We have witnessed an incredible amount of divisiveness during the past two school years at Texas State University. There have been racist flyers, threats to student media, protests, marches, sit-ins and arrests.

Feeling that it is the job of student media to create a forum for ideas, the students discussed hosting any number of events from panels to lectures. However, they liked the idea of people sharing their own stories and developed the idea of Star Stories. The University Star planned, organized and hosted this event to increase understanding on our campus. The entire campus was invited to attend. It received a grant from the Office of Equity and Inclusion, as well as a grant from Texas State Common Experience.

**Title of Event:** Star Stories: True Stories of Life at TXST

**Date of Event:** 6-7:30 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 17, 2019 (during Mass Comm Week)

**Location of Event:** Performing Arts Center Recital Hall, Texas State University

**Description of Event:** During Mass Comm Week, the University Star brought together eight phenomenal local storytellers who were members of our Texas State community to present “Star Stories: True Stories of Life at TXST.” The event featured true personal narratives that revealed something about our community’s greatest challenges and greatest opportunities. The goal was to open a dialogue among diverse groups while assigning value to first-person narratives.

This project was in keeping with Texas State University’s values of diversity of people and ideas, a spirit of inclusiveness, a global perspective and a sense of community as essential conditions for campus life.

**Process:** The University Star created an open call for submissions for community members to be one of the eight storytellers for this event. Fifty-four people submitted online applications with their stories through a Google form on our website. The applications were reviewed by University Star committee of editorial and PR team members who narrowed down the group to 15 who came in for in-person interviews and tryouts. The committee chose eight diverse members from our community to be the storytellers.
**Admission:** We charged $5 per person and sold tickets through EventBrite for this event. More than 120 people attended the event.

**Event:** The storytellers sat in the front row, and each had a chance to come up to the front to tell their story individually. Four storytellers told their stories, followed by a 10-minute intermission, then the final four told their stories. Each speaker had up to six minutes.

**Reception:** The comments were entirely positive from both the audience and the storytellers. Audience members shared their experiences on social media that helped get people on campus talking. The storytellers have volunteered to help plan another event for next year with the goal of this becoming an annual University Star event.