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## **CVN Partners with StoryCorps to Share Compelling Stories of Veteran Transition**

*Powerful audio cards highlight the experiences of veterans of varying backgrounds, capturing their military service experience, and their transition to civilian life*

**Stamford, CT., November 11, 2019** – As a way to honor veterans this Veterans Day, [Cohen Veterans Network](#) (CVN), a national not-for-profit network of mental health clinics for post-9/11 veterans and military families, partnered with StoryCorps to record, preserve, and share the stories of service and transition from military veterans.

With a mission to preserve and share humanity’s stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world, StoryCorps partnered with CVN to record 15, 40-minute uninterrupted conversations between veterans and their loved ones, including family members, friends, colleagues, as well as mentors and mentees. With the participants’ permission, StoryCorps then archived some of those recordings at the Library of Congress to be preserved for future generations.

“This project provided a unique way for us to engage with the military community, while also capturing real stories from veterans’ experiences both during and after service,” said Cohen Veterans Network CEO & President, Dr. Anthony Hassan. “This is a perfect way for us to convey to our clients, and others out there with similar military experiences, that they are not alone.”

Over the course of just a few days, StoryCorps captured the voices of veterans in California for this project by setting up a pop up recording studio inside the [Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Veterans Village](#) of San Diego (VVSD). The stories highlighted veterans from different military affiliations and varying experiences, encouraging openness about their personal lives and topics meaningful to them.

“StoryCorps is thrilled to partner with CVN in honoring California veterans by preserving and sharing their stories, reminding them that their lives and sacrifices matter profoundly,” said Robin Sparkman, CEO of StoryCorps.

From conversations recorded, three were compiled into “audio cards,” electronic audio-visual slides that include photographs of the participants and produced audio segments. Ashley Tatum, navy veteran, active-duty military spouse, and case manager at the Cohen Clinic at VVSD said her experience during this project was rewarding.

“StoryCorps gave me the opportunity to share my experiences with my children in ways they hadn’t heard them before,” Tatum says. “They were very young when I was active-duty so, sometimes, they forget that I



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served, too. I had hoped for the chance to be able to be a little vulnerable, honest, and real with my kids. And surprisingly, their questions made that very possible!”

[Click here](#) to view and listen to the audio cards.

“It was extraordinary to see veterans of different backgrounds walk inside the Cohen Clinic at Veterans Village of San Diego and use StoryCorps as a way to convey very important moments in their lives,” said Josh Cohen, son of Steven A. Cohen, philanthropist and founder of Cohen Veterans Network. “It is clear that the Cohen Clinic is an important part of the San Diego community, and I was so humbled and proud of the work all of the clinicians and staff put into making the clinic a welcoming and safe environment for the people that need it most. I was also able to meet some of the participants and it was amazing to see them build connections with their conversation partners by talking about topics they never spoke in detail about before. In return, their loved ones embodied the true value of listening. I could tell that it was a very rewarding experience for those involved.”

This focus on veterans’ experiences comes in conjunction with the recent launch of the [CVN Veterans Day Survey 2019](#), a recent poll commissioned by CVN and conducted online by The Harris Poll among more than 2,000 U.S. adults ages 18+. The survey revealed a divide between veterans’ preference and civilians’ actions when it came to the common phrase, “*Thank you for your service.*” According to the survey, 91% of Americans say they have thanked a veteran for their service when they see them public. But nearly half (49%) of veterans and active-duty service members feel uncomfortable being thanked for their service.

In an effort to bridge the divide between veteran preferences and civilian actions that the survey highlighted, CVN launched Beyond “Thank You for Your Service,” an awareness campaign aimed at connecting veterans and civilians in more meaningful ways. In addition to the poll, the campaign, which utilizes #BeyondTheThankYou, draws on anecdotes from veteran staff members across the organization’s network of clinics.

Find more on [Beyond ‘Thank You for Your Service’ here](#).

#### **ABOUT THE COHEN VETERANS NETWORK**

Cohen Veterans Network is a 501(c)(3) national not for profit philanthropic network of mental health clinics for post-9/11 veterans and their families. CVN focuses on improving mental health outcomes, with a goal to build a network of outpatient mental health clinics for veterans and their families in high- need communities, in which trained clinicians deliver holistic evidence-based care to treat mental health conditions. The network currently has 14 clinics in operation serving veterans and their families across the country. Learn more about [Cohen Veterans Network](#).

#### **ABOUT STORYCORPS**

Founded in 2003 by Dave Isay, StoryCorps has given more than 450,000 people—Americans of all backgrounds and beliefs, in towns and cities in all 50 states—the chance to record interviews about their

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lives. The organization preserves the recordings in its archive at the Library of Congress, the largest single collection of human voices ever gathered, and shares select stories with the public through StoryCorps' weekly podcast, NPR broadcasts, animated shorts, digital platforms, and best-selling books. These powerful human stories reflect the vast range of American experiences, wisdom, and values; engender empathy and connection; and remind us how much more we have in common than divides us.

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