

“

Human connection is so important. The work you do is beautiful, and connects us to the daily world.

—Gina

StoryCorps keeps me mindful of my daily kindness impact. One kindness can change the world—one person at a time, one day at a time.

—Karen, StoryCorps Corps Member

I believe that listening is an act of love too! Thanks for being the change that is needed.

—Travis, App User



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

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MISSION
EVERY STORY MATTERS
AND EVERY VOICE COUNTS

Our mission is to preserve and share humanity’s stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world.

LETTER FROM THE LEADERSHIP

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**Board as of May 2017*

Dear Friends,

Nearly 15 years ago, StoryCorps launched in Grand Central Terminal to give everyday people the chance to record meaningful conversations about their lives and to pass wisdom from one generation to the next.

Half a million people have recorded StoryCorps interviews for inclusion in our archive at the Library of Congress—the largest single collection of human voices ever gathered—and tens of millions more have been moved by the powerful stories we’ve culled from these recordings.

Over the years, StoryCorps has tried to help people feel more connected, to increase hope and decrease fear, to shine a light on our best and truest selves, and to remind us all of the inherent value in every life and every story.

Most people come to StoryCorps because they know and love one another. But in 2017, we began testing a new effort to bring people on different sides of the political divide together. It doesn’t matter if they are strangers or the closest of kin. We simply invite them to sit down for a StoryCorps conversation—not to argue about politics—and to get to know one another as human beings and take “one small step” toward each other.

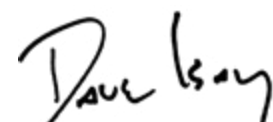
What we’ve seen in testing this new program has been extremely encouraging. Because participants are aware that they are speaking to their great-great-grandchildren through StoryCorps, they bring their highest selves to these conversations. While social media can often unleash our worst impulses, StoryCorps seems to bring out our best angels. We are excited to officially launch One Small Step in the fall of 2018, and hope that in the years to come the effort can help pump the breaks on the tribalism which is tearing at the fabric of our country.

Other highlights of 2017 include:

- 80,000 people recorded StoryCorps interviews through our recording booths, onsite recording options, or our app.
- We broadcast 57 stories on NPR. Seventy-five percent of our broadcasts featured a storyteller from a diverse or under-represented group.
- Our stories were viewed tens of millions of times on social media. For example, our story featuring **William “Lynn” Weaver** was seen by more than 5 million people.
- We re-launched our Military Voices Initiative to collect the conversations of service members and their families who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan after 9/11.
- We launched **StoryCorps DIY** to help organizations learn how to do their own interview collection projects.
- We redoubled our commitment to our animated shorts: We’ll be producing more than two dozen animations over the next two years, such as **“Temple of Knowledge.”**

Robert F. Kennedy said that “All great questions must be raised by great voices and the greatest voice is the voice of the people.” Every day we work hard to lift up those voices and to share their authentic stories with the world.

Thank you for believing in our work and for supporting our efforts.



Dave Isay, *Founder & President*



Robin Sparkman, *CEO*



Photo Credit: Harvey Wang

Dave Isay



Photo Credit: Maggie Soladay

Robin Sparkman

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends,

Has there ever been a time when the work of StoryCorps is more important to hold aloft the most cherished American ideals?

In 2017 we saw a resurgence of white supremacy at Charlottesville; fierce debates on immigration; children once again mowed down by a school shooter, this time in Parkland, Florida; lives destroyed by opioid abuse all across the American heartland.

Our country is more divided than ever, and too many of us are talking past one another and increasingly failing even to recognize one another's common humanity, whatever our political differences.

StoryCorps points a way out of this dangerous spiral. An America where we listen to one another across bridges of experience, identity, and ideology.

You may stop for a moment and think about the travel ban on immigrants from certain countries when you hear the story of [Philip](#), an Iraqi translator who worked with Americans in the Iraq war ... ICE raids and deportations when [Aiko and Roy Ebihara](#) recall their time in deportation camps for Japanese Americans during the Second World War.

The toll of gun violence is inescapably real when [Tom and Terry Sullivan](#) talk about their son Alex, killed in the Aurora theater shooting while attending a showing of the latest Batman movie on his birthday—something he'd done every year, and which his parents continue to do in his memory each year.

And the grim cost of opioid addiction comes through when two Knoxville nurses, [Carla Sanders and Kyle Cook](#), share their story of the sharp increase they've seen in babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome, a condition marked by tremors and constant shaking in babies who experience withdrawal. Over the past decade, the incidence of babies born with NAS in their state has risen nearly ten fold.

We can't deal with America's challenges without listening to one another, and can't overcome the gulfs in our society without working together. Besides its day-in, day-out work of capturing voices and stories too often unheard, StoryCorps is also launching One Small Step, to encourage Americans to spend time talking with someone whose politics are different from theirs.

In such small steps—in the work that StoryCorps has done for almost 15 years now—the promise of a better future lies. Thank you, on behalf of my colleagues and I who are proud to serve on the StoryCorps board—for the generous support you provide to make this vital work possible.



Gara LaMarche

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gara'.

Gara LaMarche, Board Chair



“

This is a powerful program that I've listened to for years. I believe in connecting humanity and this is a significant means to do so. I truly value StoryCorps!

—Jennifer

YEAR IN REVIEW 2017



StoryCorps Signature Interviews

3,773 in 2017

Number of StoryCorps signature interviews facilitated and recorded in 2017

73,710 All Time

Number of StoryCorps signature interviews since 2003



App Interviews

34,506 in 2017

Number of app interviews recorded and shared in 2017

157,222 All Time

Number of app interviews since 2015



Interview Participants

76,199 in 2017

Number of people who took part in a StoryCorps interview in 2017

445,832 All Time

Number of people who took part in interviews since 2003



10 Mobile Stops in 2017

- Las Cruces, NM
- San Antonio, TX
- Nashville, TN
- Washington, DC
- Baltimore, MD
- Providence, RI
- Burlington, VT
- Buffalo, NY
- Pittsburgh, PA
- Columbia, SC

ONE SMALL STEP

Almost everyone who has recorded a StoryCorps interview has done so to thank and honor a loved one. But in 2017, a time of national divide and discord, we began asking people with different political viewpoints to record StoryCorps interviews with each other. We're calling it One Small Step: a project to help people get to know each other as human beings and remember our common humanity.

Learn more and help us take one small step toward one another.

ONE
SMALL
STEP

GOOGLE HOME

In 2017, StoryCorps partnered with Google to deliver StoryCorps stories via smart-speaker devices like Google Home, triggering collections of our most universal stories with a simple voice command. With nearly a quarter of all Americans using a smart-speaker device, StoryCorps voice commands like "tell me a love story" and "tell me a story about gratitude" are helping reshape the way people interact with audio in their homes.

16 collections in 2017

Collections of stories based on themes like holidays, emotions, and unheard voices

"Hey Google. Tell me a StoryCorps story."



STORYCORPS DIY

After 15 years of working closely with community partners, in 2017 StoryCorps created a do-it-yourself set of multimedia resources to help organizations develop their own interview collection projects. These guides offer crucial tools to promote listening, build an archive, create dynamic public programming, and partner with community organizations.

482 organizations in 2017

Number of libraries, museums, and other organizations that participated in pilot year

26+ states in 2017

States that used StoryCorps DIY, including New York, Florida, Texas, Illinois, and California



PLAYLIST | SOME OF THE MOST MEMORABLE STORIES OF THE YEAR



William “Lynn” Weaver

In 1964, Dr. William “Lynn” Weaver was one of 14 black teens who integrated West High School in Knoxville, Tennessee. Dr. Weaver also integrated the school’s all-white football team, along with other black players, including his older brother, Stanley. At StoryCorps, he spoke about what it was like to play for the West High School Rebels, his experiences in the classroom, and how difficult it was for him to get a quality education there.

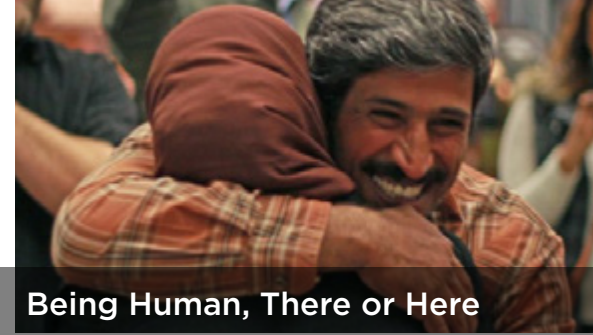
[Listen to the Story.](#)



Johnny Holmes & Christian Picciolini

In the 1990s, Johnny Holmes was head of security at a high school in Blue Island, Illinois, where he met Christian Picciolini, a teenage student who was the leader of a local neo-Nazi group. Christian was involved for eight years before he renounced the movement’s racist principles. He credits Johnny with being the person who helped turn him around. Christian and Johnny came to StoryCorps to remember how it happened.

[Listen to the Story.](#)



Being Human, There or Here

Although it’s hard for him to imagine now, when Philip, an Iraqi interpreter who worked with the U.S. Army, first took the post, he didn’t consider how dangerous it would be. In this podcast, Philip talks about his time with the military, through a conversation he has with the U.S. Army sergeant who sponsored his immigration. He also speaks with his nephew and recalls his years-long struggle to reunite with his family, whom he had to leave behind in Iraq.

[Listen to the Podcast.](#)



Tom Sullivan and Terry Sullivan

On July 20, 2012, a gunman shot and killed 12 people in a packed movie theater in Aurora, Colorado. One of the victims was Alex Sullivan. He was celebrating his birthday at the movies that night—something he had done since he was a small child. Alex and a group of friends planned to see a midnight showing of the latest Batman film, just as he turned 27. Five years later, his parents, Tom and Terry Sullivan, sat down at StoryCorps to remember him.

[Listen to the Story.](#)



Aiko & Roy Ebihara

Last year marked 75 years since President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066, which authorized the internment of Japanese Americans. Roy Ebihara was 8 years old at the time, living in Clovis, New Mexico. He watched as his town grew increasingly hostile toward its small Japanese community. Roy’s family was among the first to be forcibly removed from their home. Roy’s wife, Aiko, was also interned along with her family. At StoryCorps, they reflect on the days leading up to their internments.

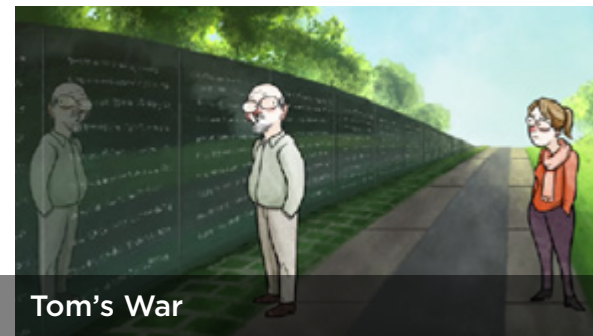
[Listen to the Story.](#)



Carla Saunders & Kyle Cook

Kyle Cook and Carla Saunders are neonatal nurse practitioners at East Tennessee Children’s Hospital in Knoxville. They spent years caring for infants, but when the opioid crisis began in 2010, their jobs changed in ways they never anticipated. Over the past decade, the incidence of babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) has risen. Kyle and Carla came to StoryCorps to remember how this affected their patients firsthand.

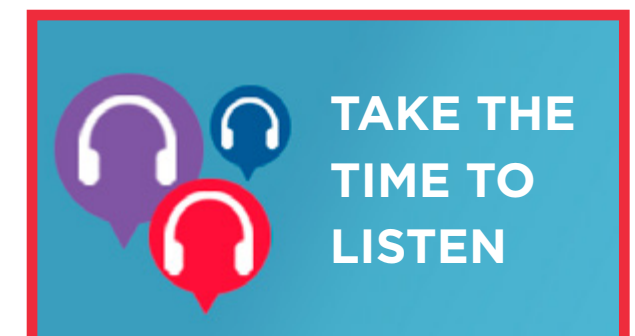
[Listen to the Story](#)



Tom’s War

After being drafted in 1969, Tom Geerdes served as an army medic in the 11th Armored Cavalry in Vietnam and Cambodia. Like many veterans, he returned home a changed man. At StoryCorps, Tom shared his long journey toward healing with his daughter, Hannah Campbell.

[Watch the Animation.](#)



In 2017, StoryCorps released:

57 broadcasts

50 new podcasts

All of our broadcasts, podcasts and hundreds of stories available on [storycorps.org](https://www.storycorps.org).

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*Thank you for allowing me
to remember the good in
people and to relish in the
love and kindness that can
be found in every corner of
our big beautiful world.*

—Madison, Donor



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Corps Members are our “core” supporters—and when you give an annual contribution, you’ll also help support our mission to record and share the voices of all people. Corps Members also enjoy benefits like sneak previews of our animated shorts and special thank-you gifts.

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I used the app to record a couple of interviews with my grandmother. It is wonderful to have her voice telling the stories.
—Cheryl

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FINANCIALS 2017

ASSETS

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$1,728,141
Investments	\$1,010,276
Unconditional Promises to Give	\$5,834,250
Other Receivables	\$506,007
Prepaid Expenses & Other Assets	\$99,161
Property & Equipment, At Cost (net of accumulated depreciation)	\$636,949
Security Deposits	\$63,817

Total Assets **\$9,878,601**

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Liabilities

Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$362,625
Deferred Revenue	\$115,583
Loans Payable	\$38,138
Promissory Note Payable	\$762,511

Total Liabilities **\$1,278,857**

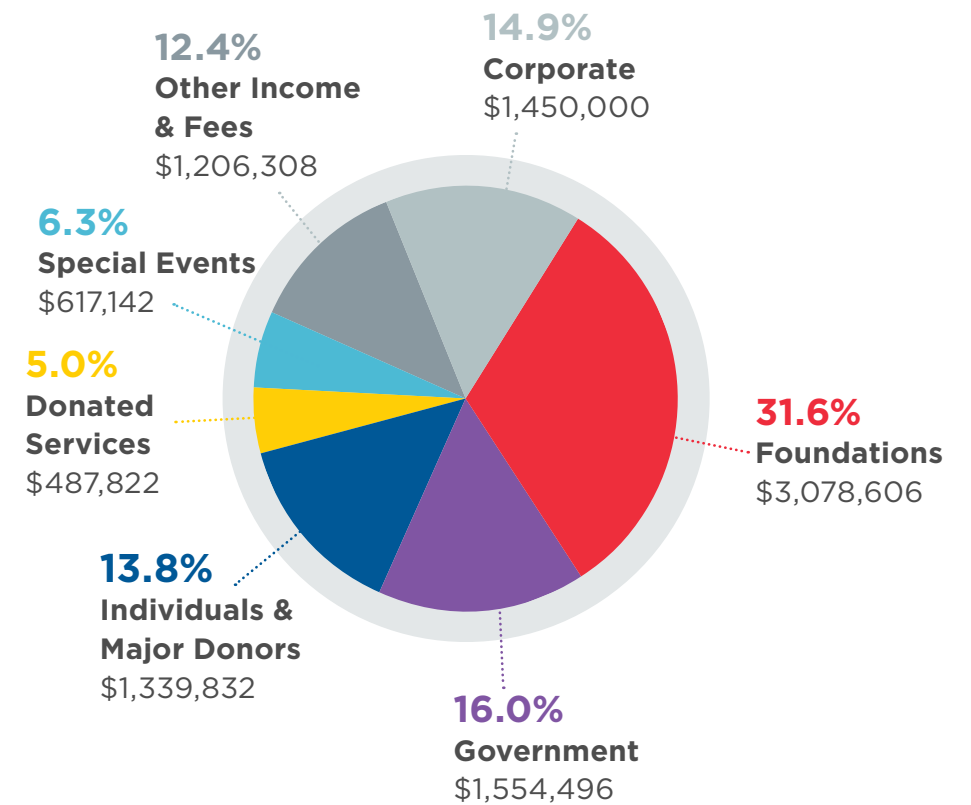
Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$1,958,071
Temporarily Restricted	\$6,641,673
Total Net Assets	\$8,599,744

Total Liabilities & Net Assets **\$9,878,601**

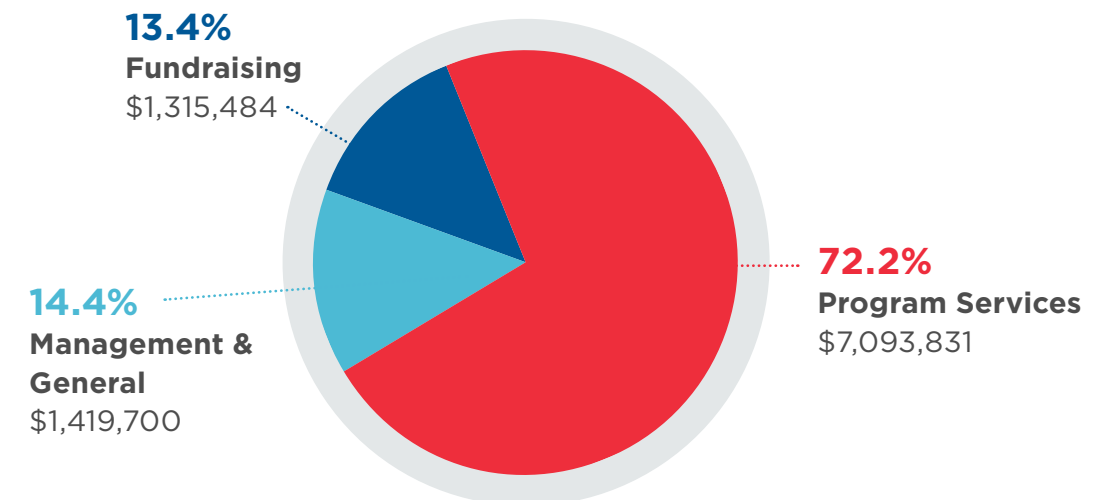
REVENUE

\$9,734,206



EXPENSES

\$9,829,015



*StoryCorps' fiscal year ended December 31, 2017.



We love your poignant, heartfelt stories. That which helps us reach another's heart, touch another's spirit, as your stories do, shines a light of hope in these increasingly disconnected times. Thank you.

—Lee and Pete

The stories we hear shape our worldview and our character. By sharing the stories of ordinary Americans of widely varied backgrounds and experiences, StoryCorps encourages us, even in these polarized times, to recognize our common humanity, and to feel love and respect for all people.

—David

We believe that this is a truly amazing opportunity for any American to have a chance to leave a bit of legacy for anyone who might want to know about them in the future.

—Kellyanne



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STORYCORPS