The four main feature articles in this issue are all based on presentations from the 2018 North Dakota State University Choral Symposium. The theme was Relevance—“creating programming that fosters connections between singers, audience, and the community with the purpose of exploring issues of social significance.” The March 2014 issue of Choral Journal was a focus on “Music of the Americas,” which was the topic of the first Choral Symposium in 2013. We are once again pleased to share these offerings from the biannual event.

From the Guest Editor
Jo Ann Miller, North Dakota State University

Choral conductors have the great privilege of working with singers of all ages. People singing together is a powerful force for good in the world, and we believe that choral music is relevant in every aspect of our lives, from the time of youthful innocence and exuberance, to the discovery of who we are, to the insightful time of maturity and through our reflection near life’s end. How we program for our choral ensembles can greatly impact the significance our music making has on our singers and our audiences.

The 3rd NDSU Choral Symposium: Relevance was designed to bring together choral musicians to tell their stories of how they contribute to choral music in a significant way in their communities. Presenters and participants shared their stories of developing choirs for special populations, of leading prison choirs and providing opportunities for musical growth for that population, of creative programming within long-established choral programs, of looking at standard repertoire in new ways, and of creatively serving the needs of the people in their own communities.

These articles represent some of the amazing work our colleagues are doing across the country. The breadth and depth of the commitment we witnessed at this symposium to developing empathy, understanding, hope, cultural awareness, trust, and community was an inspiration. We believe that the experience of intentionally providing choral music experiences toward these goals can be life changing.

Dr. Michael Weber, Dr. Charlette Moe, NDSU choral faculty, and Tesfa Wondemagegnehu, St. Olaf College, and I, as program chairs for the Relevance symposium, are happy to share information on the other inspiring presentations. Jo.miller@ndsu.edu