JOHN BROWN LIVES! BEGINS THE “FREEDOM STORY PROJECT”, SEEKING STORYTELLERS

AARP Community Challenge grant will help bridge generational boundaries while collecting freedom and justice narratives using the OurStoryBridge model.

LAKE PLACID, NY (6/29/22)— Today AARP announced that John Brown Lives! (JBL!) has been selected to receive a 2022 AARP Community Challenge grant for its new initiative, “Freedom Story Project.” JBL! is seeking storytellers whose first stories will be released on a new website on August 20 during the First Adirondack Family Book Festival at the John Brown Farm State Historic Site in Lake Placid, making these stories and all that follow easily accessible to all.

Freedom Story Project collects and broadcasts three- to five-minute audio stories and related photographs online, centering around themes of freedom and justice, human and civil rights, activism and engagement, at local, national and international levels. One of its goals is to inspire younger generations to tell their stories and connect to their communities and these issues, including through powerful personal narratives by elders who share their experiences. Freedom Story Project uses the OurStoryBridge methodology, making stories easily accessible and shareable.

Martha Swan, Executive Director of John Brown Lives! said, “Thanks go to AARP for the generous support that has made Freedom Story Project possible. What we need next are storytellers in our local area, and across the country, to email us at freedomstoryproject@gmail.com so they can tell their freedom and justice stories.”

To ensure the success of this new initiative, JBL! has partnered with OurStoryBridge (www.ourstorybridge.org), a free tool kit for producing a crowdsourced story project collecting and sharing a community's unique history online. OurStoryBridge supports the creation of three- to five-minute, locally created audio stories with related photographs, as well as their online accessibility, by posting them on a website that appeals to both young and old and can be produced at low cost.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that empowers people to choose how they live as they age. The AARP Community Challenge is a grant program to make tangible improvements in communities that jump-start long-term change. It is part of AARP’s nationwide Livable
Communities initiative, which supports the efforts of cities, towns, neighborhoods, and rural areas to become great places to live for people of all ages. To learn more, visit aarp.org/Livable.

John Brown Lives! is a freedom education and human rights project that amplifies the lessons, legacies and lens of the past to inform and inspire civic action and the creation of a just and livable community. As the official friends group of the John Brown Farm State Historic Site in Lake Placid, NY, JBL! works to promote, preserve, interpret and welcome all peoples to this sacred site and human rights destination. JBL! connects and enhances life in our community through wide-ranging conversations, innovative programs, partnerships and collaborations, as well as through joyous celebrations and moving commemorations that provide ports of entry to address issues at the core of JBL!’s mission, including racial justice, voting rights, mass incarceration, human trafficking and climate justice.

OurStoryBridge Inc. is a national charitable nonprofit organization whose mission is to serve as a resource and tool kit for OurStoryBridge projects that preserve and circulate local audio stories past and present through accessible online media; to promote, build and assist with the deployment of these resources in communities across geographic, cultural, socioeconomic, racial and organizational strata; and to help strengthen these communities through sharing of their stories, including preserving the stories of older generations before they are lost and encouraging younger generations to become engaged community members.