About David L. Brunner

David L. Brunner, professor emeritus at the University of Central Florida, is well known as a conductor and composer whose expertise embraces singers of all ages, from young children and emerging choirs to university, community and professional choruses.  For thirty years as Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities, David Brunner led the choral program at the University of Central Florida, where he conducted the University Chorus and Chamber Singers, taught courses in undergraduate and graduate conducting, and coached composition students. He twice received a College of Arts and Sciences Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award and in 1995 the University Excellence in Teaching Award, UCF's highest teaching honor. He was also the recipient of four Teaching Incentive Awards, three Research Incentive Awards, and three major research awards: the College of Arts and Humanities Excellence in Research Award on two occasions, and the College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Researcher Award.  In 2011 he was the recipient of Florida ACDA's prestigious Wayne Hugoboom Distinguished Service Award for "dedicated service, leadership and consistent examples of excellence in choral music in Florida" and in 2019 the inaugural Impact Award for Distinguished Contribution to the Choral Profession.  He is the 2020 recipient of the College Music Educator of the Year award from the Florida Music Educators Association.  Brunner has been on the music faculties of the Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University and South Suburban College (IL) and is on the graduate faculty of the VanderCook College of Music (Chicago). His choirs have performed in England, France, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Italy and Greece, at state and divisional conventions of the American Choral Directors Association and the Music Educators National Conference, at the Seminar für Klassiche Musik at the Eisenstädte Sommerakademie in Eisenstadt and Vienna, in St. Mark's Basilica, Venice, St. Martin-in-the-Fields and Wesley's Chapel, London, and at the Vatican for Pope John Paul II.

Dr. Brunner is highly regarded for his work with singers of all ages, conducting treble, tenor/bass, and mixed All-State and regional honor choirs throughout the United States at the elementary, middle and high school levels. As teacher, workshop clinician, conference presenter and adjudicator at choral festivals and educational workshops, he has appeared in thirty-four U.S. states, Canada, the UK, Europe, Japan and Australia.  Notable engagements have included the American Choral Directors Association, Music Educators National Conference and American Guild of Organists, the Association of British Choral Directors and the Kodaly Societies of Canada and Australia, the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, the Choristers Guild, the Asian Pacific Activities Conference Honor Choir in Japan, the International Cathedral Music Festival at Salisbury and Canterbury, the Association for Music in International Schools’ (AMIS) International Honor Band and Choir Festival at the Hague and Brussels, and the Choral Music Experience International Institute for Choral Teacher Education in England, Scotland and Wales. He has, on seven occasions, conducted concerts of his own works for chorus and orchestra at Carnegie Hall.

With University of Central Florida choruses he enjoyed a long partnership with the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra (as chorus master for Mahler’s Symphonies 2 and 3, Beethoven’s Choral Fantasy and Symphony 9, music of Copland, Puccini, Verdi, Bizet, Faure, Ravel, Bach, Vivaldi and Monteverdi, and popular concerts of John Williams and Marvin Hamlisch); collaborated with Orlando Opera and Cirque du Soleil in staged performances of Carmina Burana; and conducted singers, players, actors and dancers of the School of Performing Arts in performances of Bernstein’s MASS.  His choirs have presented themed concerts about peace, hunger, and social justice, have collaborated with jazz and world music artists, and presented premiere performances of music by Francisco Nunez, Stella Sung, Alexander Burtzos and David Dickau.  Unique projects were the southeastern U.S. premiere of David Lang’s Little Match Girl Passion and a performance of Lou Harrison’s La Koro Sutro with the Old Grandad gamelan, a replica of Harrison’s original instruments. They have performed in Carnegie Hall and at the International Cathedral Music Festival in Canterbury Cathedral and Queen Elizabeth Hall in London.

An ASCAP award-winning composer annually since 1997, Brunner is one of a prestigious group of American composers named the Raymond W. Brock Commissioned Composer by the American Choral Directors Association (The Circles of Our Lives), their highest honor for American composers.  In the same year he was asked by the Copland Foundation to contribute new mixed chorus adaptations of several of the Old American Songs to Boosey & Hawkes’ Copland 2000 series.  The New York Times has noted him as a “prolific choral writer whose name figures prominently on national repertory lists”, his work having been performed and recorded worldwide in venues as diverse as Royal Festival and Queen Elizabeth Halls in London, Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, EPCOT and Carnegie Hall, and at national conventions of the American Choral Directors Association, the American Kodaly Educators, and the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts, the Voices 500 Festival in Newfoundland, Europa Cantata in Germany and American Cantat in Venezuela and Cuba, the International Cathedral Music Festival at Canterbury Cathedral, as well as Choral Music Experience Institutes for Choral Teacher Training in England, the U.S., UK and Sweden.  His writing styles range from harmonically rich and lyrical to bold and asymmetrically rhythmic.  In each instance, he is committed to texts that resonate and connect with singers and audiences of all ages. Boosey & Hawkes and Walton Music have published over one hundred twenty of his works.

He has been an editorial advisor for Boosey & Hawkes popular Conductor's Choice series and served on the editorial board of the Choral Journal.  His articles appear in both the Choral Journal and Music Educators Journal and he has contributed chapters to Teaching Music Through Performance in Choir, Volume III, GIA Publications, Inc. (2011); The Choral Director's Cookbook:  Insights and Inspired Recipes for Beginners and Experts, Meredith Music Publications (2006) and material for the chapter on "Composing for Women's Choirs" in Conducting Women's Choirs: Strategies for Success, ed. Debra Spurgeon, GIA Publications (2012).  His advanced treble music is the topic of a DMA dissertation, David Brunner's Music for Women's Choirs, by Kelly Miller at Michigan State University and a focus article in the International Federation for Choral Music’s Bulletin.

Brunner holds degrees from Illinois Wesleyan University and Northwestern University in choral music education and conducting and the Doctor of Music Arts in Choral Literature and Conducting from the University of Illinois.  In addition, he studied with Robert Shaw, and with Helmuth Rilling in conducting master classes at the Oregon Bach Festival.  Dr. Brunner is a Past-President of the Florida chapter of the American Choral Directors Association.

A complete resource of Dr. Brunner’s work can be found at www.davidbrunner.com.