

Our America: Documentary in Dialogue

American
Documentary

POV
ENGAGE





**DOCUMENTARIES
WITH A POINT OF VIEW**



POV (a cinema term for “point of view”) is America’s **longest-running nonfiction series**. For over three decades, we have served the American viewing public as a **trusted curator** of artful, thought-provoking documentaries that inspire a sense of **connection and hope in shared humanity**.



**News & Doc
Emmy Awards**



**Peabody
Awards**



**DuPont Columbia
Awards**

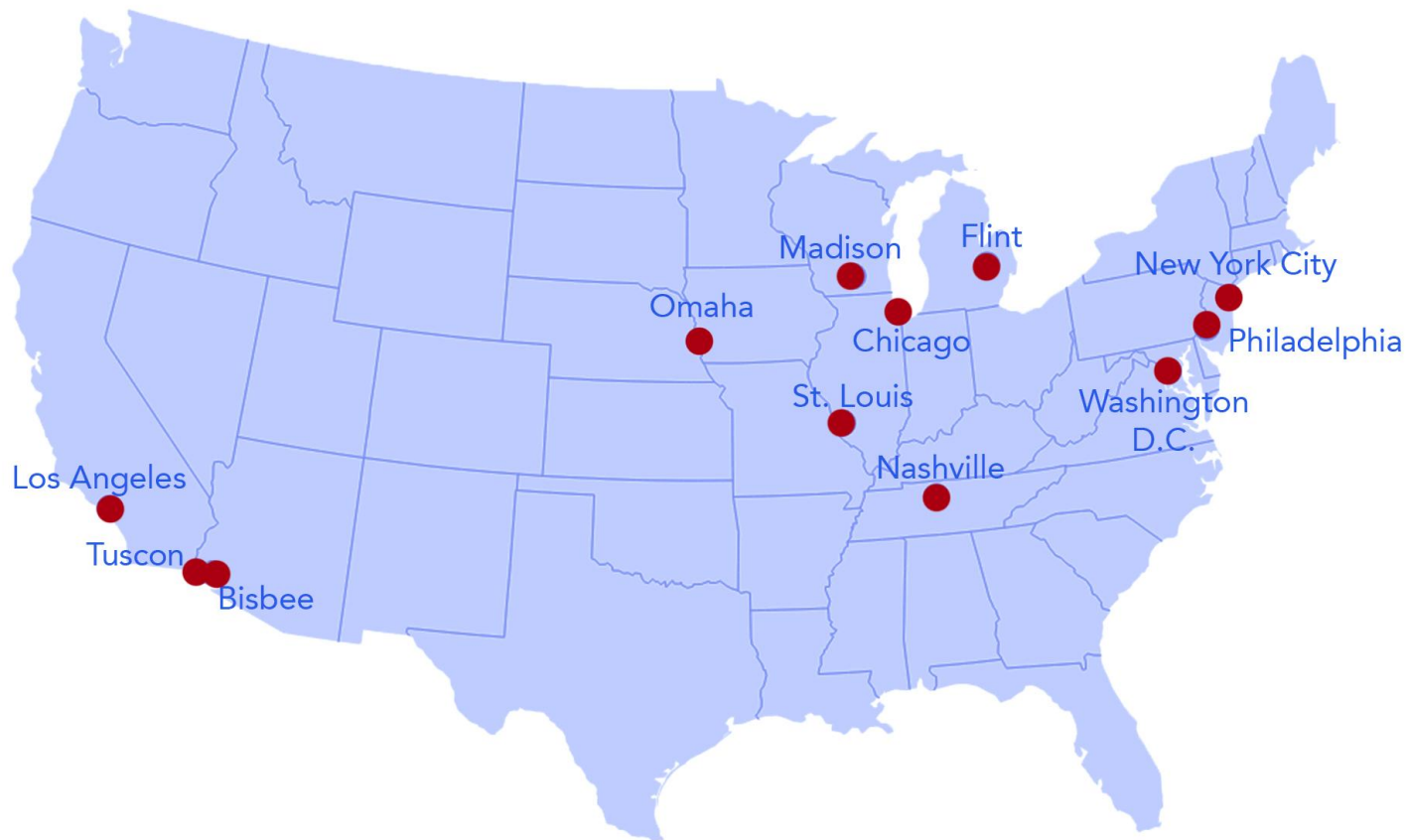


**Academy
Awards**

OVERVIEW

Launched in the wake of the 2016 elections, **Our America: Documentary in Dialogue** is a high-impact initiative that empowers PBS stations to champion civil, civic dialogue about issues that matter to their communities.

Over the past three years, we have provided grants and technical support to more than a dozen PBS stations. This work builds upon our impact model rooted in the belief that our partners know their communities best.



PILOT PROGRAM

OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

OBJECTIVES

*To expand the mission of public media as a **trusted resource** for local communities and spark **meaningful dialogue** through events that serve audiences with different views and backgrounds*

OUTCOMES

MOBILIZED PBS STATIONS

to expand their existing community network and forge new partnerships that create opportunities to produce meaningful, substantive public discourse

BUILT NEW AUDIENCES

from youth to senior citizens who may have never been exposed to their local public media, helping them see that events like these are invaluable for their personal enrichment

PROVIDED RESOURCES

that enabled PBS stations to create new program opportunities and supply local community members with a space where they feel welcome and their diverging points of view are respected

REFRAMED THE NARRATIVE

surrounding sensitive, controversial, and divisive topics about race relations, law enforcement tactics, and immigration by building bridges of understanding

DOCUMENTARIES FOR THE PEOPLE

We combine our award-winning curation and decades-long collaboration with PBS stations to make documentaries accessible to a wide range of local stakeholders including:

COMMUNITY LEADERS

Individuals who dedicate their vocation or significant volunteer time trying to create systemic change, especially on behalf of underrepresented populations

LOCAL PROFESSIONALS

Adults who are community pillars, e.g. secondary school teachers, college academics, and local entrepreneurs

YOUNG ADULTS & YOUTH

Current high school and college students, especially young men of color, who are socially conscious and seeking outlets for conversation and ways to address personal calls to action



PILOT YEAR

AMERICA'S
HEARTLAND

PILOT YEAR OVERVIEW

With seed funding from the Open Society Foundations, POV launched “Our America: Documentary in Dialogue” as a response to growing political and regional division in the wake of the 2016 election. The national screening series invited PBS stations to use our catalog of over 200 titles to delve into growing concerns in their communities.

During our pilot year, we worked with stations based in America’s heartland: Wisconsin, Michigan and Nebraska. These Midwestern communities, often far from the national spotlight, selected titles about divisive topics that resonated with their communities, including police militarization, race relations and educational equity.

To complement each screening, stations partnered with community organizations to build rich event experiences for attendees including panel discussions that provided a local perspective on the issues presented.



Raising Bertie (Dir. Margaret Bryne)



Two Towns of Jasper (Dirs. Whitney Dow and Marco Williams)



Do Not Resist (Dir. Craig Atkinson)

PILOT PROGRAM LEARNINGS

The pilot year was a resounding success, with an overwhelming response that these “community-first” screenings and conversations must continue. Subgrants allowed stations to address local barriers to attendance, like providing childcare or transportation to increase participation. Stations also indicated they would continue working with the local advocacy groups, making it a particular point to note that they found the pilot model both easy to implement and incredibly supportive.

While the pilot year primarily focused on rural and non-coastal communities, we received interest from the broader PBS station network. Inspired by the responses of our Midwestern partners, we began planning a sister initiative, “POV Presents”, to serve as a city-focused corollary to “Our America”, with a focus on community-building in the nation’s largest urban areas.

“[T]he main question we fielded from attendees across the demographic spectrum was this: ‘You guys are going to keep doing these, right?’

These events have really made an impact, and hopefully created a model for us statewide.”

Carol Griskavich, Community Education Manager
Wisconsin Public Television

2018

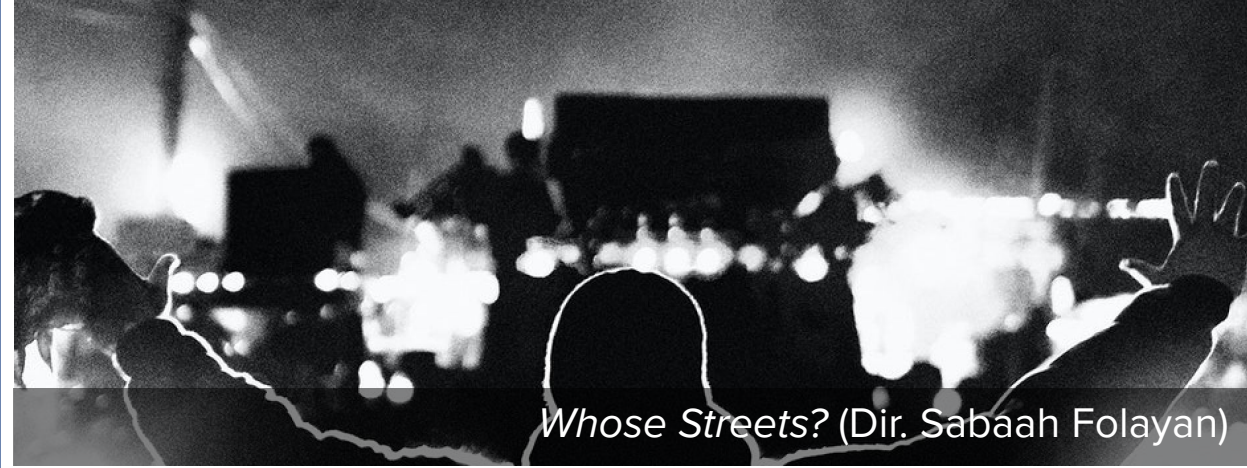
CONVERSATIONS
IN THE CITY

YEAR TWO OVERVIEW

During our second year, “Our America” continued to build momentum in non-coastal regions with new events in Missouri and Tennessee. Local audiences shared the ripple effect these events had on their communities: “Thank you so much for bringing events [here] that make people THINK and WANT TO SHARE what they learned with others.”

In addition, we launched a sister screening series, “POV Presents”, to serve stations based in America’s cities. By hosting similar events in cities like Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York City, we expanded the model’s hyper-local focus and took on audience and event-specific challenges distinct to larger cities.

The following case studies share the unique ways each series sparked local conversation and connection.



Whose Streets? (Dir. Sabaah Folleyan)



Dark Money (Dir. Kimberly Reed)



Quest (Dir. Jonathan Olshefski)

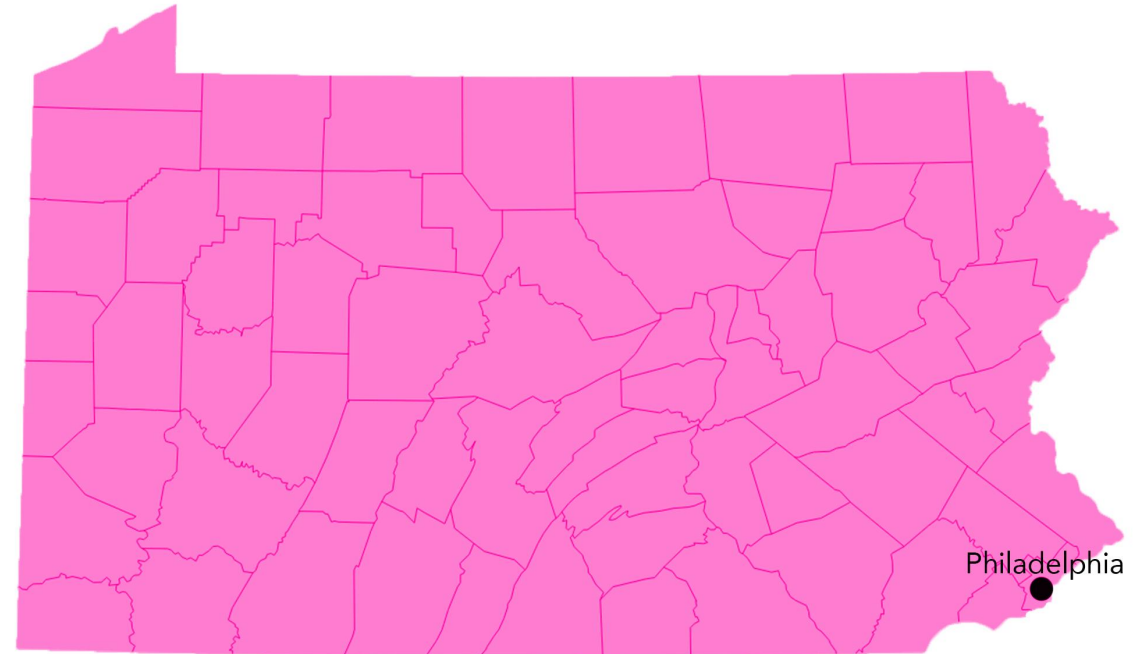
CASE STUDY

PENNSYLVANIA

Core Issue: Pennsylvania is both a swing state and operates under the weakest campaign finance laws in the country. It is the only state with neither contribution limits nor an explicit ban on spending campaign cash for personal use, according to a nationwide survey by The Caucus and Spotlight PA.

Community Statistics:

- From 2016 through 2018, state House and Senate candidates spent nearly \$3.5 million that cannot be fully traced based on the information they publicly disclosed.
- The Caucus and Spotlight PA found more than 4,800 instances of obscured spending by nearly 300 campaigns.
- In the 2016 Pennsylvania Senate election, over \$80 million was spent by outsider groups (dark money).



EVENT OVERVIEW

Selected Film: *Dark Money* traces the history of campaign finance laws after *Citizens United*. Returning to her home state of Montana, director Kimberly Reed highlights the corrosive effects of untraceable campaign donations in the democratic process.

Event Description: POV and WHYY co-hosted this screening of *Dark Money* at the WHYY Studios in Philadelphia. A free community event, over 200 locals participated as the film was curated around this question: can state and local officials be controlled by those with deep pockets? The discussion was framed by recent local and presidential elections that saw record amounts of money pouring into local television advertisements.



Bisbee '17 Screening, Bisbee, AZ



WHYY Studios, Philadelphia, PA

IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT

Panel Description: Moderated by WHYY's senior political reporter and *Fresh Air* contributor Dave Davies, the post-screening discussion and Q&A tackled issues like local reform, the history of campaign finance laws, and what the future might hold for Pennsylvania's electoral system.

Panelists:

- Shane Creamer, Philadelphia Board of Ethics
- Dave Davies, WHYY
- Derek Green, Philadelphia City Council
- Aubrey Montgomery, Rittenhouse Political Partners



DAVE DAVIES
SENIOR POLITICAL REPORTER
WHYY



DEREK GREEN
PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL



AUBREY MONTGOMERY
RITTENHOUSE POLITICAL
PARTNERS



SHANE CREAMER
PHILADELPHIA BOARD OF
ETHICS

CASE STUDY

MISSOURI

Core Issue: Statewide, African Americans were pulled over at a rate 59 percent greater than would be expected based solely on their proportion of the population.

Community Statistics:

- 15 St. Louis County municipalities, including the city of St. Louis, had a disparity index exceeding 5.0 in 2013. St. Louis County's disparity index was 2.99 in 2013.
- Statewide, in 2013, African-Americans were nearly twice as likely to be searched than whites following a traffic stop, and twice as likely to be arrested.
- The data also indicates that when white motorists are searched, they are found to have contraband more frequently than African-Americans, with a 26.3% "hit rate" for whites, compared with 18.8% for African Americans.



EVENT OVERVIEW

Selected Film: Filmed in the wake of Michael Brown's death, *Whose Streets?* follows the community protests in Ferguson, Missouri and the global movement they inspired.

Event Descriptions: In partnership with KDHX Community Media and ArchCity Defenders, POV screened *Whose Streets?* in St. Louis to discuss the local impact of the Ferguson protests. After the event, during the national broadcast of the film, POV and the Nine Network hosted a live Twitter chat, inviting St. Louis residents to share their experiences of August 2014. Nearly 1,000 people responded and the #WhoseStreetsPBS hashtag reached 4.6 million unique accounts.



Whose Streets? Panel, St. Louis, MS



Public Media Commons, St. Louis, MS

IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT

Panel Description: Focusing on community activism, Blake Strode, Executive Director of ArchCity Defenders, moderated a post-screening panel with local leaders in academia, law enforcement, politics, and youth engagement.

Panelists:

- Blake Strode, Archcity Defenders
- Kayla Reed, Action St. Louis and Electoral Justice Project
- Dr. Kira Hudson-Banks, St. Louis University
- Tef Poe, Hands Up United
- Reddit Hudson, Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis



BLAKE STRODE
ARCHCITY
DEFENDERS



KAYLA REED
ACTION ST. LOUIS AND
ELECTORAL JUSTICE
PROJECT



DR. KIRA
HUDSON-BANKS
ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY



TEF POE
HANDS UP UNITED



REDDITT HUDSON
URBAN LEAGUE OF
METROPOLITAN ST.
LOUIS

2019

EXPANDING
IMPACT

YEAR THREE OVERVIEW

The second year received positive feedback but coordinating the two screening series caused some confusion among stations and funders, as well as logistical challenges with limited staff capacity. In response, we folded in the newer city-facing initiative under the larger “Our America” umbrella.

Over the past year, we focused on youth outreach and immigration, especially in areas hit hard by economic divestment and deportations. Teaming up with local nonprofits, we continued to grow “Our America” with new partners in Wisconsin and Arizona and an emphasis on creating events that spur action and reflection. In cities, we increased screenings across the country, holding them in schools, with arts programs, and at station headquarters.



Minding the Gap (Dir. Bing Liu)



Bisbee '17 (Dir. Robert Greene)



93Queen (Dir. Paula Eiselt)

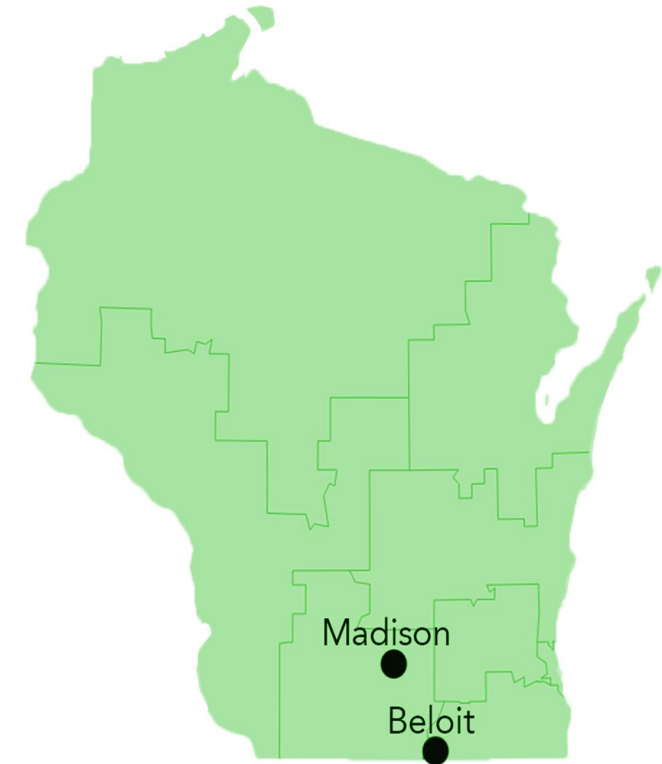
CASE STUDY

WISCONSIN

Core Issue: Rock County, which houses Beloit, has the highest percentage of adults with at least one Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE). As manufacturing jobs have left, opioid use and unemployment have risen.

Community Statistics:

- 1 in 4 adults in Rock County have high (4 or more) ACE scores.
- Rock County has the lowest percentage of people with no ACE at 31%.
- If you have 4 or more ACEs you are six times more likely to struggle with depression, seven times more likely to become alcoholic, 12 times more likely to attempt suicide, twice as likely to have heart disease and twice as likely to be diagnosed with cancer.



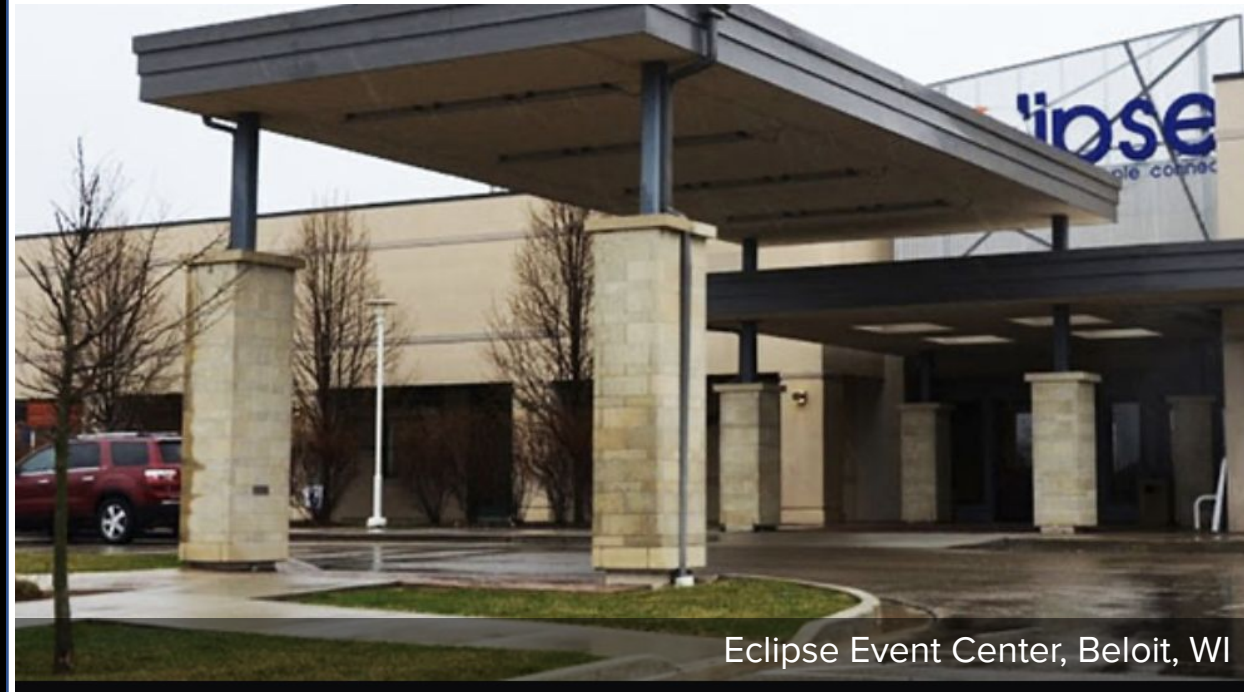
EVENT OVERVIEW

Selected Film: Taking place just 30 miles south of Beloit, *Minding the Gap* follows two of director Bing Liu's earliest friends as they use skateboarding to navigate the transition to adulthood and come to terms with their childhood abuses.

Event Description: For this close-to-home screening of *Minding the Gap*, POV and WPT partnered with several local community organizations - Community Action Inc. of Rock County, the Beloit International Film Festival and Beloit Fresh Start GED Program. The focus of this event was accessibility. We were able to provide a balanced, family-friendly meal for those in attendance, onsite childcare and two local trauma-informed therapists in case anyone was triggered by events depicted in the film.



Minding the Gap Screening, Beloit, WI



Eclipse Event Center, Beloit, WI

IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT

Panel Description: Director Bing Liu and subject of the film, Keire Johnson, attended the screening and participated in an informal discussion with four students from the Beloit Fresh Start GED program about coping with the long-term effects of childhood trauma.

Audience Feedback: *“I feel like this should be shown at every high school in the area. I see so many young people who are hurting in those halls every day, and it would help them to see that they are not alone.”*



BING LIU
DIRECTOR



KEIRE JOHNSON
PROTAGONIST

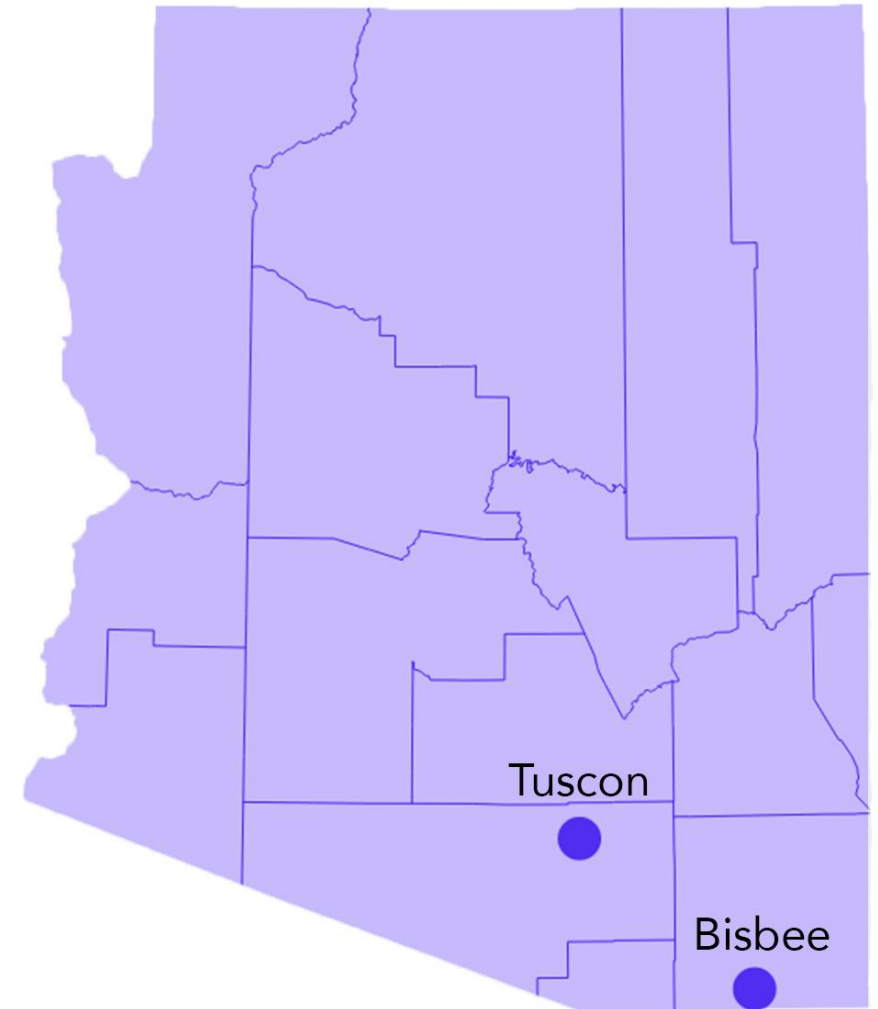
CASE STUDY

ARIZONA

Core Issue: In 2018, Federal officials deported 3 times more people in Arizona than the national average, by far the highest number in the country, according to a study by Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC).

Community Statistics:

- 1 in 6 workers in Arizona are immigrants.
- 250,000 in Arizona live with at least one family member who is undocumented.
- Reports estimate that at least 35% of the state's immigrant population—approximately 325,000 individuals—is undocumented.



EVENT OVERVIEW

Selected Film: *Bisbee '17* retells the buried history of Bisbee, Arizona's forced deportation of thousands of mine workers. Sent into the desert to die, the miners' story is vividly brought to life using a mix of documentary and staged scenes. The film's resonances with current Arizona immigration practices are impossible to ignore.

Event Description: POV worked with local organizations to host several events in Bisbee and neighboring Tucson, ranging from public screenings to anti-bias training with court employees. Attendees engaged in dialogue with the film team, film participants, and members of the Bisbee Deportation Centennial Committee. They also received updates on the historical research on the deportation, and discussed the impact of the film on the public's awareness of the issue, the filmmaking process and the next steps needed to maintain awareness of the growing deportations statewide and locally in Bisbee.



Bisbee '17 Screening, Bisbee, AZ



Copper Queen Library, Bisbee, AZ

IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT

Panel Description: Moderated by APM's Lorraine Rivera, the post-screening panel featured director Robert Greene, artist Laurie Mckenna, whose exhibition *The Undesirables* was on display, and local historian Mike Anderson. Moments before the event, Rivera learned she was related to one of the deported miners.

Audience feedback: *"It was really amazing to see the exhibit by the artist who was in the movie and to be in Tucson, so close to Bisbee... It was great to learn where some of the ghosts come from in Bisbee, and to see how those issues continue today."*



LORRAINE RIVERA
HOST OF ARIZONA 360



LAURIE MCKENNA
ARTIST



ROBERT GREENE
FILMMAKER



MIKE ANDERSON
HISTORIAN

CASE STUDY

CALIFORNIA

Core Issue: In the late 1970s, Los Angeles Public Schools enacted a rolling back of arts education due to budget cuts that continue to this day.

Community Statistics:

- 29% of California's public schools offer no study in any arts discipline.
- Students who had intensive arts experiences in high school were three times more likely than students who lacked those experiences to earn a bachelor's degree; they also were more likely to earn "mostly A's" in college (5% versus 17%).
- High school students who earned few or no arts credits were five times more likely not to have graduated than students who earned many arts credits (22% versus 4%).



EVENT OVERVIEW

Selected Film: *Minding the Gap* is also about using art as a tool for healing. Where our past screening of the film focused on its proximity to local concerns, we wanted to expand the film's reach by emphasizing how it demonstrates the connection between the arts, youth, and lightening the load of traumatic experiences.

Event Description: POV partnered with local Los Angeles nonprofit Inner-City Arts to host a screening of *Minding the Gap* for a group of 80 students, predominantly young men, to address the challenges of adulthood, how art inspires us and how to cultivate a sense of belonging in a community. The guiding question for the audience was: "*How do I tell my own difficult story?*"



Minding the Gap Screening, Los Angeles, CA



Inner-City Arts, Los Angeles, CA

IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT

Panel Description: Academy Award-nominated director Bing Liu joined a post-screening discussion and workshop via Skype with POV Shorts and Streaming Producer Chloe Gbai, SPACE Arts Center Director Hope Perello, and ICA teaching artist Marissa Herrera.

Audience Feedback: In response to the question, “What are the challenges of adulthood?” students candidly responded on stick-it notes with answers like: “Facing my fears,” “Not enough money,” “Gratitude,” and “Taking care of myself.”



BING LIU
DIRECTOR



CHLOE GBAI
SHORTS AND STREAMING
PRODUCER

POV



HOPE PERELLO
DIRECTOR SPACE ARTS
CENTER



MARISSA HERRERA
ICA TEACHING ARTIST

LOOKING AHEAD

**COMMUNITY-BUILDING
IN THIS MOMENT**

PROGRAM
OVERVIEW

For a generation, POV has championed accessibility and audience engagement in partnership with educators, community leaders and local stations. Today, many of us are physically cut off from in-person connection as public spaces and events have shut down to “flatten the curve.” Thousands of our partners including PBS stations, libraries and local media centers can no longer host in-person events that uniquely serve their communities. In addition, we are witnessing a historic moment of national uprisings and community-led calls for social change.

Innovative and inclusive ways to stay connected are more critical than ever, although our own work is not immune to this pandemic. At this time, we are working to be both responsive and responsible in our engagement efforts.

CONNECTING OUR CITIES

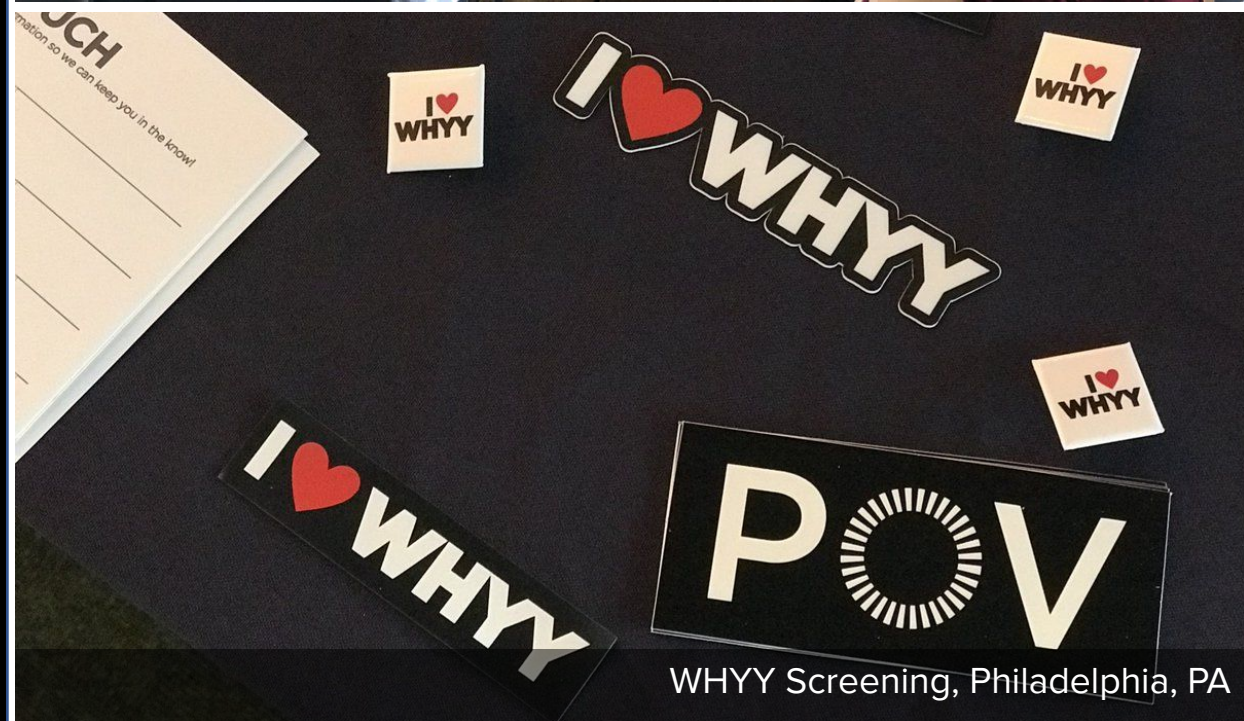
Over the past three months, we have seen the unique ways cities have responded—or not—to public health crises and growing social unrest. Our goal is to deepen partnerships between PBS stations and local community media centers, who have authentic connections to local storytellers but often lack funding and access to equipment. Through this, we uplift the unique roles that stations, media centers and mediamakers play in enriching local narratives.

Partner Stations

- WHYY (Philadelphia, PA)
- WPBT South Florida PBS (Miami, FL)
- PBS SoCal (Los Angeles, CA)
- WYES (New Orleans, LA)
- DPTV (Detroit, MI)
- WNET (New York, NY)
- WTTW (Chicago, IL)



QUEST Screening, WURD, Chicago, IL



WHYY Screening, Philadelphia, PA

RETURN TO RURAL

For small towns and rural communities, PBS stations provide a critical perspective on both national issues and local stories. In fall 2020, we will premiere *Portraits And Dreams*, which revisits photographs created by Kentucky schoolchildren in the 1970s and the places they were made. The documentary will be part of a rural-facing impact campaign that includes a series of station-centered virtual screenings, educator workshops and digital storytelling initiatives across Appalachia.

Partner Stations:

- WSKG (Binghamton, NY)
- WOUB (Athens, OH)
- Blue Ridge PBS (Roanoke, VA)
- KET (Lexington, KY)
- WTCI (Chattanooga, TN)



Still from Portraits And Dreams documentary



Photo from iconic Portraits And Dreams photography book

POV ENGAGE

We implement both short and long-term strategies for positioning documentaries to open minds and advance social justice. Working in partnerships with grassroots groups and NGOs, we aspire to enhance our community programming, extend the reach of our films and move our impact work forward.

We welcome collaboration with impact producers, film teams, educators and librarians to produce educational resources and strengthen community engagement.



ASAD MUHAMMAD
Vice President,
Engagement & Impact
Strategy



AQIYLA M. THOMAS
Manager of Community
Engagement



RACHEL FRIEDLAND
Community Partnerships
Senior Associate



COURTNEY COOK
Education Manager



ALICE QUINLAN
Our America lead,
Year Two



ERIKA HOWARD
Our America lead,
Pilot Year

SPECIAL THANKS

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FOUNDING PARTNERS



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ACADEMY
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