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WHYY.ORG TO LAUNCH SPECIAL WEB PAGE SPOTLIGHTING PAUL ROBESON

*Page Complements Book on Philadelphia Entertainer, Activist
That Contains Companion Audio CD of WHYY-produced Interviews*

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 15, 2009 — To coincide with the Oct. 20 release date of *Stories From the Paul Robeson House: Lives Touched by a Renaissance Man*, WHYY.org will launch a special Web page the week of Oct. 18. It will feature audio interviews of individuals who knew Robeson, lived in his West Philadelphia neighborhood or are somehow connected to the actor, orator, human rights activist, lawyer, author, linguist, athlete, singer and scholar.

The page, www.whyy.org/community/robeson.html, will include six streaming interviews conducted by Elisabeth Perez-Luna, executive director of audio content at WHYY. It will also house excerpts of *Fresh Air* interviews with those connected to Robeson and a 1958 Pacifica Radio interview with Robeson.

Perez-Luna conducted, recorded and edited 27 interviews for *Stories From the Paul Robeson House*. Transcriptions from those interviews comprise the bulk of the book, and a 90-minute companion audio CD enables book owners to listen to stories about Robeson and West Philadelphia from the voices of community figures. Figures include Frances Aulston, president and CEO of The Paul Robeson House and West Philadelphia Cultural Alliance; Charles L. Blockson, educator, collector, author and curator emeritus of Temple University's Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection; and Sonia Sanchez, nationally recognized poet, writer and speaker.

"... Your face, like summer lightning, gets caught in my voice, and I draw you up from deep rivers, taste your face of a thousand names, see you smile a news season, hear your voice, a wild sea pausing in the wind," Sanchez says in the book in the form of a poem.

"The most exciting part of this project was to capture Paul Robeson's story through the memories, anecdotes, poems and photos of the people who knew him or heard of him," Perez-Luna said. "But what also comes through in the interviews is a portrait of a vibrant community rich in culture, history and pride. In that context, the Robeson house comes alive as a true landmark that connects the past, the present and of course, the future. It's a Philadelphia legacy that I'm sure Paul Robeson and his sister, Marian Forsythe, would be very pleased with."



Stories From the Paul Robeson House will be released Oct. 20 at Robeson's former home, a designated historical property, 4951 Walnut St. The property is owned and maintained by the West Philadelphia Cultural Alliance. *Stories From the Paul Robeson House* is not for commercial sale and will be available on a donation basis at The Paul Robeson House.

WHYY's special Web page complements not only the book but the Web site of The Paul Robeson House, www.paulrobersonhouse.org, where Perez-Luna's interviews are also available. WHYY served as the media partner in the production of *Stories From the Paul Robeson House*. The production was funded by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage through the Heritage Philadelphia Program with additional support from the Marketing Innovation Program.

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