



TACOMA REFUGEE CHOIR

Healing Through Love and Belonging



Accompanied by:
ZJE Mongolian Music Ensemble
and Providence Kamana

We are the **Tacoma Refugee Choir (TRC)**, a nonprofit music ensemble that brings together refugees, immigrants and friends, to collectively create spaces that foster a sense of community through new connections and music. We believe these spaces promote artistic expression that fulfills a need nearly as essential as food and shelter. In these spaces, like this one that you are sharing with us today, our choir family hopes to spread an enthusiastic message of hope and empathy. We hope you feel that. Thank you for being a part of today's special performance!



Members of TRC perform at the State of the State Address 2023 in Olympia.

Learn more about TRC at www.refugeechoir.org



A Note from Erin

It means so much to have you here at this session to celebrate Love and Healing through Belonging. The invitation to present at this conference comes at a pivotal moment of growth for us, and we are eager to share our stories and learning with you.

Tacoma Refugee Choir is not your typical choir, and yet the lessons of belonging we have experienced are universal and profound. When we feel safe, empowered, and loved, we can show up as our best selves and anything becomes possible. Though some of our members had never sung in choirs before, we have repeatedly seen the power when someone embraces using their voice to sing and then being able to use that voice to advocate for themselves - whether to secure needed support and resources or to serve their community. The power of voice is hard to measure and yet it changes everything! We are now seeing members appointed as commissioners in local government, developing their own businesses, working through difficult challenges, and speaking up in meetings with the WA Governor and Speaker of the House. As one member said, "The choir healed my mistrust...and gives me a reason to do hard things."

For us, music is a tool for creating and healing our community. There have been times when we've been unsure how to overcome the barriers that divide us - and we haven't always gotten it right. But we are increasingly recognizing that we have the opportunity to innovate and reimagine a world that embodies our values and honors the value of every individual in our community, regardless of their past experiences.

When our Choir members stand up on stage and look out at a full audience, it brings them genuine hope and even relief that the community welcomes them, sees them as peers, that they may have found a home. Your presence does that. Thank you for showing up and making that message come across loud and clear.

We invite you to continue on this journey of hope with us. We have created a special page for ACDA guests to stay connected. The page also has some fun musical gifts for download. That link is: <https://www.refugeechoir.org/acda>

Or you can sign up directly for updates at:

<https://refugeechoir.dm.networkforgood.com/forms/acda-guests>

*With Gratitude,
Erin Guinup
Executive & Artistic Director*

Learn more about TRC at www.refugeechoir.org



- **United Drumbeat** - *By Sean Duncan, Laurie Johnson, Joyce Davis & Erin Guinup*
- **Jambo Bwana**
- *[Speaker] Maurice: The Choir is Family*
- **Ehiin Tuhai Duu (Mother's Song)** - **By** *Nyangar Ch*
- *[Speaker] Anne: What the Choir Means to Me*
- **Help Me Find a Home** - *Words by Aboubakr Hassan, Music by Erin Guinup*
- **Coming Back**** - *By Erin Guinup, Michael M.I. Cole, Mariia Pozhar*
- *[Speaker] Mariia: How singing has helped me get through hard times?*
- **Moon Song** - *Words by Abby E. Murray, inspired by youth detained at Selma Carson Home; Music by Erin Guinup*
- **Everyone Can Love Someone** - *By Trésor John, Nathalie Bajinya & Erin Guinup*

** - *When you sign up for our newsletter at www.refugeechoir.org/acda you will be able to download sheet music for this song.*

Tacoma Refugee Choir is: Ala, Anne, Annie, Anu-Ujin, Becky, Bhagirath(Bud) , Da'Nitra, Diane, Erin, Gadine, Galang, Julie, Ina, Kaelin, Karyn Anne, Katia, Krystal, Linda, Linus, Lynndi, Maricre, Mariia, Marsha, Mary Eileen , Maurice, Michael, Michelle, Perry, Priya, Ran, Sander, Shannon, Temuulen , Temuuiin, Tshishiku





Acknowledgments

We humbly thank the **American Choral Directors Association** for this invitation to perform. As we have been excitedly telling our supporters, this was our first performance outside of Washington State! Thank you for sharing in this important occasion with us.

A very warm and special thanks to our musical guests. The **ZJE Mongolian Music Ensemble** enchants us all once again with their traditional songs from across the world. It was truly a gift to have those sounds accompany us on this trip. We were also very happy to welcome **Providence Kamana** and **Suzzette Ortiz** as guest accompanists to help us bring our music to life.

Most of all, we are thankful to you, our audience. You make us feel welcome.

Being Welcoming Is Everyone's Job

- We welcome others by being better hosts. Learning, improving our understanding of the world, connecting to others' perspectives and ideas - these are all ways we can grow together and become more welcoming. In 2023, TRC is fully committed to that growth.
- Help us share our message of hope. Post about the Tacoma Refugee Choir on social media using the hashtag #refugeechoir, follow us online, and join our mailing list.
- Be a friend. Take every chance to send a warm greeting. Find new connections to new cultures and communities. The power of a smile or a hug to someone new cannot be underestimated. Simple acts of love change the world.
- Stay connected and follow our journey to learn how to achieve community change by creating spaces that make welcoming possible. Please learn more about TRC at www.refugeechoir.org and the ways you can get involved or contribute to our mission.

