



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Leaders Step into the Shoes of Undocumented Americans in New Podcast Series, *UndocuAmerica*

Jorge Ramos, John Lithgow, Gloria Steinem, Nicholas Kristof and Jose Andres among the leaders featured in UndocuAmerica

LOS ANGELES, CA — Today, Shoebox Stories, a unique “story-holding project” of Colorado-based Motus Theater launched UndocuAmerica, a new podcast series in which national leaders, cultural influencers, and journalists step into the shoes of 12 young undocumented Americans to read their stories to a national audience and have a conversation about the inspiration behind each story.

UndocuAmerica aims to disrupt the false narratives about undocumented immigrants in the United States and instead introduce a positive narrative about the 11 million individuals who work, raise families, go to school, and have become pillars of their communities. The podcast seeks to bring these stories into the homes, offices, and public spaces of communities across the country in order to build empathy for, and understanding, of the undocumented immigrant experience among the greater American public.

“This is a critical moment in our nation’s history. The horrific practices of exclusion, persecution, and family separation which defined our country during slavery, Japanese internment and the boarding of Native American children are rearing their heads again as immigrant families across our country are being persecuted everyday,” said Kirsten Wilson, creative director of UndocuAmerica. “Stories can open hearts. Millions of immigrants living and working in our country need us now to open our hearts and minds and recognize their humanity, and that is what we hope to accomplish with this podcast.”

These powerful personal stories of young undocumented people touch on losing family to deportation, the experience of being rejected by the country in which you were raised, the uncertainties faced by undocumented immigrants due to the Trump administration ending DACA,

the threat of human rights violations and infringement upon American civil liberties, and the contributions immigrants make to our country.

The public figures who have lent their voice to this podcast include the following:

- **Jorge Ramos**, journalist and Anchor for Facebook's Real America
- **John Lithgow**, American actor, musician, poet, author, and singer
- **Gloria Steinem**, Author and feminist activist
- **Nicholas Kristof**, New York Times Op-Ed columnist
- **Art Acevedo**, Houston Police Chief
- **Maria Hinojosa**, journalist and President of Futuro Media
- **Jo Anne Lyon**, Vice President of Wesley Seminary
- **Jose Andres**, internationally-recognized culinary innovator, New York Times bestselling author, humanitarian, and chef/owner of ThinkFoodGroup

Musician and cellist Yo-Yo Ma and pianist Kathryn Stott also contributed an original recording to UndocuAmerica, which serves as the opening for the podcast.

The first episode of UndocuAmerica, featuring Jorge Ramos in conversation with, and reading the story of, Christian Solano-Córdova is currently available here.

"I've been reporting about immigration for more than 30 years. And I've talked to hundreds or thousands of immigrants in my life. But it's very rare when I can go beyond that first encounter and that first talk about their legal situation in which I can get into their personal story." said Jorge Ramos while reading Christian's story. "And this is just what happened. I think that if people in this country would listen to stories like this, and really just take a couple of minutes to digest everything that you said, it'll be a different story."

Additional episodes will be released each month until Summer of 2020. To read what other national leaders and undocumented writers are saying about their participation in UndocuAmerica, [click here](#). If you are interested in learning more about the project or speaking with any of the individuals involved, please contact Anthony Perez at aperez@rabengroup.com.

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About Shoebox Stories

Shoebox Stories is a **story-holding** project where you gather together and stand in another person's shoes by reading aloud their story, saying their words, and holding, for a moment, the weight that they carry.

About Motus Theater

The mission of Motus Theater is to create original theater to facilitate dialogue on critical issues of our time. We aim to use the power of art to build alliances across diverse segments of our community.