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StoryCorps Announces One Small Step Communities, Expanding its Newest Initiative to Foster Conversations Across American Political Divides

Six Public Media Stations Will Provide Hubs for People to Engage in Facilitated Interviews; NPR Will Bring Stories to National Audience

Stations Selected by StoryCorps to Take Part:

WBHM – Birmingham, Alabama
KCUR – Kansas City, Missouri
Texas Public Radio – San Antonio, Texas
Utah Public Radio – Logan, Utah
Arizona Public Media – Tucson, Arizona
WUSF – Tampa, Florida

StoryCorps, the groundbreaking personal history project, which has given 500,000 Americans across all 50 states the chance to record conversations about their lives and preserve them for posterity at the Library of Congress, announces **One Small Step Communities**. With support from the **Corporation for Public Broadcasting**, StoryCorps will provide training and production assistance to six local public radio stations across the United States as part of StoryCorps' **One Small Step** initiative to facilitate and broadcast conversations with Americans of opposing viewpoints.

Dave Isay, Founder & President of StoryCorps said: “Our dream, which is lofty, is to try and convince the country that it’s your patriotic duty to see the humanity in people we disagree with. StoryCorps stokes trust, stitches us together, and brings out our best and highest selves.”

Public radio stations have played an integral role in helping StoryCorps to realize its aspiration to touch the lives of every American. Since 2005, more than 145 stations in all 50 states have hosted the StoryCorps Mobile Tour, providing local access to a mobile recording booth that travels the country, reaching people of all backgrounds and providing opportunities to capture stories of communities that might otherwise go untold.

One Small Step entails facilitating and recording conversations between two people—specifically to counteract intensifying political divides, by enabling those who disagree to listen to each other with respect. Rather than spark additional political debates, One Small Step encourages answers to questions like, “Was there a moment, event, or person in your life that shaped your political views?” and “What scares you most when you think about the future?”

“One Small Step is the latest example of StoryCorps’ innovative approach utilizing shared stories to initiate understanding and respect,” said **Pat Harrison**, President and CEO of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. “CPB support will enable public media stations to engage their communities and take that one small step toward mutual understanding and respect for different perspectives.”

The stations participating in One Small Step Communities are: **KCUR – Kansas City; Texas Public Radio – San Antonio; Utah Public Radio – Logan; Arizona Public Media – Tucson; WUSF – Tampa; and WBHM – Birmingham.**

Chuck Holmes, Executive Director of WBHM, says, “Ours is a city of dichotomies: Black and white. Rich and poor. Young and old. Steelmaking and tech start-ups. Native Southerners and newcomers from the North. One Small Step gives us a unique means and framework for continuing the work we’ve done for years to engage both sides of the partisan divide to demonstrate the fairness of our journalism and its civic purpose.”

For the One Small Step Communities project, two members of each participating station will go to New York for a two-day training led by StoryCorps staff. The stations will receive program support and a customized set of professional recording equipment. Stations will record conversations with community residents of differing political persuasions and selected interviews will be shared across each station’s media platforms.

In addition, **NPR** will provide a national platform for sharing stories recorded in these communities in 2019, through digital distribution and a live national event.

“NPR is proud to be part of this effort to foster conversations, in a time of deep division in America. Civil dialogue is at the heart of public radio’s mission,” said **Christopher Turpin**, Vice President for Editorial Innovation and Newsroom Development at NPR.

One Small Step is supported by a broad coalition of government and philanthropic support. Major supporters include The Rockefeller Foundation, the Fetzer Institute, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Einhorn Family Charitable Trust, The Charles Koch Foundation, and the Righteous Persons Foundation. Additional support provided by Present Progressive Fund at Schwab Charitable.

About StoryCorps

Founded in 2003, StoryCorps has given 500,000 people—people of all backgrounds and beliefs, in thousands of towns and cities in all 50 states—the chance to record interviews about their lives. The organization preserves the recordings in its special StoryCorps archive at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, the largest single collection of human voices ever gathered, and shares select stories with the public through StoryCorps’ podcast, NPR broadcasts, animated shorts, digital platforms, and best-selling books. These powerful human stories reflect the vast range of American experiences, wisdom and values; engender empathy and connection; and remind us how much more we have in common than divides us.

StoryCorps is especially committed to capturing and amplifying voices of everyday people least heard in the media. The StoryCorps MobileBooth, an Airstream trailer the organization has transformed into a traveling recording booth, crisscrosses the country year-round in order to gather the stories of people nationwide. With the 2015 TED

Prize awarded to Dave Isay, StoryCorps launched a free mobile app that puts the StoryCorps experience entirely in the hands of users and enables anyone, anywhere to record meaningful conversations with another person and upload the audio to the Library of Congress. StoryCorps also records interviews in its permanent StoryBooths, in New York, Chicago and Atlanta.

Recording an interview in a StoryCorps booth couldn't be easier: You invite a loved one, or anyone else you choose, to a StoryCorps recording site. There you're met by a trained facilitator who explains the interview process, brings you into a quiet recording room and seats you across from your interview partner, each of you in front of a microphone. The facilitator hits "record," and you share a 40-minute conversation. At the end of the session, you walk away with a copy of the interview, and a digital file goes to the Library of Congress, where it will be preserved for generations to come.

StoryCorps is working to grow into an enduring national institution that fosters a culture of listening in the United States; celebrates the dignity, power and grace that can be heard in the stories we find all around us; and helps us recognize that every life and every story matter equally. In the coming years StoryCorps hopes to touch the lives of every American family.

About CPB

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government's investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of more than 1,500 locally owned and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. CPB is also the largest single source of funding for research, technology and program development for public radio, television and related online services. For more information, visit cpb.org, follow us on Twitter [@CPBmedia](https://twitter.com/CPBmedia), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and [subscribe](#) for other updates.

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