

StoryCorps' Thanksgiving Listen asks kids to record elders

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In this Nov. 27, 2015, file photo, Rhiannon Leonard interviews her boss, Gary Himes in Weverton, Md., for StoryCorps' Great Thanksgiving Listen oral history project. The Great Thanksgiving Listen will be held for a third year in 2017. The event calls for high school students to record a conversation with an elder over the holiday weekend using the StoryCorps app. (AP Photo/David Dishneau, File)

StoryCorps is hoping people give their social media apps a break for a

few minutes this Thanksgiving and instead use one designed for listening.

The nonprofit oral history project on Thursday announced the 2017 edition of its Great Thanksgiving Listen, which calls for high school students to record a conversation with an elder over the holiday weekend using the StoryCorps app.

Students can also add photos and videos to their stories and upload them to an online StoryCorps archive. They'll also be included in a StoryCorps collection at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

Dave Isay, StoryCorps' founder and president, sees the event as a potential way "to strengthen our national fabric at a time when we desperately need it."

"Listening is a skill critical to young people now and in their future," Isay added in a statement.

This is the third year for the Great Thanksgiving Listen. Before 2015, those participating in StoryCorps had to visit the project's mobile booth or its permanent booths located in New York, Chicago, Atlanta and San Francisco.

The app has been a boon to StoryCorps' archive of American voices. The project had amassed more than 50,000 recordings by the time the app was launched in March 2015. Since then, the app has added nearly 250,000 new stories to the archive, including 75,000 recorded during its Great Thanksgiving Listen events.

The app was launched in part with a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, which funds media innovation and has also provided funding for The Associated Press. The foundation on Thursday

announced \$600,000 in new funding for StoryCorps.

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