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## **StoryCorps Launches American Pathways, a Two-Year Initiative to Record the Stories of Refugees, Asylees, Immigrants and Muslims in the U.S.**

### **Recordings Will Be Preserved at the Library of Congress in StoryCorps' Tapestry of Voices Collection and the Anwar Collection of Muslim Voices**

**StoryCorps**, the national non-profit organization dedicated to recording, preserving, and sharing the stories of people of all backgrounds and beliefs, today announces **American Pathways**, a major two-year initiative to celebrate the stories and contributions of both Muslims living in America, including African American Muslims, and specific groups including asylees, refugees, and immigrants, some of whom are DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), TPS (Temporary Protected Status), and DED (Deferred Enforced Departure) recipients. The initiative seeks to move the traditional media conversation beyond the oft-dominant lenses to highlight stories of everyday refugees, asylees, immigrants and Muslims—doctors, teachers, and cab drivers; parents, children, and families. The recordings, gathered through partnerships with a wide range of national and community-based organizations, will be preserved for future generations in two collections in the StoryCorps Archive at the Library of Congress: the **Tapestry of Voices Collection** and the **Anwar Collection of Muslim Voices**, named in memory of beloved StoryCorps producer **Liyna Anwar**, an American Muslim woman who died on March 26, 2020, at the age of 30, of Acute Myeloid Leukemia. American Pathways is made possible in part by the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art's Building Bridges Program.

The recordings build upon StoryCorps' already-rich archive of U.S.-born Muslim and refugee, asylee and immigrant voices, including "[Driving Lessons](#)," in which Muhammad Faridi describes the evolving nature of his feelings about his father being a taxi driver; a [conversation](#), produced by Liyna Anwar, between Mussarat Jabeen and her former pupil Yusor Abu-Salha, who was murdered in Chapel Hill, North Carolina in 2015; an [interview](#) in which immigration lawyer Irakere Picon and his wife Arianna Hermosillo talk about the challenges faced by Irakere, a DACA recipient; and a [conversation](#) between Maria Rivas and her teenage daughter Emily about potentially having her Temporary Protected Status (TPS) rescinded under the Trump administration.

**Dave Isay, Founder and President of StoryCorps**, said, "We're excited and humbled to launch American Pathways, especially at this critical moment in American history. This initiative will honor and celebrate the stories and lives of Muslims and immigrants living in the United States. In doing so, we hope to remind all Americans of two eternal truths: that we have so much more in common than divides us, and that all of our stories matter equally and infinitely."

**Senior Program Officer for the Building Bridges Program at the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Zeyba Rahman**, said: "We are proud to support StoryCorps in this effort to amplify a wide spectrum of voices from African-American and other U.S.-born Muslims as well as refugee, asylee and immigrant communities that include Muslims and to share their stories with the public. Stories are the connective tissue of human relationships, illuminating our shared humanity and building our reservoirs for empathy. American Pathways provides individuals from a variety of cultural and geographic origins with a powerful platform for sharing their experiences, facilitating understanding at a time when the United States needs it more than ever." The mission of the Building Bridges Program is to support national efforts, working with U.S. Muslims, to increase mutual understanding and well-being among diverse populations for the benefit of building stronger, inclusive communities.

To gather recordings, StoryCorps has partnered with organizations including **Refugee Congress**, member agencies of **Refugee Council USA**, **Islamic Speakers Bureau**, **Glitter of Hope Foundation** and **Silk Road Rising**, and is working with an advisory council including **Institute for Social Policy and Understanding**, **Building Bridges/ Rethink Media**, and **Refugee Congress**. Follow the project and find out more at [StoryCorps.org/AmericanPathways](http://StoryCorps.org/AmericanPathways).

## **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 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.

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