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**FROM:** YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish / StoryCorps

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**STORYCORPS, THE GROUNDBREAKING ORAL HISTORY ORGANIZATION,  
TO RECORD INTERVIEWS WITH YWCA IN SNOHOMISH COUNTY**

**YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish will host five days of recording with families who have experienced homelessness**

**June 19, 2014** – StoryCorps, an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to recording, preserving and sharing the stories of people from all backgrounds and beliefs, will visit the Family Village Lynnwood YWCA from July 29-Aug. 2. StoryCorps will partner with the YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish to record five days of interviews about family homelessness and the larger issues that surround it—poverty, unemployment and inequality—with a focus on capturing stories about families.

The YWCA is the Snohomish County local host partner for a new StoryCorps project called “Finding Our Way: Puget Sound Stories About Family Homelessness.” The YWCA was selected because it has a long and successful track record of supporting homeless and at-risk families with comprehensive services to find and maintain stability. Last year in Snohomish County, the YWCA housed more than 1,700 adults and children and helped 98 percent of families in its transitional housing program graduate to more stable housing.

All Snohomish County residents who have experienced homelessness as part of a family, in their recent or distant pasts—or know someone who has—are encouraged to participate. Those interested can contact StoryCorps at [findingourway@storycorps.org](mailto:findingourway@storycorps.org), or Denise Miller at the YWCA, [dmiller@ywcaworks.org](mailto:dmiller@ywcaworks.org). More information about “Finding Our Way” is also available via the [Seattle University Project on Family Homelessness](#), which is assisting the YWCA by working to find stories from local residents who may not be connected to a nonprofit service provider.

StoryCorps will also record stories in King and Pierce Counties this summer — a total of 90 interviews across the three counties. The project is funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

StoryCorps interviews are conversations between two people who know and care about each other. A trained StoryCorps Facilitator guides the participants through the interview process. At the end of each 40-minute recording session, participants receive a CD copy of their interview, and with their permission, a second copy is archived at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. A very small percentage of all of the interviews StoryCorps records are produced for national broadcast on NPR’s *Morning Edition*. All of the interview materials recorded at the YWCA will also be made available for the Gates Foundation and other local nonprofits to use in their advocacy efforts to prevent and end homelessness among families.

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“StoryCorps tells the true American story—that we are a people defined by small acts of courage, kindness and heroism. Each interview reminds people that their lives matter and will not be forgotten,” said its founder, David Isay. “By strengthening connections between people and building an archive that reflects the rich diversity of American voices, we hope to build StoryCorps into an enduring institution that will touch the lives of every American family.”

Mary Anne Dillon, YWCA senior regional director of Snohomish County, said the YWCA is excited to be the local host partner for the project. “We believe that empowering women and families goes beyond shelter and services,” she said. “People who have experienced homelessness deserve to have their voices heard. This project will help families who have overcome significant barriers tell their own stories and honor the efforts of dedicated volunteers, donors, staff and partners working to end family homelessness in our community.”

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#### **About StoryCorps**

StoryCorps is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide people of all backgrounds and beliefs with the opportunity to record, share, and preserve their stories. Since 2003, StoryCorps has collected and archived more than 50,000 interviews with nearly 95,000 participants. Each conversation is recorded on a free CD to share, and is preserved at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. StoryCorps is one of the largest oral history projects of its kind, and millions listen to its weekly broadcasts on NPR's *Morning Edition* and on [its website](#).

#### **About the YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish**

The YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish has a proud history of improving the quality of life for women of all ages, races and faiths, and their families. Since 1894, the YWCA has provided services to meet critical needs, promote self-sufficiency, reduce violence and achieve equal opportunities for all people.

The YWCA touches the lives of 49,000 women and families in King and Snohomish counties each year with these critical services: housing, basic needs, employment training, job placement, domestic violence advocacy, health care services and child and youth development. For more information, visit [ywcaworks.org](http://ywcaworks.org).

#### **About the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life.

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