If you

- Have experienced homelessness
- Were surprised that something like this could happen to you
- Lost your home due to the high cost of housing, job loss, low wages, domestic violence, changed family situations, or health challenges

You might be interested in joining the Close to Home Storytellers Network.

Close to Home is shining a bright light on the broad reach of homelessness and mobilizing people to take action and support solutions. Our campaign is made up of individuals with personal experience of homelessness, together with allies in housing, education, domestic violence, business, faith and homelessness-focused organizations and agencies. Together, we communicate, educate and advocate for meaningful solutions to homelessness.

Our Storytellers are Change Agents!

The most powerful messengers are the women and men who have personally experienced homelessness at some point in their life. By openly, honestly and proudly sharing their personal journey, more people come to understand that homelessness isn’t something that happens to “someone else, somewhere else,” nor is it a personal failing – it is the result of unaffordable, inaccessible or ineffective systems making it difficult to move past challenging personal circumstances.

We would love to meet with you and tell you more about the Close to Home Storytellers Network, including the supports our storytellers receive and how they’re moving people past stereotypical views to become part of the solution to end homelessness.

Contact: Chance LeBeau – clebeau@violencefreeco.org – 720.728.8369.

Thanks for your interest and for all you do to #HelpMakeHomelessnessHistory!
What’s involved in being a Storyteller?

One-on-One
The first step on the journey to becoming a storyteller is to meet with a representative of Close to Home to be introduced to the campaign and to share a bit about your personal experience of homelessness and your interest in the Storytellers Network.

101
Next, join us for a Close to Home “101” session. Over dinner in a welcoming environment, we will share more in-depth information about the work we are doing to increase understanding about the broad-reach of homelessness and moving more residents to be part of the solution.

Mentoring & Coaching
Each storyteller is paired with a representative of Close to Home. This “mentor” answers questions and is available to provide support to the storyteller along the way, including before and after presentations. Storytellers also meet with a professional speaking coach to gain confidence and presentation expertise as they prepare to share their stories in different settings.

Listening Sessions
These periodic gatherings offer the opportunity for storytellers to share their experiences of homelessness, and hear their fellow storytellers’ experiences, in small, supportive groupings. For some, this may be the first time they have shared their story and for all, it offers a uniquely supportive, healing and learning opportunity.

Storyteller Meetings
Close to Home storytellers meet every month or two to share ideas, identify challenges and discuss new and different ways to reach more audiences and encourage people to take meaningful actions in addressing homelessness. Most meetings are held in the evening to accommodate work schedules, include dinner, and offer transportation assistance.

Storytelling
Following the learning and coaching sessions, storytellers are offered opportunities to share their personal experience of homelessness in a variety of settings, from keynote and panel presentations to podcasts, media interviews, written stories and artistic expression. Mentor and coaching supports are provided for each storytelling opportunity, together with transportation support and a stipend.

Circles of Support
Also available to storytellers is the opportunity to form “circles of support.” Tailored to the interests and needs of each storyteller, these social networks help the storyteller explore ways to set and work toward personal, educational and/or professional goals.

Leadership Opportunities
Experienced storytellers are offered the opportunity to explore ways to raise awareness, increase understanding, or mobilize action through tailored projects that go beyond personal storytelling, such as advocacy, community engagement and more.