



## **Master 700 Director Ryan Heller**

Ryan Heller has been leading Portland's mighty Pride for over ten years!

A "barbershop brat," he joined the Barbershop Harmony Society as a high school freshman, singing with then Evergreen District champs, Vocal Gentry. Under Ryan's leadership, Pride of Portland has won regional championships each cycle of competitions, made six appearances on the international stage with five top ten finishes, received the Audience Choice Award at the 2010 international convention in Seattle, WA, and most recently a 4th place finish in the fall of 2014 at international competition in Baltimore, MD. In April of 2013, Ryan received his Master Director 700 award when Pride of Portland Chorus took first place at our regional contest, with a record-breaking score of 701 points.

Along with the tremendous distinction of being Pride's Master Director 700, Ryan is the Artistic Director/ Conductor of the following: Chorus Austin (Austin, TX) and Portland Vocal Consort (Portland, OR). Other recent positions include: Music Director/Conductor of the Southwest Washington Symphony (2003-2013) and Co-founder/Conductor of the Columbia Chorale of Oregon (2001-2009). His Master of Music and Bachelor of Music degrees are in conducting and vocal studies from Chapman University (Orange, CA) and Portland State University (Portland, OR). He is also sought after as a chorus and quartet coach, conference speaker and guest director.

Ryan's musical career has seen many highlights outside of the barbershop world. He has been the musical director of a wide variety of productions throughout the country including--among

others--Brigadoon, Pirates of Penzance, H.M.S. Pinafore, Sweeney Todd, Annie, Company, and Into the Woods. While an undergraduate, Ryan was Music Director of the Orange Coast Unitarian Universalist Church (Costa Mesa, CA). The choir appeared on the acclaimed Victoria Recital Series, earning the group reviews as "the best church choir in Orange County," as well as recording the ensemble's first CD. Ryan has appeared and/or recorded with groups such as the Austin Symphony, Portland Opera, William Hall Master Chorale, Rose-City Chamber Orchestra, Choral Cross-Ties, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Capella Romana, Lakewood Theater Company and the Broadway Rose Theater Company. He has toured with groups throughout the United States, Europe, and China.

Recent awards include Master 700 Director (Pride of Portland, 2013), ASCAP/Alice Parker Award for Innovative Programming from Chorus America (Chorus Austin, 2013), and American Prize Finalist (Chorus Austin, 2013 and 2011).

A rarely known fact about Ryan is that, while an undergrad, he received a scholarship from Sweet Adelines' Young Singers Foundation and received a Young Artist Award from the National Recording Academy. In demand throughout the country as a conductor, singer and coach, Ryan encourages, cajoles and educates each performer toward becoming the best they can be. A demanding yet loving leader, Ryan never fails to bring out the optimal performance in each musician with whom he works. Pride of Portland Chorus looks forward to our continued journey of musical excellence with Ryan as our fearless leader!