



DULUTH SUPERIOR AREA
**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

Private giving for the public good.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Foundation welcomes StoryCorps to Twin Ports

Storytelling project with local residents is part of Annual Celebration activities

DULUTH—StoryCorps, a national nonprofit that builds communities through storytelling, will come to the Twin Ports next week to record stories of local residents on poverty and opportunity, helping inform and educate Twin Ports residents about how these issues affect the region.

The three days of recording, Tuesday through Thursday, coincide with the 2019 Annual Celebration of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, which has worked to narrow the opportunity gap in our region.

The podcast-style recordings, each with a local resident and a trusted person in their life talking about their story and how they have observed poverty and opportunity issues, will be shared through the websites of the Community Foundation (dsacommunityfoundation.com) and its Opportunity Rising Initiative (opportunityrising.org).

Like all other StoryCorps recordings, those from the Twin Ports also will be shared through the StoryCorps website (storycorps.org) and archived for future historians in the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

“We are honored to have StoryCorps here to share their tools and platform so our local residents can share their stories and experiences on this important issue,” said Community Foundation President Holly C. Sampson. “Opportunity and poverty are subjects we are increasingly discussing in our region and our nation. We’re honored that StoryCorps will be here to bring voices from our community into the conversation in a more prominent way.”

The recordings coincide with the Community Foundation’s Annual Celebration, at 4 p.m. Wednesday in the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center. A highlight of that event, open to the public, will be a presentation by Emily Janssen, associate director of community training at StoryCorps.

Janssen will share more about StoryCorps' work nationally and in the Twin Ports. As part of her role at the nonprofit, Janssen has traveled with StoryCorps' mobile recording booth for 18 months, facilitating and archiving more than 500 conversations between people from coast to coast.

Four years ago, the Community Foundation began its work to identify the opportunity gap locally and to seek solutions. It invited Robert D. Putnam of Harvard University to the Twin Ports to give the keynote address at its 2015 Annual Celebration. Putnam is the author of "Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis," a New York Times best-selling book examining the gap. Putnam and a team of scholars conducted research for the book in cities nationwide, including Duluth, showing the gap widening.

A year later, the Community Foundation awarded \$1.5 million to 10 nonprofit grantees in the Twin Ports for groundbreaking work to help children and families in poverty and to narrow the gap. The projects, still underway and now joined by others, are connecting children and families to services including education, transportation, mentoring and employment. Many of the grants are for innovative efforts that may serve as national models for improving lives of children and families.

In Duluth, 3,346 children, or 21.5 percent, live in poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In Superior, the number is 1,038 children, or 25.8 percent. Both numbers are higher than the Minnesota average of 12.2 percent, the Wisconsin average of 15 percent and the national average of 18 percent.

Scholars, civic leaders and service providers have warned that the gap between rich and poor families is widening across the United States, creating increasingly separate societies. That chasm, they say, threatens the ability of individual communities and the nation as a whole to solve problems, seize opportunities and achieve goals for economic growth and quality living.

For more information about this year's Annual Celebration or to RSVP for this free event, please go to dsacommunityfoundation.com. Those with questions also may call 218-726-0232 or email info@dsacommunityfoundation.com.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION:

The Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation encourages private giving for the public good. It is a permanent community endowment, built by gifts from hundreds of individuals and organizations. Guided by a volunteer Board of Trustees, it makes grants to nonprofit organizations and to individuals for scholarships while providing leadership on important community initiatives in northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin. Since its inception in 1983, the foundation has distributed more than \$53 million and has established more than 400 funds, each with its own charitable purpose. For more information, please visit dsacommunityfoundation.com.

FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Rob Karwath | North Coast Communications
218-343-9418 | rob@northcoastcommunications.com