

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



STORYCORPS

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.

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A Note on Experiencing This Report

At the heart of StoryCorps' mission is making our work as accessible as possible. Throughout this report, we invite you to further explore our content and programs by clicking on the links embedded within this document (that look like this), which will take you to our website and other online platforms.

LETTER FROM **LEADERSHIP**

Dear Friends,

It's been another year of focused, hard work at StoryCorps — and another challenging period for our country. In last year's annual report, we wrote to you about a new pilot project bringing people across the political divide into StoryCorps booths. The effort, which we're calling **One Small Step**, launched last fall and has become more timely and important by the day.

A 2019 study by political scientists at Louisiana State University and the University of Maryland paints this picture of our country today:

- 42 percent of people in each party view the opposition as "downright evil";
- One in five Republicans and Democrats agree with the statement that their political adversaries "lack the traits to be considered fully human";
- 20 percent of Democrats and 16 percent of Republicans think that the country would be better off if large numbers of the opposition died; and
- 18 percent of Democrats and 14 percent of Republicans feel violence would be justified if the opposing party wins the 2020 presidential election.

Needless to say, these numbers continue moving in the wrong direction.

One Small Step is not an effort to foster civil conversation or find common ground, but simply to recognize that people across the divide are human beings. In doing this, we hope to find a path by which we can begin to mend the fraying fabric of our nation. From slavery in America to Nazi Germany, we've seen the damage that dehumanizing others can do. We know from research that the most primitive parts of our brains are hardwired to divide ourselves into "us" versus "them." One Small Step, and StoryCorps writ large, were built to begin undoing that wiring.

In 2018, we began testing our first interviews between strangers across the divide. We recorded our first-ever remote interviews — connecting Washington, DC, with Birmingham, Alabama, using state-of- the-art video conferencing technology to recreate the intimacy of a StoryCorps booth for people who might otherwise never come face-to-face. We opened One Small Step hubs in San Antonio; Phoenix; Kansas City, KS/MO; Tampa, FL; Logan, UT; and Birmingham, AL, with support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. We also started working intensively on college campuses.

Watching One Small Step evolve over the past year has been thrilling. Our initial testing proves we have a powerful methodology for decreasing fear and contempt of the other. We've felt the thrill of seeing people have the courage to come together, to look one another in the eye and recognize that it's hard to hate up close.

Now, we are planning to scale One Small Step, in the hopes of someday convincing the country it's our patriotic duty to see the humanity in people with whom we disagree. One Small Step feels like the toughest and most important thing we've ever done — but given the stakes in the country, we're going to give it everything we've got.

Some other highlights from our work over the past year include:

- We continued to honor military veterans and their families through our Military Voices Initiative. This work was celebrated in a rare two-day Google Doodle this past Veterans Day.
- We continued our work serving those facing lifethreatening illness through our Legacy Initiative, with new resources created this year to support families and children in grief.
- We continued to share a broad diversity of powerful American stories unlike any other media company. This year we produced 57 stories and 11 animations.
- We recorded interviews in our recording booths and through the StoryCorps App, adding to the largest collecting of human voices ever gathered in our archive documenting the wisdom of humanity.

Thank you for your support and belief in our work.

Warmly,

Dave Isay, Founder & President

Koli Sparken





Dave Isay



Robin Sparkman

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LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends,

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StoryCorps is not a news organization. Though we have the utmost respect for journalists who uncover scandals, explain policy debates, or rush to the scenes of disasters, that's not our job. We help our listeners make meaning of big events by focusing on the human stories within.

In 2018, that role was more important than ever.

- The question of how America and much of the world treats immigrants and refugees was constantly in the headlines, dominating the national conversation. But too often it leaves the people at stake without a voice. We featured the story of Maria Rivas, who talked with her American-born daughter Emily about fears of having her Temporary Protected Status revoked and being forced to return to El Salvador for the first time in almost two decades, leaving her children behind.
- School shootings and other acts of gun violence occur in America with numbing frequency. Not long after the massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, we heard 10-year-old Dezmond Floyd of Houston, who talked with his mother, Tanai Benard, after experiencing his first active shooter drill with his fifth grade class.
- Deaths in police custody roil the nation, as protesters seek accountability and legal reforms. Too often the lives of those who are lost are in danger of becoming statistics, so we listened to Chad Eisen-Ramgren and his daughter Leila, who knew Philando Castile, who was killed by Minneapolis police at a traffic stop, as their beloved Mr. Phil, who managed the school cafeteria.
- Hate crimes like the murders of Jewish worshippers at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh now occur with disturbing regularity. A year after Heather Heyer was killed when a white supremacist rammed her with his car at the Charlottesville marches, her mother, **Susan Bro, and friend, Alfred Wilson**, came to remember a promising young life cut down by bigotry.
- As Congress and the courts challenged a new ban on transgender service members, Sue McConnell and Kristyn Weed best friends, Vietnam-era combat veterans, and men who transitioned to women talked about the courage they saw and displayed on and off the battlefield.
- And at a time of deep polarization of American politics and culture, when too many fail to see even the common humanity of those who believe or worship differently, we were heartened by the StoryCorps conversation between Amina Amdeen and Joseph Weidknecht, where her hijab and his MAGA hat gave them an unlikely common bond.

The way forward for our troubled country, we believe now more than ever, is through multiplying our efforts to understand our fellow-travelers on this planet. America is talking, StoryCorps is listening, and change can come if we can reach enough people.

For your support in this, the vital work of our time, our deepest thanks.

Gara LaMarche



Gara LaMarche

STORIES TO REMEMBER



"My name is John Banvard. I am 100 years of age."

Two married veterans look back upon the beginnings of their 25-year relationship, when they were "sort of in the closet," and their love story ever since.

Listen to the story.



"I want to take the bullet and save my friends."

In a conversation released weeks after the February shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, a son tells his mother about what it was like to experience his first active shooter drill with his fifth grade class.

Listen to the story.



"They said, 'Peaches, come up here, you got some mail."

Private First Class Roman Coley Davis, who today works as a chef, remembers a special package he received from his grandmother in Georgia while stationed at a remote outpost in Afghanistan.

Listen to the story.



"I had to be who I wasn't so that I could survive."

Two best friends and Vietnam-era veterans reflect together on their experiences as transgender women, and the story of courage and sisterhood they share.

Listen to the story.



"I remember him shaking my hand and, as he let go, somebody shot him."

Fifty years after Senator Robert F. Kennedy's assassination in Los Angeles, Juan Romero, then a busboy, remembers that night — and how he met Kennedy the day before, when Romero helped deliver his room service.

Listen to the story.



"I rushed towards you and I just started screaming, 'Leave him alone!""

Two people with beliefs on different sides of the political spectrum reflect on the moment that unexpectedly brought them together at an anti-Trump rally, days after the 2016 presidential election.

Listen to the story.



"I can hardly even imagine what my life would've been like had I not lived in the library."

Ronald Clark's father was custodian of a New York Public Library branch during a time when caretakers and their families lived on-premises. With his daughter, Jamilah, Ronald remembers a childhood surrounded by books.

Watch the animation.



"The school's mascot was a Confederate colonel."

After his experiences integrating his Tennessee high school in the mid-1960s, Dr. William "Lynn" Weaver refused to even drive by the place for decades. Fifty years later, we join Dr. Weaver as he finds himself making his way back to a place he thought he'd never step foot inside again.

Listen to Part 1 of the podcast. Listen to Part 2 of the podcast.

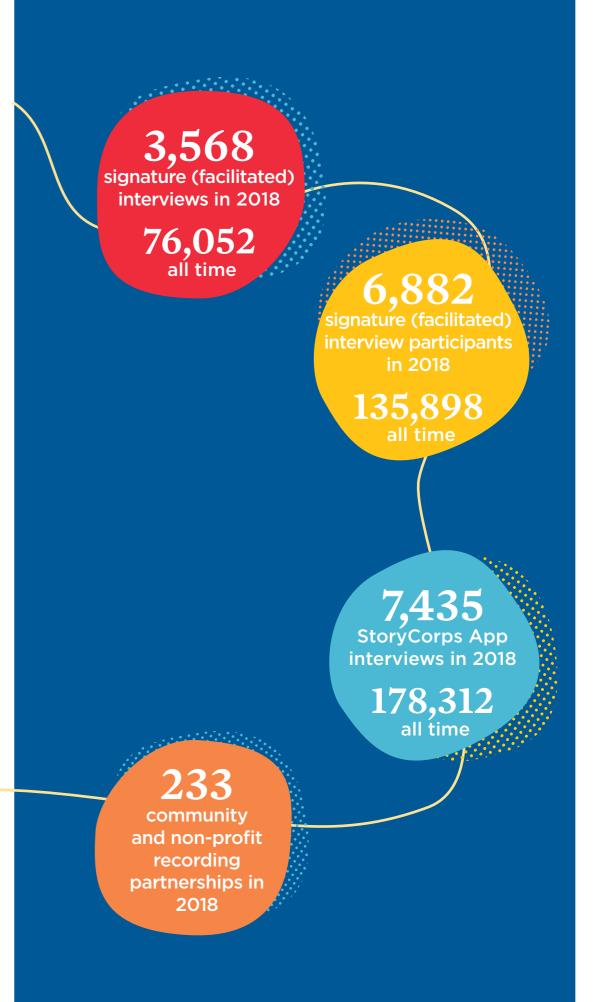
All of our stories, podcasts, and animations are available to explore on **storycorps.org**.

THE STORYCORPS IMPACT

In 2018, StoryCorps interviews helped our participants connect with loved ones, better understand themselves and others, and value their own stories.

According to our participant research, **82%** felt more connected to the person they interviewed with, and **78%** felt more likely to think of their own lives and experiences as meaningful. In our listener survey, **96%** said that listening had helped them better understand people different from themselves, and **94%** said that it made them feel connected to others.

Read on for more things to celebrate from StoryCorps in 2018.



CAPTURING THE DIVERSITY OF COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES

In 2018, StoryCorps celebrated 15 years of working to collect and preserve the voices and stories of Americans nationwide and to preserve them in the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.



CAPTURING THE DIVERSITY OF COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES

StoryCorps' work has always been focused on the power of listening and storytelling to bring people together. After seeing the opportunity to use our methodology to help bridge the political divides that have only continued to deepen across the United States, we launched our major new initiative, **One Small Step**, with the goal of helping our participants recognize one another's shared humanity. Even before StoryCorps' featured appearance on *Good Morning America* and special event at Washington, D.C.'s Newseum on our launch day in September, we saw an outpouring of interest in the project that led to partnerships with community leaders, philanthropies, public radio stations, and college campuses across the country.

We then watched our first participants in the effort have conversations about their lives and saw how by meeting face-to-face, they were reminded of the importance of treating others — even those they most fervently disagree with — with decency and respect.

For the fourth consecutive year, StoryCorps began 2018's holiday season by empowering young people to sit down with a loved one and record an intergenerational story using the StoryCorps App. The Great Thanksgiving Listen, which asks teachers to have their students honor an elder with an interview over the holiday weekend, now sees participation from schools in all 50 states, as well as Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico, as our toolkit of educational resources for educators becomes an autumn classroom staple. Since its inception, more than 100,000 priceless personal histories have been collected and preserved as part of this new annual tradition.

The StoryCorps Mobile Tour crisscrossed the country, making stops in ten cities – from North Dakota to Texas, Wyoming to West Virginia – and connecting with local communities, recording conversations with people of all backgrounds and beliefs along the way. We also continued to build our archive



GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS, DAVE ISAY, AND PARTICIPANTS CHERATON WHITE AND JIM LOVE INTRODUCING ONE SMALL STEP LIVE ON GOOD MORNING AMERICA



CAPTURING THE DIVERSITY OF COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES

of stories from veterans, service members, and military families through our Military Voices Initiative tour to three cities, and recorded conversations throughout the year at our permanent StoryBooths in Chicago and Atlanta.

Our Community Training team continued its work serving those facing life-threatening illness with our Legacy Initiative, notably through Road to Resilience: Memories That Move Us Forward, a project in partnership with the New York Life Foundation that leverages the power of storytelling and listening to help children cope with the death of a parent, sibling, loved one, or friend. Community Training led more than 24 webinars, presentations, workshops, and trainings nationwide throughout 2018, enabling partners to use the StoryCorps model within their own organizations and communities.



MOBILE TOUR

INTERVIEWS COLLECTED: 1,197

LOCATIONS: Austin, TX; Oklahoma City, OK; Portales, NM; Fort Collins, CO; Jackson, WY; Bismarck, ND; Kansas City, KS/MO; Charleston, WV; Athens, GA; Jacksonville, FL



MILITARY VOICES

INTERVIEWS COLLECTED: 160

LOCATIONS: Del Rio, TX; San Antonio, TX; Colorado Springs, CO; San Diego, CA

ONE SMALL STEP COMMUNITIES

INTERVIEWS COLLECTED: 90

LOCATIONS: Abilene, TX; Kansas City, KS/MO; Denver, CO; Salt Lake City, UT; Hartford, CT; Houston, TX; Baltimore, MD; Nashville, TN

CHICAGO & ATLANTA STORYBOOTHS

INTERVIEWS RECORDED: 2,139

CRAFTING AND SHARING POWERFUL STORIES

Through our digital channels, longtime partners in public radio and television, and new relationships with media publishers, StoryCorps was able to reach a larger audience in 2018 than ever before.

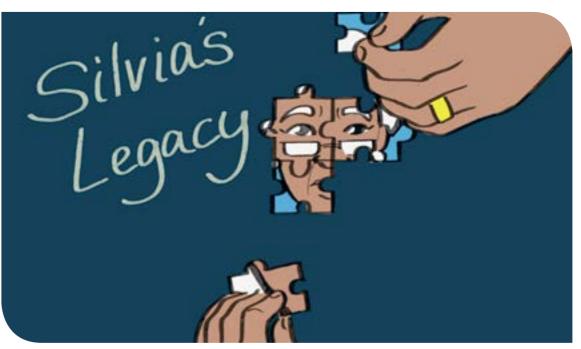


On Veterans Day in November 2018, we honored those who served in each of the five branches of the military by partnering with Google and YouTube on a Google Doodle featuring animated shorts derived from voices recorded through our Military Voices Initiative. Other media partners that introduced StoryCorps stories and animations to their own audiences through special partnerships included Voice of America, Woman's Day, Time's Up, Shondaland, and The Glenn Beck Radio Program, among others. StoryCorps' social media follower base grew by 33% during 2018 to total almost one million followers and subscribers across Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter.

The StoryCorps Podcast was relaunched in 2018 with a brand-new format, as well as a new host: beloved, longtime StoryCorps producer Jasmyn Morris. Beginning with our summer season, each 12-episode podcast season is now arranged around a single theme — this season's focus was "reunions" — and features more original content.

Animated shorts released throughout the year captured a range of story themes and visual styles, including three adaptations of conversations shared as part of our One Small Step initiative. Collections included "In Their Footsteps," memories from people about loved ones they've lost, and voices recorded through StoryCorps Griot, our initiative to preserve the stories and experiences of African Americans.

The StoryCorps Mobile Tour, Military Voices Initiative tour, and StoryBooths hosted listening events in communities across the country to highlight local voices and bring people together for celebration and dialogue — including "Sanctuary City" at the Chicago StoryBooth, which highlighted local stories to expand on the idea of "sanctuary" and what it means to residents, and "Immigration, Migration, and Family History" at the Atlanta StoryBooth, which focused on stories describing the migration stories and experiences of documented and undocumented families and city residents.

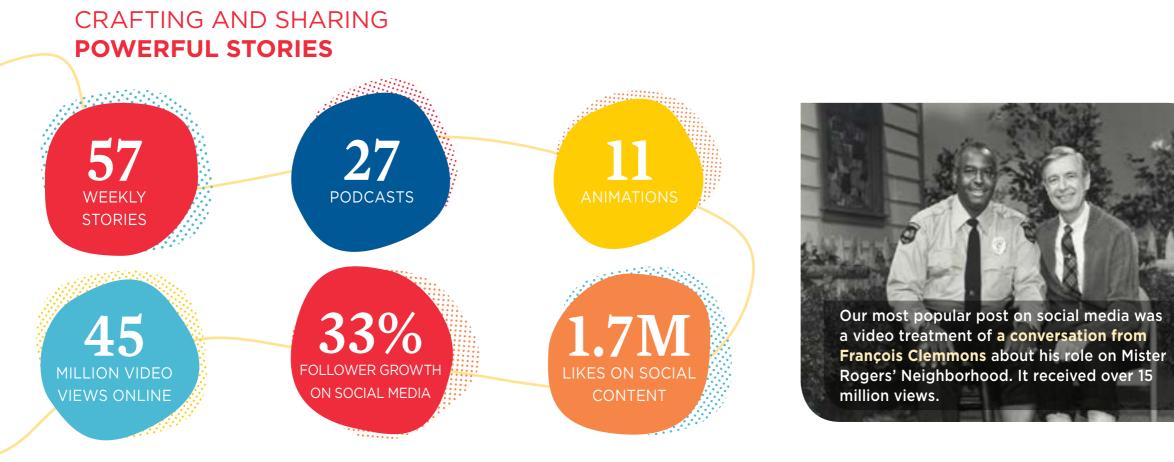


SILVIA'S LEGACY



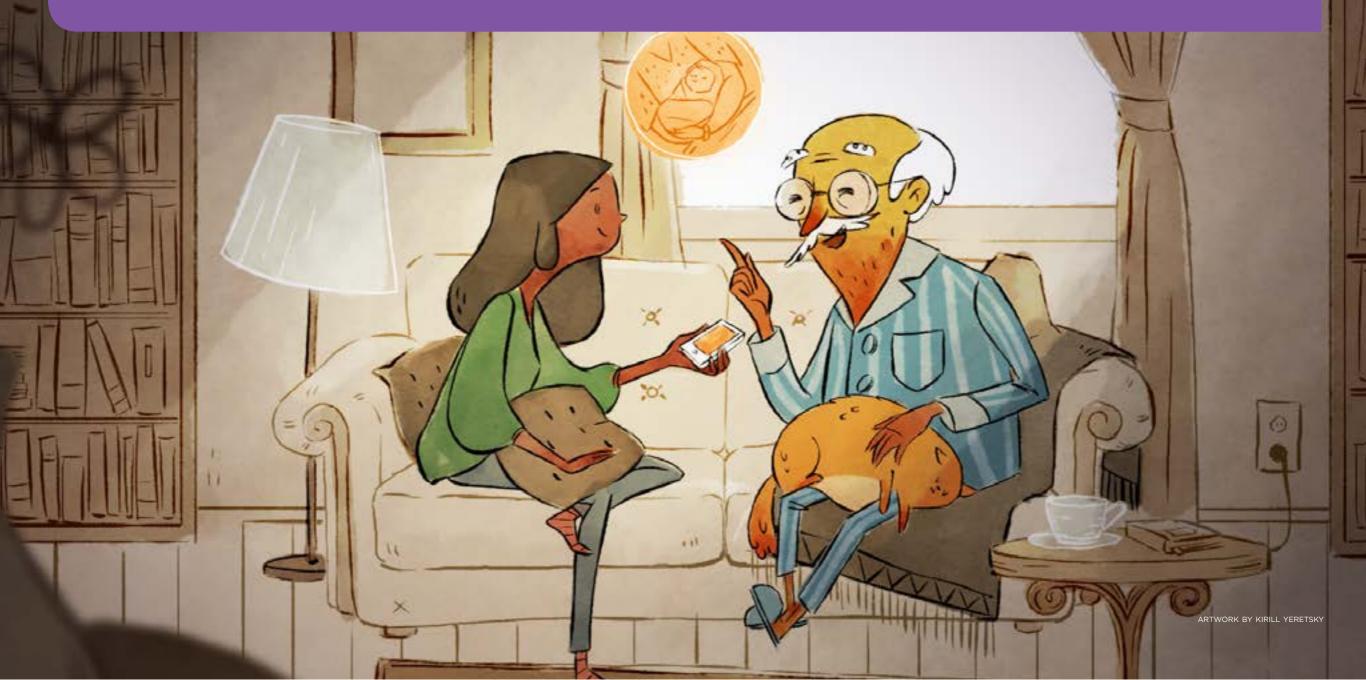


MY FATHER, THE GIANT



INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY WITH DIGITAL TOOLS AND PLATFORMS

Previously, it was once only possible to record a conversation with StoryCorps at one of our permanent StoryBooths or on our Mobile Tour. Now, anyone anywhere with access to a smartphone can have their voice preserved at the Library of Congress.



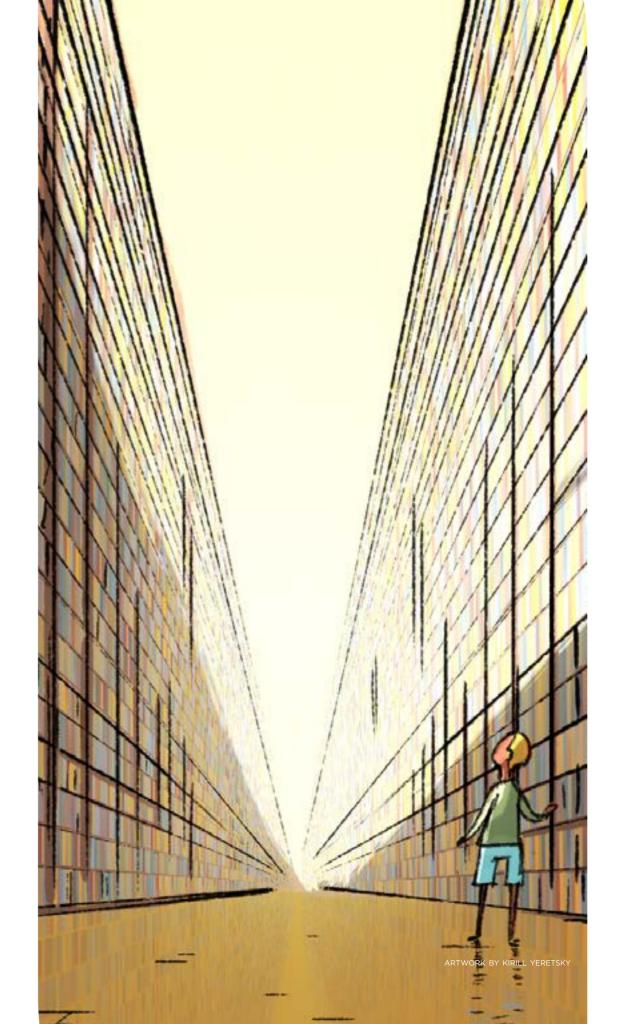
INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY WITH DIGITAL TOOLS AND PLATFORMS

In less than four years, StoryCorps has been transformed by the creation and growth of the StoryCorps App, which now boasts over half a million registered users. Along with updating to a new user-friendly look and interface, in 2018 we enhanced the app's recording capabilities, accessibility, and archiving of content and also enhanced the searchability of archived interviews, making it a more effective tool for users who would like to listen, share, and be inspired.

Our new, publicly accessible StoryCorps Archive platform, currently in beta before its public launch, already holds more than 500 user-generated communities built around shared topics, including location, history, advocacy, family, education, and faith.

StoryCorps DIY, our new multimedia resource kit for helping organizations develop their own interview collection projects, saw its base expand to 2,000 registered users who are accessing these tools to promote the power of listening, build archives, and create public programming in their communities.





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StoryCorps is an independently funded organization. We acknowledge the following generous public funders, institutions, and businesses:

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Military Voices Initiative Partners

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One Small Step Communities

KCUR: Kansas City, KS/MO Texas Public Radio: San Antonio, TX Utah Public Radio: Logan, UT Arizona Public Media: Tucson, AZ WUSF: Tampa, FL WBHM: Birmingham, AL

Additional One Small Step **Recording Locations** KACU: Abilene, TX Brave Coalition: Denver, CO Trinity College: Hartford, CT

Utah Village Square: Salt Lake City, UT Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee: Nashville, TN WAMU: Washington, DC Houston Public Library: Houston, TX Johns Hopkins University: Baltimore, MDWBHM: Birmingham, AL

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, listener & donor



STORYCORPS

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STORYCORPS PRODUCER'S CIRCLE

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The concept of listening as an act of love is a key element to saving this country and the transition of humanity to a kinder and more compassionate world. Thank you for providing this venue to all.

– Ellen, listener & donor



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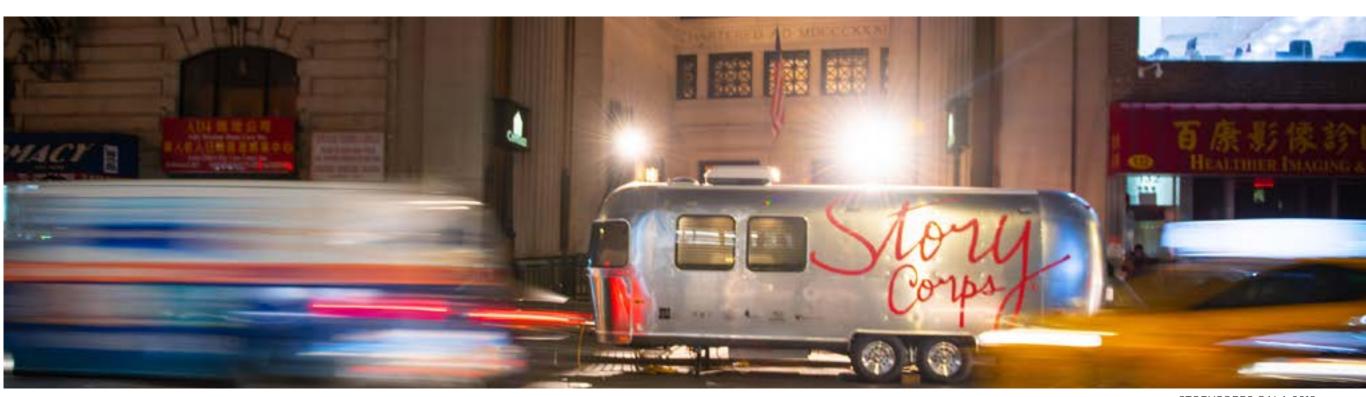
Mary Schepelmann Marc Schild Adam Schneider Miles Schuck Seth Schulman Elizabeth Schulte Jennifer & Randy Scope Charity Scott Shannon Dominique Scott Christina Seda-Acosta Stella Seiders Sheara & Jeffrey Seigal Carol Seitz Amy Selmi Lawrence Selter Hazel Shankem Dardanella & Ray Shenefelt Lisa Sherman Tervl Shewfelt Jonathan Silberman Stephanie Silverman Adele Simmons Lainie Simon Johnny Sittisin Ramez Skaff Ellen & Henry Slack Barbara Slagle Tom Slavin & Mark Thall Elenie Smith James Smith Leslie Smith Marty Smith Pam Smith & Julia Byrne Shelley Smith & E. Christopher Dailev Shannon Nicole Smith-Sengstack Shelley Sneed Leslie Snowdon-Jones Donna Sokol Rachael Solem Marcia Solkoff Eskin Michelle Souza James Springer Shirley Stamen Jaffe Colleen Starkloff Cathy Stawarski Vilja Stein Aileen Steiner Barbara Steinmetz Karin Stende

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This is such a vital part of the human experience, just to record people talking honestly and openly, letting it become a part of your own history while being accessible to others to share in that experience.

- Kristina, listener & donor





Mark Stern Christie Stevens Kristine Stoesz Andrea Stone Linda C. Stork Andrew Stricker Nancy Sullivan Susan Summers Jessica & John Supera Rakesh Surampudi Robin Svendsen Roy Swan Mike Syers Cathy & Ron Taisch Jill Tallmer Joan Tarasevich Peter Tarjan Mary Taylor & Allen Yang Marilyn & Mark Tenekjian Amy Theobald Megan Thiele Jennifer Thomas Robert N. Thomas Gayen Thompson Ryan Thompson Mary Jean Thomson Patrisha Thomson

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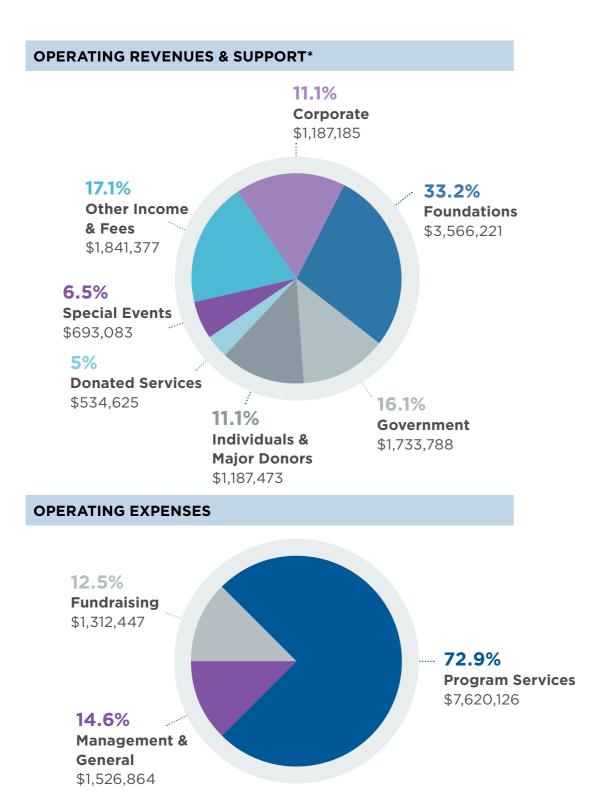
Gary Volkening Brenda Voloshin Naomi Wachs Brooke Walis Anne & Scott Walker Carolyn Wallace Mary Wampler Cheng Wang Jerry Ware Kathryn & Lynn Weaver Sharon & Howard Warner Webb James Weber John Weidman Kate Weil Rebecca Weinberg Tina Weiner Weingart Foundation Linda & George Wertheim Tom Wertheimer Cindy Westley Ranieka Weston Kittie Weston-Knauer Johnny L. Weting Jodi Wheeler-Toppen Kathleen & Patrick Whelan John White Daniel Widmaier

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This list includes gifts made between January 1, 2018, and December 31, 2018. We are grateful to all of our StoryCorps Supporters. This list recognizes contributions of \$60 or more. Every effort was made to ensure its accuracy; if you should find an error or omission, please contact Ellen Rae Huang, Director, Special Events & Individual Giving, at ehuang@storycorps.org.



ASSETS

Unconditional Promises to Give	\$3,193,673
Other Receivables	\$315,340
Prepaid Expenses & Other Assets	\$84,012
Property & Equipment, net	\$416,859
Security Deposits	\$77,644
Total Assets	\$77,644 \$9,349,565

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Liabilities	
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$453,218
Deferred Revenue	\$517,909
Loans Payable	\$26,878
Promissory Note Payable	\$797,444
Total Liabilities	\$1,795,449
Net Assets	
Net Assets without donor restrictions	\$2,399,621
Net Assets with donor restrictions	\$5,154,495
Total Net Assets	\$7,554,116
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$9,349,565

*Revenue without or released from donor restrictions. StoryCorps' fiscal year ended December 31, 2018.

We will continue to serve as a beacon of hope. We will continue to whisper truths in people's ears about who we are and what's important. We will continue to bring our work into every corner of the country until there are no more people that feel unheard. We will continue to sew stitch after stitch in the national tapestry of hope until we are whole. And we won't stop even then.

It's a miracle that StoryCorps exists. Thank you for all you've done to give this organization life. This is only the beginning.