

Civil Dialogues Town Halls at Library of Congress and Points of Light Conference in Washington, DC

Kinder Institute, University of Missouri Alumni Association, and Harnisch Foundation Partner on "America 250" Town Hall at Library of Congress

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, July 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Civil Dialogues](#) held parallel town halls in Washington, DC. in mid June, first in partnership with the [Kinder Institute](#) on Constitutional Democracy, Mizzou Alumni Association, and the Harnisch Foundation, titled "America 250: Defending Freedom & Democracy in 2026". Following that event, Civil Dialogues led a panel discussion at the [Points of Light](#) Conference. Nearly 600 participants benefitted from the co-founders' presentations and panelists' insights at both events. Library of Congress panelists included Jay Sexton, Director of the Kinder Institute; Brenda Robinson, film producer, entertainment attorney, and niece of the late civil rights leader, Rev. Jesse Jackson; David Young, former ambassador to Malawi; and Mady Geiler, honors college rising senior at the Kinder Institute, University of Missouri-Columbia.



Jean Becker addresses audience at Points of Light conference June 23, 2026



Library of Congress Panelists, Left to Right; David Young, Brenda Robinson, Mady Geiler, Jay Sexton, and Moderator, Linda Lorelle, June 16, 2026

"We need to be able to talk to each other, recognizing these are difficult times," said Greg Wilson, Senior Advisor at Our Republican Legacy and former Treasury Department Deputy Assistant

Secretary, one of 150 in attendance. "Events like this give me hope that there are ways to engage in civil dialogue and disagree politically on issues, but find common solutions that make sense."

The Points of Light Annual Conference hosted the June 23rd town hall at the Washington Hilton where the topic was "Finding Common Ground: Strategies for Civil Dialogue and Healing the Divide". "What resonated with our audience was the reminder that finding common ground begins with listening. Not listening to respond but listening so others truly feel heard," said Beth Pann, Senior Vice President of Strategic Partnerships & Convenings. "The panel modeled empathy and compassion, demonstrating that meaningful dialogue happens when we step outside our own circles with curiosity, humility, and an open mind."



Points of Light Panelists and Moderator, Left to Right; Linda Lorelle, Manu Meel, Wyatt Nako, Jan Cope, David Vandenberg

Panelists included The Reverend Canon Jan Naylor Cope, Provost at Washington National Cathedral; Manu Meel, Co-Founder and CEO of BridgeUSA; Wyatt Nako, Chapter Development Manager of BridgeUSA; and David Vandenberg, Director of Partnerships & Engagement at Volunteer Canada. The town hall ended with audience members at each table practicing how to have challenging conversations, facilitated by Civil Dialogues partner, Living Room Conversations.

Civil Dialogues has become a trusted forum where Americans can voice concerns without judgment and seek understanding across political divides. In partnership with the George & Barbara Bush Foundation, the Clinton Presidential Center, the LBJ Foundation, and the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy, Civil Dialogues seeks to create a safe space for community conversation on some of the most important and contentious topics of the day. The democracy project was co-founded by Jean Becker, author and chief of staff to President George H.W. Bush during his post-presidency, and Linda Lorelle, Emmy Award-winning broadcast journalist and entrepreneur.

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