

For Embargoed Release  
July 2, 2020



**CONTACTS:**

Blake Zidell  
Blake Zidell & Associates  
718-643-9052 or blake@blakezidell.com  
press@storycorps.org

StoryCorps Press Desk  
646-723-7020 ext. 4101

## **StoryCorps Announces 2020 One Small Step Communities, Expanding to Six New Cities to Foster Conversations Across American Political Divides**

### **Public Media Stations will Anchor StoryCorps' Nationwide Project to Build Connection in Spite of Political Differences**

**Stations Selected by StoryCorps to take part:**

**ideastream**, Cleveland, OH  
**KMUW**, Wichita, KS  
**Red River Radio**, Shreveport, LA  
**VPM**, Richmond, Virginia  
**WESA**, Pittsburgh, PA  
**WJCT**, Jacksonville, FL

StoryCorps, the groundbreaking personal history project, which has given 600,000 Americans across all 50 states the chance to record conversations about their lives and preserve them for posterity at the Library of Congress, announces the 2020 expansion of **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' nationwide **One Small Step** initiative to facilitate and broadcast conversations with Americans of opposing viewpoints.

**Dave Isay, Founder & President of StoryCorps said:** "The pandemic has only exacerbated the deep divisions in the United States. One Small Step has proven to be a powerful intervention to help people see one another's humanity. In 2020 when our country faces challenges unlike any other time in our history, One Small Step helps remind us of who we are, and who we can be at our best as a nation."

“As Americans continue to grapple with the serious issues dividing our nation and how to effect change, open dialogue has never been more vital to strengthening our civil society,” said **Pat Harrison, President and CEO of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting**. “CPB is pleased to support StoryCorps’ efforts through One Small Step to provide local public media stations with tools and platforms to directly engage their communities in constructive conversations about the path forward.”

The stations participating in 2020 are: **ideastream**, Cleveland, OH; **KMUW**, Wichita, KS; **Red River Radio**, Shreveport, LA; **VPM**, Richmond, Virginia; **WESA**, Pittsburgh, PA; and **WJCT**, Jacksonville, FL.

For recording dates and locations in these communities, visit [storycorps.org/onesmallstep](https://storycorps.org/onesmallstep).

Launched by StoryCorps in 2018 in response to growing division in the country, One Small Step is a nationwide project that provides people who hold different views with the opportunity to take part in facilitated and recorded conversations—specifically to counteract intensifying political divides and to enable 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?”

For the One Small Step Communities project, a separately funded component of StoryCorps’ One Small Step program, two members of each participating station participated in 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. The project will culminate with a series of public listening events, streamed online, in fall 2020. In locations where COVID social distancing requirements remain in place, stations will use StoryCorps’ remote recording platform, which pairs two people for a conversation over video and hosted by a trained Facilitator.

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 150 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 is supported by a broad coalition of government and philanthropic institutions, including the Fetzer Institute, The Wunderkinder Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the [Charles Koch Institute](#). Additional support is provided by the Newman-Tanner Foundation.

## **About StoryCorps**

Founded in 2003 by Dave Isay, StoryCorps has given 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 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 what divides us.

StoryCorps is especially committed to capturing and amplifying voices 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 StoryBooths located in Chicago and Atlanta.

Recording a StoryCorps interview couldn't be easier. At one of our locations, you and a loved one, or anyone else you choose, are met by a trained facilitator who explains the interview process. You are then brought into a quiet recording room and seated 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. If you are not able to get to a recording booth or would prefer to do the interview at home, the StoryCorps app serves as the facilitator, guiding users through the interview experience, from recording to archiving to sharing their stories with the world. It provides easy-to-use tools to help people prepare interview questions; record high-quality conversations on their mobile devices; and upload the audio to [archive.storycorps.org](http://archive.storycorps.org) which serves as a home for these recordings and also provides interview and editing resources.

StoryCorps is a 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 matters 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](http://cpb.org), follow us on Twitter @CPBmedia, Facebook and LinkedIn and subscribe for other updates.

###