



Spirit of the Gulf (Region 9)

Harmony Education Resource Outreach "HERO"

Overview

This is a unique program for an in-school educational program for middle and high schools in their area. It takes place on weekdays during normal school hours, mostly scheduled during regular choir class time.

Detailed Planning

They acknowledge that there is a big challenge in contacting schools to offer the program. Emails usually end up in Junk; USPS letters are often screened by the front office. Teachers who have taken advantage of the program are the best advocate and their endorsement of the experience can be used to promote it to others.

Many county or area school districts have Fine and Performing Arts Coordinators who can share information about the program to their teachers and might open new opportunities.

Marketing

By inviting the schools that participate in their outreach program to perform in their annual chorus show, they build a strong relationship with the schools, and focus on continual relationship building. In an effort to reach new educators, they often extend invitations to them to attend their show for free admission.

Day-Of Scheduling

Because this program is held in schools, during a class hour, they have to have a well-planned schedule. It starts with a short explanation of western vocal music and how it differs from barbershop harmony. They focus on class participation by teaching tags, allowing the class to sing together and, if time allows, form pickup quartets to sing tags. The focus of the day is to emphasize the good singing techniques already taught by the teacher; to build on the foundations they have already laid. They utilize video examples of chorus and quartets, both women and men to let the students see barbershop in action.

Personnel

When going into a school, the chorus selects members who can sing accurately in a quarter and teach their part with confidence and a fun and positive way. These are generally section leaders and/or members of quartets singing at B levels or higher. This is an advantage because these individuals are usually self-sufficient and dependable. The key is having a consistent team...if the chorus always has a steady stream of singers to choose from available, then smaller groups can be mixed and matched to fit into specific school requests.