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High-resolution photographs are available for download at

<http://www.mahaiwe.org/press.html>

**The Mahaiwe and Great Barrington Fairgrounds Co-Present
An Evening with StoryCorps Founder Dave Isay, Plus Free StoryCorps Community
Recordings in Partnership with Berkshire Community College**

Great Barrington, Mass.— The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center and Great Barrington Fairgrounds will co-present an evening with StoryCorps founder Dave Isay on Wednesday, August 5 at 7:00pm at the Mahaiwe, plus free StoryCorps community recordings at Berkshire Community College South County Center (343 Main Street in Great Barrington) on Friday, August 7 through Sunday, August from 9:00am to 4:00pm.

“We’re really excited to celebrate the power of personal stories with Dave Isay’s talk and the community recordings,” said Mahaiwe Executive Director Beryl Jolly. “This program offers opportunities for friends and family members to share and preserve conversations around meaningful experiences and the places that make the Berkshire unique.”

Dave Isay is the founder of StoryCorps and the recipient of numerous honors, including six Peabody Awards, a MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship, and the 2015 \$1 million TED prize. StoryCorps is one of the largest oral history projects of its kind. Since 2003, StoryCorps has collected and archived more than 50,000 interviews from more than 100,000 participants. Each conversation is recorded on a free CD to share, and is preserved at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. Millions listen to weekly broadcasts on NPR’s *Morning Edition* on Friday mornings.

Isay is the author/editor of numerous books that grew out of his public radio documentary

work, including three StoryCorps books: *Listening Is an Act of Love* (2007), *Mom: A Celebration of Mothers from StoryCorps*, and *All There Is: Love Stories from StoryCorps* (2012)—all *New York Times* bestsellers. StoryCorps' fourth and latest book, *Ties That Bind: Stories of Love and Gratitude From the First Ten Years of StoryCorps*, was released in the fall of 2013 to coincide with the organization's 10th anniversary. Isay's books will be available for sale in the lobby and there will be a book signing after this event.

In conjunction with Dave Isay's talk, community members are invited to record their own conversations with a family member, friend, or colleague. A trained team of StoryCorps facilitators will be in Great Barrington to formally record up to 18 stories over the three day period. In addition, teams of locally-trained volunteers will allow for more recordings using the newly launched StoryCorps mobile app.

Participants will have 40 minutes of uninterrupted time to talk to each other about preservation and change, about leaving and staying, about secret and public spaces, and the places that make the Berkshires unique, along with anything else that is meaningful to them.

"It's a real thrill to join hands to present this opportunity," says Fairgrounds co-founder Janet Elsbach, who emphasizes that the recordings are open to all. "Awakening interest in our history is at the heart of the preservation work our organizations are engaged in, and it's so important to capture all facets of our community in the record we leave for the future. This commitment to look forward and look back is part of what makes the Berkshires such a special place to live."

StoryCorps will record the conversations and, with the participants' permission, archive them at the Library of Congress so they will be preserved for future generations. Each person who participates in an interview will be given a copy of their conversation.

To participate in the recording project, please fill out the form posted at

www.mahaiwe.org/Community. Formal recording reservations are limited and will be confirmed via email.

Tickets

Tickets to Dave Isay's talk are \$10 to \$45 (with proceeds helping to underwrite the costs of the recording days) and the event is free to Mahaiwe members. The Mahaiwe is located at 14 Castle Street in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. Box office hours are Wednesday through Saturday from noon to 6:00pm and three hours before show times. For tickets and information, see www.mahaiwe.org or call 413.528.0100.

About the Mahaiwe

Located in downtown Great Barrington, Massachusetts, the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center is the year-round presenter of world-class music, dance, theater, classic films, Live in HD broadcasts, and arts education programs for the southern Berkshires and neighboring regions. The intimate jewel box of a theater opened in 1905. Since 2005, the performing arts center has hosted over 1,000 events and welcomed almost half a million people through its doors. Its education program has served over 12,000 students from 35 different schools with school-time performances and residencies. The Mahaiwe generates in excess of \$1,000,000 in ticket revenue from 150 events each year, while contributing over \$4,000,000 in regional economic impact from the theater's direct spending and audience's restaurant, lodging, and shopping activities.