

News Release

The “Great Thanksgiving Listen” Helps Dobbs Ferry Students Discover History

Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. November 23, 2015—Dobbs Ferry High School Social Studies teacher Leslie Stein is offering her 11th grade US History and 12th grade IB 20th Century World Topics classes a unique extra credit assignment over the Thanksgiving holiday. She is encouraging her students to become real-life historians by interviewing a grandparent or elder as part of a huge national oral history project sponsored by the nonprofit organization StoryCorps. The students also have the option of permanently archiving their interviews, which can then be accessed through the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

“The great idea behind this project is that the kids are not just reading about history in a textbook,” said Ms. Stein. “They are discovering history through stories told by the people who were there and lived during those times. Hearing about your grandfather’s military service or growing up during the depression makes history come alive, and records that information for future generations to come.”

According to StoryCorps, which was established in 2003, the purpose is to give everyone a chance “to discover the history in their own families while honoring their elders through the act of listening. It’s really about connecting to another generation.” Their goal is to continue to foster meaningful connections within families, communities and classrooms while “creating a priceless archive of American history and wisdom.”

Ms. Stein heard about the StoryCorps initiative on NPR’s Morning Edition which features a series of interviews every Friday morning between family members that highlight their heartfelt personal stories. For this Thanksgiving project, StoryCorps is opening up the storytelling to everyone, encouraging thousands of younger family members to use its new free app to record interviews with their elders. Anyone over the age of 13 can participate (parental consent needed if you’re under 18). Simply download the StoryCorps app on your computer, smartphone or tablet, and use the built-in prompts to record and publish an interview. You can also record the stories in different languages. . The app was made possible with a \$1 million TED Prize

“We hope to spread the word so that any Dobbs Ferry student can participate in this wonderful initiative,” said Ms. Stein. “It’s a valuable experience whether or not you earn extra credit in social studies!”

"If we can pull this off, it will create a very powerful and important bottom-up history, history through our voices, through our family's voices and stories of the last 75, 80, 90 years of United States history," said StoryCorps founder Dave Isay "I hope that we can make The Great Thanksgiving Listen a national tradition."

For more information on The Great Thanksgiving Listen and how to record your own family story, click here <https://storycorps.me/>

For more information, please contact:

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