

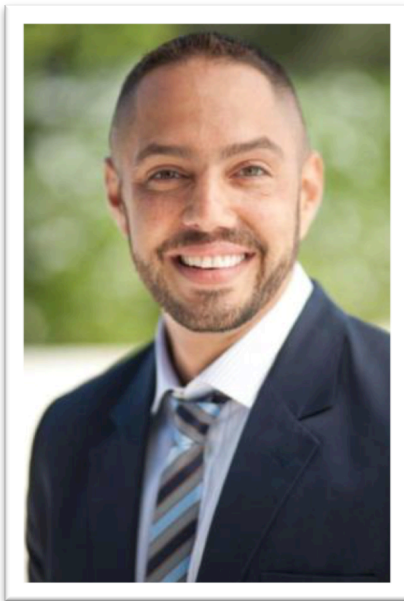
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## San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus Appoints Christopher Verdugo as New Executive Director

SAN FRANCISCO (June 29, 2016) – The **San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus** (SFGMC) announced today that they have appointed **Christopher Verdugo** as Executive Director. Mr. Verdugo joins SFGMC in anticipation of the Chorus' 39<sup>th</sup> Season, and together with Artistic Director **Dr. Timothy Seelig**, will lead the organization to new levels of growth, financial sustainability and artistic excellence. Verdugo brings over 15 years of experience leading non-profit organizations, and comes to SFGMC after five successful years as Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles (GMCLA).



"I am proud to be joining SFGMC at this moment," said Chris Verdugo. "With its rich musical history, deep roots in the community and unparalleled artistic excellence, SFGMC is poised to become a global influence in the years to come."

Before joining SFGMC, Verdugo served as the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles. Under Verdugo's leadership GMCLA has continued to build its international reputation for musical excellence, doubled its budget, saw massive expansion incorporating education programs in Los Angeles' high schools, as well as a national music tour entitled "It Gets Better." Before working with GMCLA, Verdugo founded his own production company, creating and producing major fundraising events and galas in Los Angeles for leading LGBT organizations, including the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), GLAAD (formerly the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), GMCLA and Beinestar. He has also served as Director of Development (Southern California) for Equality California and Special Events and Major Gifts Manager

*The San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus creates extraordinary musical experiences that inspire community, activism and compassion.*

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of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. He received his BA from the New World School of Performing Arts.

“Over the last few years, we’ve witnessed major growth artistically with the Chorus,” writes **Dennis Stradford**, Chair of SFGMC’s Board of Directors. “We’ve more than doubled our audiences at our season concerts, we’ve increased the number of outreach performances we do for community non-profits and local organizations and we’ve brought major world-premiere commissions, such as Stephen Schwartz’s *Testimony* and Andrew Lippa’s *I Am Harvey Milk* into the world. But now we take the next major leap forward with the hiring of Chris Verdugo, who will bring incredible leadership and management to the Chorus.”

“We are so excited to have Chris Verdugo join our organization,” writes **Dr. Timothy Seelig**, Artistic Conductor. “He brings such a wealth of experience that will truly take the Chorus to the next level. In 2010, just before moving to San Francisco, I had the privilege of working with Chris when I guest conducted GMCLA for their holiday concert. I got to experience first-hand his dynamism and extraordinary skills in arts management. We are so thrilled that he will be joining us and know he will be instrumental in helping us achieve the landmark goals we have for the future.”

SFGMC just finished a hugely successful 38<sup>th</sup> Season, including three major season concerts – “HoliGays Are Here” at the Nourse Theater, “Tales of Our City: Our Lives, Our Heroes” at Davies Symphony Hall featuring Armistead Maupin and the Bay Area Rainbow Symphony, and “Heartthrobs: Biggest Boy Band Ever” at the Nourse Theater. Next week, the Chorus travels to Denver, CO, for the quadrennial GALA Choruses Festival, and then will embark on an extension tour to Colorado Springs, CO, where the Chorus will host a benefit concert for many local LGBT charities in Colorado Springs. For more information on the Chorus, please visit [www.sfgmc.org](http://www.sfgmc.org).

### **About San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus**

For nearly 40 years, the San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus has courageously served as the international standard bearer for a powerful and accomplished mix of high-caliber performance, human rights, community activism, empowerment and inclusiveness, establishing it as an icon among LGBT organizations. Founded in 1978, it was the first organization of its kind and is credited with starting the LGBT choral movement, galvanizing and changing the course of LGBT history. It continues to rally and inspire other arts-based community organizations around the world. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Dr. Timothy Seelig, SFGMC has in recent seasons established a heightened level of performance standards receiving audience and choral acclaim, increased its touring and recording profile and broadened its impact and reputation in the community while maintaining its signature blend of humor, personality and high-voltage performances. For more information, visit [www.sfgmc.org](http://www.sfgmc.org) and @sfgmc (Facebook/Twitter/Instagram).

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