

ACM at 50: Story Circles and Y/Our Access Story

ACM West Conference

February 11-13, 2026

acmwest.org/conference/

10:30-12noon Thursday Feb 12

Tower Bridge A

This session is an interactive introduction to the power of Story Circles. We'll walk through the Story Circle process and introduce resources to help launch story circles and digital storytelling in your local communities. A personal jumping off point explores "Your entry point into community media/ access" or "A moment you recognized the power of access/community media." Our focus is on harnessing personal storytelling to celebrate the ACM's 50th anniversary in 2026.

Whether you're new to access or been involved for years, your story/our stories contribute/s to the rich global history of community media.

Facilitator:

John Higgins, Media Professor (retired), University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA

[MediaProf.org](https://www.media-prof.org/)

Speaker:

jesikah maria ross, Community Media Evangelist, Davis, CA

Connect with me on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jesikahmaria/)

<https://jesikahmariaross.com/>

This document available at



<https://shorturl.at/8vwkQ>

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Story Circles are inspiring ways for groups and individuals to share a transformative moment listening to and developing stories. Also an inclusive way to conduct meetings

Resources

jesikah

- [Story Circle Primer](#) (handout)
- [Story Circle Guidelines](#) (handout)
- [Planning Your Story Circle](#)
- [Story Circles: Deep Listening and Bridge Building on Issues That Matter](#)
 - A “How-To Guide” by jesikah for public radio stations who want to collaborate with community orgs to use stories for bridge building and understanding.

John

- Reflection materials and survey form from John’s workshops:
 - [Reflection Guide](#)
 - [Reflexivity Form](#)
- Additional articles available at John’s website, www.mediaprof.org - “Projects/Bio”
- **Self Reflection and Paulo Freire**

[“Paulo Freire and Social Transformation.”](#) *Peace Review* 9.4: 571-577. 1997.

Students in my classes read this before starting their own personal stories in the Story Circle, getting an idea of how their instructor/workshop facilitator sees reflection as more than just an academic tool.
- **Personal Reflection and Cyprus Conflict**

Hadjittofi, Daniel: [“Daniel Hadjittofi's Identity.”](#) Chapter in *Cypriot Identities*. Ed. Karen B. Costello. Intercollege Press. 51-56. 2004.

Students at a Greek Cypriot university read this before starting their reflection on family and personal stories. Daniel’s story tells how he became interested in peace and reconciliation, and the Director of the Cyprus Fulbright Commission.
- Examples from John’s digital storytelling workshops
 - [CyprusStories](#): Turkish and Greek Cypriots
 - [StoryFires](#): University of San Francisco students
 - [MenloTV](#): Menlo College students

Additional

- [The StoryCenter](#), innovator in Digital Storytelling, based on John O’Neal’s story circles
 - [Free preview copy of The Digital Storytelling Cookbook](#)