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COLLABORATIVE LOCAL STORYTELLING VENTURE YIELDS EVENTS, RADIO SERIES AND PODCASTS

WHYY and First Person Arts will collaborate on a series of storytelling events, a new radio program and a podcast, thanks to a \$300,000 Project grant from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.

Original content created by WHYY with First Person Arts (FPA) will amplify the profound story-sharing experiences FPA curates throughout the region, which will be distributed via WHYY's multimedia platforms and civic engagement events, reaching hundreds of thousands of people each week.

The project elements will connect personal stories with current news events, allowing both organizations to expand their existing expertise in storytelling and audience engagement. Components include:

- 26 unique live arts experiences and community engagement activities that will generate new, original content for the broadcasts
- A series of 48 radio broadcasts (24 per year) to air on WHYY-FM
- An expanded podcast series of 52 original recordings featuring predominantly regional storytellers

- Some 40 three-to-four-minute long radio segments to air weekly on WHYY-FM during *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, *NewsWorks Tonight* and other news magazine programs
- A shared online archive of the audio content

"Through this exciting collaboration, we are expanding upon the human interest story," said FPA Executive Director and on-air host Jamie J. Brunson. "By positioning the stories and perspectives of everyday people as the central focus of this news-themed project, our vision is to help us connect more deeply with each other and the world through the lens of current events."

"This project will create a unique intersection of journalism and personal stories that will deepen our collective audiences' understanding of issues and themes identified by the community," said WHYY President and CEO Bill Marrazzo. "It's a terrific combination of one-to-one narratives and WHYY's ability to expand the reach of these valuable stories through multiple media platforms."

WHYY and FPA producers note that the audio content will be inspired by and connected to current news events and audience-suggested themes. Current events will be explored through real life, first person, true storytelling from members of the regional community.

The stories will focus on the commonality that underpins news stories. For example, a news story about a bombing in an African American church could be explored through stories about fear and safety in minority communities, showing how a specific news story impacts everyone.

This project will be led by Elisabeth Perez-Luna, WHYY's Executive Producer of Radio/Audio Content News and Information and Jamie J. Brunson, On-air Host and Executive Director of FPA. Mike Villers will produce the radio series.

WHYY is the Philadelphia regions' leading public media company. First Person Arts (FPA) is Philadelphia's premiere storytelling organization.

This joint project has been supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.

About First Person Arts

Now in its 15th year, First Person Arts is Philadelphia's premiere storytelling organization and the producers of StorySlams, the Annual First Person Arts Festival (Nov. 2016), First Person Arts Podcast, and Applied Storytelling community

engagement programs. From such artistic luminaries as novelist Toni Morrison, activist Angela Davis, and celebrity chef Marcus Samuelsson, to everyday people at twice-monthly StorySlams, FPA presents a diverse array of storytellers in order to foster an appreciation for our unique and shared experiences, and connect us with each other and the world.

About WHY Y

WHYY is the Philadelphia region's leading public media provider, serving southeastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and all of Delaware. WHY Y takes pride in bringing audiences news when they need it, entertainment when they want it, and education when it counts- on television, radio, the Web and in the community.

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