



**SOROMUNDI**  
*Lesbian Chorus of Eugene*



## **Karm Hagedorn**

### Founder

On September 21, 1989, Karm Hagedorn and her wife, Sheryl, invited four friends over to sing. Karm had spent her life singing — as a child with her music-loving parents, in the Sheldon High School a capella chorus, with local theater productions, and the University of Oregon’s gospel choir. Perhaps it was inevitable she would form a choir herself, and that night in September is regarded as the first rehearsal for what would become Soromundi Lesbian Chorus of Eugene. For decades Karm has served as Musical Director, Co-Musical Director (with Lisa Hellemn) or member. She eventually learned to play bass guitar and joined Complicated, a local band with a strong Soromundi following. Now retired from her position as General Manager at Eugene’s Hult Center for the Performing Arts, she and Sheryl enjoy traveling and visiting with their adult daughter, but her love of singing brings her back to Soromundi periodically, most recently for the 35th Anniversary and now Soromundi the Musical.



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## **Lisa Hellemn**

### Music Director

When Dr. Lisa Hellemn came to Eugene in 1990, she saw a Soromundi performance at a local event — and was an instant fan. She offered her services as an accompanist and eventually became the Musical Director. Lisa’s extensive background in music, music education, special education, and educational leadership has been critical to Soromundi’s longevity and growth, given that there are no auditions and many in the chorus have no musical background — except a love of singing. Lisa’s commitment to supporting each singer and helping them find success, just as she supported all the students and teachers who she encountered, accounts for the lengthy tenure of so many in the chorus.

After twenty-four years of training teacher candidates for the University of Oregon’s Department of Education, Lisa retired just in time to assist with the writing of the choir’s memoir, *Sisters of the World*, and compose *Soromundi the Musical*. She has no intention of slowing down and looks forward to whatever comes next, stating, “I’m surrounded by the most amazing people.”



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## **Lynn Smith**

Assistant Director

Assistant Musical Director Lynn Smith spent her entire career surrounded by music, serving as an elementary school music teacher for 32 years. Lynn first sang with Soromundi from 1991 through 1994 and acted as a guest director occasionally. As is often the case with the Mundis, Lynn stepped away and returned for the 20th celebration in 1999 — and stayed. The combination of Lynn’s musical knowledge and teaching ability, have made her a valuable asset to the four sections, most especially to those members who don’t read music and need tutelage to succeed with Soromundi’s vast repertoire. When Lynn isn’t arranging music or supporting Mundis, she enjoys traveling with her wife, playing golf, and hosting game nights.



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## **Ann Huber**

President

After seeing Soromundi's tribute to Broadway eight years ago, Ann joined the chorus the following September. Before she was president, Ann served as the vice president and director of development. A former public school educator with a background in theater and chorus, Ann and her wife moved to Eugene from Phoenix, Arizona. She considers herself incredibly fortunate to have found the Soromundi community.



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## **Carrie Bartlett**

### Board Secretary

Carrie moved to Eugene in 2022. Carrie has worked as an Occupational Therapist for 32 years, and she currently supports students in numerous schools within the 4J School District. She was encouraged to join Soromundi to meet new people. During her first year in chorus, she was asked to introduce a song composed by a songwriter she knew, and by the end of the year, she was asked to be section leader. For the 24-25 season, she joined the board as secretary. When she's not working or singing, she enjoys weightlifting, gardening, camping, and home improvement.



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## **Rebecca Swing**

Treasurer

A native Oregonian, Rebecca found Soromundi in 2004 during a visit to the Saturday Market. She heard them performing and was inspired to join. She would serve six years as the treasurer, capitalizing on her financial acumen as a REALTOR® and former school administrator. After going on hiatus right before the pandemic, Rebecca rejoined the chorus and was asked to serve as treasurer once again. She enjoys training and hiking with her Brittany dogs, gardening, reading and knitting.



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## **Cathy Thomas**

### Director of Organizational Development

Cathy came to Eugene in 1978 for grad school, and she worked as a swim and water polo coach. Sadly, she was unable to be an out lesbian. After retiring as a coach, she became a research data analyst at Teaching Research Institute and later at Lane Community College. She also found Soromundi through friends and was able to share her true self every day. Becoming a part of the Mundi community is a highlight of her life, and her analytical skills earned her a spot on the board — three times. She currently serves as Director of Organizational Development and is focused on finalizing succession plans for all positions in the Soromundi organization. She enjoys camping with her wife, time with her granddaughters, attending Oregon women's sports, and working with her Portuguese Water Dog, Zoey, who is a Certified Therapy Dog.



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## **Dawn DeMars**

### Director of Marketing

Even though Dawn lived out of state most of her adult life, she often visited Soromundi's rehearsals, concerts, and other events with family who were members, and joined the chorus when she moved back to Oregon five years ago. As a consultant in the manufacturing and retailing of pianos and other musical instruments, Dawn brings her experience as a former member of many non-profit Board of Directors and expertise in Marketing.



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## **Ruth Danielson**

Director of Technology

A transplant to Oregon from Utah, Ruth was invited to join in 2010 but didn't make it until 2012 and hasn't looked back since! She has been involved with chorus and theatre for most of her life. She served as section leader for six years, and once her children were grown (one of whom sings with Soromundi), she joined the board. She served as the Member-at-Large, secretary, and now is the first Director of Technology. It was a natural fit since she's been immersed in the digital needs of the chorus for several years. She's also the "Chorus Mom," providing cough drops and tissues, and lending support wherever needed.



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## **Rebekah Hope**

Director of Concerts

Becky comes from a family of performers and started performing at a very young age. She grew up in Springfield, and after years of performing in local theatre productions she found she really missed singing in groups. So, in 2018 she happily joined Soromundi. Becky is the proud mom of three delightful hooligans, performs and directs for local community and children's theatres, and can often be found vending at local crafters markets.



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## **Kim Dunn**

### Director of Activities and Events

Kim moved to Eugene from Portland in 2016, leaving behind a beloved lesbian community. She found Soromundi, and after attending one rehearsal, she joined in 2017 and never looked back. The next year she joined the board as the chair of retreats and rehearsals, and through the strong community network she's established in Eugene, she's moving Soromundi toward greater community involvement. Some of her favorite Mundi memories include being part of a song and video honoring Ruth Bader Ginsburg and being asked to create a jingle for one of our local eateries. Her thirteen-year-old daughter and partner share her love of the arts, and her professional life is in hospice with extensive experience in dementia and senior living.



## **Chantelle Baldwin**

### Member-at-Large

Chantelle first recalls seeing Soromundi at protests and marches. She finally got the chance to join for herself in 2024! Chantelle moved back to Eugene in 2018 after living in Washington, California, New York, and Portland for medical school and residency training. During that time, she also had five children, now aged 17-26. She keeps busy in the community as a member of the Eugene Downtown Lions Club and plays in a Marimba band called Kutenda. Professionally, Chantelle is both an Osteopathic and Naturopathic Physician. She owns a Primary Care and Integrative Medicine Clinic in Eugene. As the Member-at-Large, Chantelle is tasked with assisting different directors on key projects and initiatives. Currently, she serves as the Soromundi Alumni Group liaison, assists with coordinating community service activities, and she will become the Assistant Song Selection Coordinator, helping to plan one of Soromundi's most important yearly events — Song Selection.