

Denver Institute Welcomes Ashley Hales and Campbell Rust to Lead National Storytelling Initiative

Denver Institute for Faith & Work announced the addition of two new team members who will lead a new national storytelling effort through the CityGate Network.

DENVER, CO, UNITED STATES, June 22, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Denver Institute for Faith & Work](#) announced the addition of two new team members who will lead a new national storytelling effort through the [CityGate Network](#). Ashley Hales will serve as

Director of Storytelling, and Campbell

Rust will serve as Story Production Manager. Together, they will help launch and lead the

[CityGate Storytelling Initiative](#), a five-year project designed to identify, produce, and share stories that illuminate how Christian faith is lived out through daily work.



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Ross Chapman, CEO

The CityGate Storytelling Initiative is part of the CityGate Network, a community of leaders from more than 85 organizations committed to vocational discipleship and city flourishing through the integration of faith and work. Denver Institute funds and stewards the network. The initiative is supported by a \$4.5 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its National Storytelling Initiative on Christian Faith and Life 2025. All grant funds will support new storytelling efforts and will not be used for the operating budgets of participating organizations, including Denver Institute.

The storytelling initiative will give capacity to CityGate organizations to help people encounter the hope and life of Christian faith through the stories of Christians at work—stories that invite

people to reimagine their work, renew their sense of calling, and experience God's presence in their everyday lives. Over the next five years, they will produce 35 short films, 120 podcasts, 250 written stories, and 250 live storytelling events while equipping leaders nationwide in story-based transformation frameworks and developing a national content hub and local distribution strategy.

Following a six-month national search involving more than 120 candidates across two roles, Denver Institute selected Hales and Rust to build and lead this new initiative.

Ashley Hales joins Denver Institute from Christianity Today, where she most recently served as Print Managing Editor. An accomplished writer, speaker, podcaster, nonprofit founder, and author, Hales brings extensive experience helping audiences engage faith thoughtfully and imaginatively.

As Director of Storytelling, Hales will guide the initiative's creative vision, helping identify compelling stories, shape editorial and theological direction, and equip CityGate partners to tell stories that spark imagination and inspire transformation. She was selected for her exceptional gifts as a writer, editor, storyteller, and pastorally attentive thinker with a unique ability to capture and tell stories of ordinary faithfulness.

In a recent interview, Hales reflected on her previous work, what drew her to this role, and her vision for the CityGate Storytelling Initiative. Read the interview: <https://bit.ly/4gduY5r>

Campbell Rust joins Denver Institute after serving in the creative services department at KKTU, where he oversaw long-form content, including Southern Colorado Life, a lifestyle program dedicated to telling engaging stories about people and communities across Colorado.

As Story Production Manager, Rust will serve as the operational backbone of the initiative, coordinating production timelines, contractor relationships, logistics, workflows, and the many details required to move a story from concept to publication. He was selected for his production expertise, organizational leadership, relational maturity, and creative problem-solving.

In a recent interview, Rust shared more about his professional background, his interest in this role, and what excites him most about the storytelling initiative. Read the interview: <https://difw.org/4eeksbp>

"Most workers are experiencing unprecedented change in their jobs. At the same time, many corporations are hiring talented storytellers to talk about their products or services. Yet, what we need are stories about work from workers. Ashley and Campbell form a dynamic team focused on shifting uninspiring work narratives in today's workforce toward a more compelling vision rooted in hope and purpose. The depth of their experience and their contagious enthusiasm for this project give us confidence the storytelling initiative will contribute to a renewed imagination of work, at just the time we need it." - Ross Chapman, CEO

To learn more about the CityGate Storytelling Initiative and the team leading this work:
Explore the CityGate Storytelling Initiative: <https://citygate.com/storytelling-initiative/>
Read an interview with Ashley Hales, Director of Storytelling: <https://bit.ly/4gduY5r>
Read an interview with Campbell Rust, Story Production Manager: <https://difw.org/4eeksbp>

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