

**Keeping the Promise of Public Education:
NEA Foundation to Livestream the Hope, Promise, and Future
with Diverse Voices and Stories on Oct. 5 at 2:30 p.m. EDT**

Event to Feature Storytellers from Across the U.S.

WASHINGTON, DC — October 4, 2018 — At a critical time in America’s over 200-year tradition of supporting public education, the [NEA Foundation](#) will stage a story-telling event that is part Ted Talk, part pop-up magazine. The story-telling symposium, which is being [livestreamed online here](#), draws on the wisdom, passion, and experience of educators, artists, STEM experimenters, philanthropists, parents, and students from across the country who will explore what it means to keep the promise of public education.

The NEA Foundation, a public charity founded by educators for educators to improve public education for all students, organized [Keeping the Promise of Public Education](#), a symposium to highlight that a dynamic public education ecosystem thrives when all stakeholders are engaged and heard. The Foundation pointed out that the vast majority of the nation’s students (90 percent) rely on public schools to prepare themselves for college, career, and civic life.

“Everyone’s story matters. We have learned through our work over the years with educators, district leaders, students, and other stakeholders nationwide that it is only through our collective and diverse thinking, and actions, that the true promise of public education is held — and kept,” said Harriet Sanford, President and CEO, The NEA Foundation. “To prepare our students for a future that is ever-evolving, we must create space to hear and learn from the many voices that make up our vibrant and complex public education ecosystem. As we embark on the Foundation’s 50th year in 2019, we will continue to elevate stories that cause us all to think differently and move our communities to action.”

DC Area Educators to Share Lessons from Their Teaching Experiences

Linda Ryden, a teacher at Lafayette Elementary School in DC Public Schools, is the creator of the [Peace of Mind Program](#), a cutting-edge combination of mindfulness, conflict resolution and social-emotional learning. Ryden will describe her use of these tactics to help students resolve conflicts in school and life.

Another Washington-area education leader, Josh Parker, will speak about his mission to help educators, students, and others solve problems. Parker is a Maryland Teacher of the Year. He describes his journey to diversify the teaching workforce and pipeline and explains how this could help educate and improve life outcomes for all students.

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Arts Education and Empathy Highlighted

Ayanna Hudson, Director of Arts Education for the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, DC, will discuss the role of arts education in schools in partnership with young poets Aniyah Smith, DC Youth Poet Laureate, and Kris Sykes, known as “Paine the Poet,” who will share their stories with a poetry slam.

[Daniel Lubetzky](#), a Mexican-American social entrepreneur, author, and Founder and CEO of KIND Healthy Snacks, says his company’s mission includes elevating kindness and empathy in society. To scale this mission, Daniel established The KIND Foundation and its signature initiative, [Empatico](#), to connect classrooms around the world through meaningful interactions that help students explore their similarities and differences and expand their worldviews.

Rachna Sizemore Heizer, a public school parent from Fairfax County, Va., will share the story of her son, Jake, a teenager with autism. Heizer explains that Jake is a musical prodigy and that both his assets and constraints have aided in his education. Attendees will have a chance to hear him perform.

Additional speakers will discuss in raw terms their impressions of the migrant student experience and what it’s like to walk in their students’ shoes. Another teacher will share how he uses his love of poetry to reach his students, as they grapple with depression, incarceration, and other challenges.

Because of her focus on global competence and the value of the stories and experiences of others, the NEA Foundation is featuring acclaimed author [Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie](#), known for the books *Americanah* and *Half of a Yellow Sun* as well as her Ted Talk “[The Danger of a Single Story](#).”

Find [livestream video](#) of the speakers and the program, and follow the conversation [@neafoundation](#) and [#neafpromise](#).

About the NEA Foundation

The NEA Foundation is a public charity founded by educators for educators to improve public education for all students. Since our beginning in 1969, the Foundation has served as a laboratory of learning, offering funding and other resources to public school educators, their schools, and districts to solve complex teaching and learning challenges. We believe that when educators unleash their own power, ideas, and voices, communities, schools, and students all benefit. Visit [neafoundation.org](#) for more information. Find us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Editor’s Note: Please use our correct name, the NEA Foundation. The “NEA” is never spelled out. We are not the National Education Association Foundation. Many thanks!