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## Alaska Public Media Partners with StoryCorps to Foster Conversations Across American Ideological Divides

**Nationwide One Small Step Initiative offers opportunity for people to talk about life experiences that formed their values and to listen with respect**

### **Anchorage, Alaska Selected as 2021 Participating Community**

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA – June 15, 2021 – While Americans face challenges unlike any other time in our history, **Alaska Public Media (AKPM)** in partnership with **StoryCorps**, the national nonprofit dedicated to recording and preserving personal stories, invites people to take part in meaningful conversations that are recorded for history. With support from the **Corporation for Public Broadcasting**, Anchorage, Alaska, is one of six locations across the country selected to take part in StoryCorps' nationwide **One Small Step** initiative to facilitate and broadcast conversations with Americans of opposing viewpoints. With participant permission, these conversations are preserved for future generations at the **American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress**.

**Alaska Public Media** plans to broadcast edited versions of select submissions from its local communities.

"We are thrilled to participate in this nationwide project. One Small Step provides an opportunity to discover how much we have in common with each other, even when we disagree on some fundamental issues," stated **Linda Wei, Chief Content Officer of Alaska Public Media**. "The participants will learn about themselves, as well as those they may not typically associate with in the community through this process, and will do the same for the listeners of the radio broadcasts. That's incredibly powerful. I can't think of a better place to do that than right here in Anchorage and southcentral Alaska."

"Recent polls demonstrate what most of us have already experienced first-hand: that there is a pervasive culture of contempt that threatens the very foundations of our democracy. According to [a CBS News poll](#) released earlier this year, more than half of all Americans say the greatest danger to America's way of life comes from their fellow citizens," said **Dave Isay, Founder and President of StoryCorps**. "One Small Step aims to remind people of the humanity in all of us, and that it's hard to hate up close. These communities can model this change for the rest of the country."

"StoryCorps uses its innovative approach to sharing stories in its One Small Step Communities initiative to foster understanding and respect, even among people who deeply disagree," said **Patricia Harrison, President and CEO of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting**. "By working with local public radio stations to connect people with different backgrounds and political beliefs, One Small Step is helping stations strengthen their communities, one step at a time. CPB is very pleased to support this effort."

Launched by StoryCorps in 2018 in response to growing division in the country, One Small Step is a nationwide initiative that provides two strangers who hold different views with the opportunity

to take part in facilitated and recorded conversations—specifically to counteract intensifying hostility and to enable those who disagree to listen to each other with respect. Rather than spark additional partisan debates, One Small Step encourages answers to questions such as, “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?”

**Alaska Public Media** encourages residents of Anchorage, Alaska, to take part in this limited-time opportunity:

- Information about how to participate is at [alaskapublic.org/onesmallstep](http://alaskapublic.org/onesmallstep).
- In locations where COVID social distancing requirements remain in place, **Alaska Public Media** will use StoryCorps’ remote recording platform, which pairs two strangers for a conversation over video and is hosted by a trained facilitator.

**Alaska Public Media** will also team up with a variety of community organizations to spread the word and will collaborate with StoryCorps to match participants and record conversations through the end of the year. The project will include a series of public listening events, streamed online, in fall 2021. Find out how your organization can partner with **Alaska Public Media** at [alaskapublic.org/onesmallstep](http://alaskapublic.org/onesmallstep).

**Alaska Public Media’s** participation in the One Small Step Communities project is made possible by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. StoryCorps’ national One Small Step initiative is made possible by the generous support of The Hearthland Foundation, the Fetzer Institute, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the Charles Koch Institute.

### **About Alaska Public Media**

About Alaska Public Media Alaska Public Media, Inc. (AKPM) is a shared Public Broadcasting System (PBS) and National Public Radio (NPR) member station and a 501(c)(3) organization. Committed to meeting the needs of our community and state, AKPM produces and presents news and content that provides lifelong learning opportunities in public affairs, health and leisure, science and nature, economic and social development, civic engagement and world events. The company is located in Southcentral Alaska and is comprised of KSKA radio, KAKM-TV, Create TV, PBS KIDS 24/7, the AKPM App and [alaskapublic.org](http://alaskapublic.org). Alaska Public Media also operates the Statewide News network and a shared television service with KTOO in Juneau and KYUK in Bethel.

### **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. There are also StoryBooths located in Chicago and Atlanta.

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. 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 recently launched StoryCorps Connect, a new video-based platform that makes it possible for two people in different locations to conduct a StoryCorps interview safely and remotely.

After recording a StoryCorps conversation via any of these methods, participants are emailed a link to their interview, and a digital file goes to the Library of Congress, where it will be preserved for generations to come.

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 the Corporation for Public Broadcasting**

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 managed 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](https://twitter.com/CPBmedia), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CPBmedia) and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cpb) and [subscribe](#) for other updates.

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