The thing about Klein Choir is that overshadowing the beautiful, precise music the directors strive to achieve, is a sense of oneness, community. Whether you're a Christian or Muslim, black or white, popular or nerdy, conservative or liberal, Mr. Raddin, Mr. Jones, and Mrs. Luedecke all place great value in making everyone feel important. Which, when you think about it, is really what choir is supposed to be all about; making many individual voices come together as one to make something magical. I encourage everyone that goes to Klein to join Klein Choir for at least one year. I know it may sound cheesy, but for me it's not just a musical experience, it's just as much a spiritual experience.

-Ashley Gibson, Class of 2005

Klein Choir is awesome!!! I was in Klein Choir all four years and graduated in 2007, so I know what I mean when I say that you will have fun and learn a lot in choir. The directors are super-good at their job. Join choir today!!!

- David Ludlow, Class of 2007

I was in choir all 4 years of high school. Every single day in Klein Choir was a learning experience that helped me for the rest of my life. You will mature with the choir as well as make some lifelong friends. As well, Klein choir is famous for its' outstanding singers. My favorite trip was New York with the Chorale choir. Every one of the directors will become parental figures and they will be with you for the rest of your life. Go Klein HS Choir and GO BEARKATS! - Brittany Glasscock, Class of 2004