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CONTACTS:
Blake Zidell  StoryCorps Press Desk
Blake Zidell & Associates  646-723-7020 ext. 75
718-643-9052 or blake@blakezidell.com  press@storycorps.org

STORYCORPS ANNOUNCES “THE GREAT THANKSGIVING LISTEN,”
IN WHICH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ACROSS AMERICA WILL INTERVIEW
A GRANDPARENT OR ELDER OVER THANKSGIVING 2015

New Free StoryCorps Mobile App Allows Groundbreaking Oral History Project to Capture an
Entire Generation of American Lives and Experiences in a Single Holiday Weekend

August 10, 2015 – Since 2003, StoryCorps has given more than 100,000 Americans a quiet booth and a
facilitator to record meaningful conversations with one another about who they are, what they’ve learned
in life, and how they want to be remembered. Today, the pioneering oral history project announces the
Great Thanksgiving Listen, its most ambitious initiative to date. StoryCorps is working with high school
teachers across the country to ask students to interview a grandparent or elder over Thanksgiving 2015
using the new free StoryCorps mobile app. Participants will upload their recordings to the StoryCorps
archive at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. In one holiday weekend StoryCorps
hopes to gather more interviews than it has in the 12 years since its founding, and to capture an entire
generation of American lives and experiences.

The scale of the Great Thanksgiving Listen is made possible by the new StoryCorps mobile app, which
Dave Isay, Founder and President of StoryCorps, launched using the $1 million 2015 TED Prize. He
shared his vision for the app in in a March 2015 TED Talk. The app takes the StoryCorps experience out
of the booth and puts it entirely in the hands of users, enabling anyone, anywhere to record conversations
with another person for archiving at the U.S. Library of Congress and on the new StoryCorps.me website.
Previously, StoryCorps interviews were possible one at a time in the StoryCorps MobileBooth that
crisscrosses the country, or in one of a few permanent StoryBooths (in New York, Chicago, San Francisco
and Atlanta). Now, with the app, thousands of interviews can be recorded simultaneously.

StoryCorps is working with national partners in media, technology and education to help bring attention
to the Great Thanksgiving Listen. Partners include The American Folklife Center at the Library of
Congress, TED and NPR.  ABC is the exclusive television partner for this historic effort. Educational
partners include Facing History and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), with additional
organizations to be announced.

“In this time of great disconnect and division, we hope the Great Thanksgiving Listen will prove a
unifying moment for the nation,” said Dave Isay, StoryCorps’ Founder and President. “We are excited
to use the new StoryCorps app to bring the country together in a project of listening, connection and
generosity. Together we will collect the wisdom of a generation and archive it for the future, while at the
same time reminding our grandparents how much their lives and stories matter.”
Betsy Peterson, Director of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, said: "The American Folklife Center is honored to be a part of this historic American undertaking, which deepens our partnership with StoryCorps, and further advances our mission to collect and document the living traditional culture while preserving it for the future."

“StoryCorps provides a powerful platform for people to listen, share and record stories,” said TED Prize Director Anna Verghese. “With the app, people can step outside the recording booth to bring the experience home, which means anyone, anywhere can record a conversation. This Thanksgiving, we hope kids, parents and grandparents take the time to talk, share stories, and impart wisdom for generations to come.”

“StoryCorps’ heartfelt stories make NPR listeners stop whatever they’re doing to listen, pay attention and often cry,” said Emma Carrasco, NPR’s CMO & SVP Audience Development. “The StoryCorps app and this national homework assignment are a terrific opportunity to take the studio to the living room, create a national oral archive of grandparents’ wit and wisdom and—who knows?—maybe even inspire the next generation of radio reporters.”

The app guides 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 the StoryCorps.me website which serves as a home for these recordings and also provides interview and editing resources.

StoryCorps hopes to make the Great Thanksgiving Listen a national tradition, and to continue fostering meaningful connections within families, communities, and the classroom while also creating a singular and priceless archive of American history and wisdom.

About StoryCorps

Founded in 2003 by MacArthur Fellow Dave Isay, the nonprofit organization StoryCorps has given 100,000 Americans the chance to record interviews about their lives, pass wisdom from one generation to the next, and leave a legacy for the future. It is the largest single collection of human voices ever gathered.

Participating in StoryCorps couldn’t be easier: A person goes with a loved one, or anyone else they choose, to one of the StoryCorps recording sites. There, a trained facilitator greets the participants, explains the interview process, and brings them into a quiet recording room where they are seated across from one another, in front of a microphones. The facilitator hits “record,” and the participants share a 40-minute conversation. At the end of the session, they walk away with a CD, while a digital file goes to the Library of Congress, where it will be preserved for generations.

StoryCorps shares edited excerpts of these stories with the world through popular weekly NPR broadcasts, animated shorts, digital platforms, and best-selling books. These powerful stories illustrate our shared humanity and show how much more we share in common than divides us.

StoryCorps has also launched a series of successful national initiatives including:

- The September 11th Initiative, helping families memorialize the stories of lives lost on September 11, 2001, in partnership with the National September 11 Memorial & Museum at the World Trade Center;
- The Griot Initiative, now the largest collection of African American voices ever gathered, in collaboration with the future Smithsonian National Museum of African-American History and Culture;
- The Historias Initiative, the largest collection of Latino stories ever gathered;
- The Military Voices Initiative, honoring the stories of post-9/11 service members, veterans and their families; and
- OutLoud, which documents the powerful, varied experiences of LGBTQ people across America.

With the 2015 TED Prize awarded to Dave Isay, StoryCorps has launched an app that puts the StoryCorps experience entirely in the hands of users and enables anyone, anywhere to record meaningful conversations with another person. In July, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation gave StoryCorps $600,000 to improve the app and expand its reach after providing initial support from the 2014 Knight Prototype Fund. Uploaded interviews are preserved at the Library of Congress and on the website StoryCorps.me, a growing, global archive of the wisdom of humanity.

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