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**STORYCORPS, THE NATIONAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT,  
OPENS STORYBOOTH IN LOWER MANHATTAN’S FOLEY SQUARE**

**CITY COUNCIL SPEAKER CHRISTINE C. QUINN TO JOIN STORYCORPS AT  
OPENING**

(NEW YORK) – April 3, 2008 – StoryCorps, the national oral history initiative to document everyday history and the unique stories of America, today announced the opening of a flagship StoryBooth in Lower Manhattan’s Foley Square.

City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn joins Dave Isay, creator of StoryCorps, along with a number of past participants and partners to celebrate the new StoryBooth opening.

StoryCorps was created by award-winning radio documentary producer and MacArthur “Genius” Grant recipient Dave Isay to honor and celebrate the lives of everyday Americans through the simple act of listening. This unprecedented project has traveled to every corner of the country, instructing and inspiring individuals to record their stories in sound. StoryCorps is the largest oral history project of its kind, creating a growing portrait of who we really are as Americans.

“Everyone loves a good story and I can tell you with confidence that no story of any New Yorker is ever ordinary,” said Speaker Quinn. “I am proud to inaugurate the new flagship StoryCorps booth that will continue to gather diverse and compelling stories from the people of the greatest City in the world!”

“As StoryCorps has grown over the past years in New York City and traveled across the country, we’ve seen the profound effect it has had not only on the lives of those who have participated in the project, but also on the millions who listen in each week on NPR,” said Isay. “We are so proud to open this StoryBooth in Lower Manhattan, which will continue our mission to honor and celebrate one another’s lives through listening. By fostering intergenerational communication among families and communities, and helping Americans appreciate the strength in the stories of people they find all around them, we hope to create a kinder, more thoughtful, and compassionate nation.”

"I congratulate Dave Isay and the StoryCorps board and staff on their wonderful new flagship in Foley Square," said Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kate D. Levin. "This StoryBooth will enhance Lower Manhattan's vibrant cultural corridor, and provide an opportunity for New Yorkers and visitors alike to recall, reflect and recount their experiences."

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"StoryCorps is a wonderful opportunity for New Yorkers and visitors to record their conversations and oral histories for the benefit of future generations," said Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe. "We are pleased to host a new StoryBooth at Foley Square, as public parks are historic public gathering spaces. The rich civic history of Foley Square and the surrounding courthouses are symbols of democracy and public voice, paralleling the vision of StoryCorps to celebrate the life experiences of all Americans."

The Foley Square StoryBooth is located across from the U.S. Courthouse bounded by the intersection of Duane, Lafayette, Centre, and Pearl Streets. Foley Square is the heart of New York's civic and historical center, as well as an easily accessible location for the City's thriving downtown community institutions.

At the StoryBooth, interviews are conducted between two people who know and care about each other. A trained facilitator guides the participants through the interview process and handles the technical aspects of the recording. At the end of a 40-minute session, the participants walk away with a broadcast-quality CD of their interview. With their permission, a second copy becomes part of an archive at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress for future generations to hear.

StoryCorps opened in Grand Central Terminal in October 2003. It became a national project in June with the launch of two mobile StoryCorps booths built inside Airstream trailers, which have since traveled the country, visiting 78 cities in 46 states. A temporary New York City booth operated out of Ground Zero at the PATH Terminal for 18 months before Architects Michael Shuman and Eric Liftin modified and prepared the recording booth to become the first free-standing outdoor StoryBooth in the nation.

Today's opening takes place on the eve of the anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. To honor this day, stories of sanitation workers in Memphis recorded by StoryCorps will be celebrated at the opening event.

StoryCorps has developed special initiatives to reach out to the widest array of participants and collect the broadest range of stories. The ongoing Griot Initiative, which began in February 2007 has gathered nearly 8,000 stories of African-Americans. StoryCorps Griot is the largest African-American oral history project since the Slave Narratives recorded by the WPA in the mid-1930's. After a full year of touring the country with a dedicated Griot MobileBooth, Foley Square will now serve as the flagship recording location for this initiative in New York. Other initiatives include reaching out to families who have loved ones with Alzheimer's Disease; and the stories of the survivors and the families who lost loved ones on 9/11. StoryCorps has partnered with the National September 11 Memorial & Museum at the World Trade Center, whose Museum Director, Alice Greenwald, will attend.

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Major funding for StoryCorps is provided by State Farm Insurance and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). Additional support for StoryCorps in New York City is provided by The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs with special thanks to the Department of Parks and Recreation. StoryCorps is a project of Sounds Portraits Productions in partnership with NPR and the American Folklife Center (AFC) at the Library of Congress. Selected segments air nationally on NPR's *Morning Edition*. WNYC is the public radio partner of StoryCorps in New York City.

StoryCorps' first book, the New York Times Bestseller, *LISTENING IS AN ACT OF LOVE: A Celebration of Life from the StoryCorps Project* (The Penguin Press, November 2007) draws from some of the most remarkable stories in the StoryCorps oral history collection and arranges them thematically into a moving portrait of America.

**StoryCorps** opened its first StoryBooth, a freestanding soundproof recording studio, in New York City's Grand Central Terminal in October 2003. Since its launch, StoryCorps' two mobile and two stationary recording studios have visited 78 cities in 46 states and have collected more than 17,000 stories. Individuals can visit **[www.StoryCorps.net](http://www.StoryCorps.net)** to make interview reservations and listen to StoryCorps stories.

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