

## NBA Announces New Incubate Partner, StoryWagen

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The National Benevolent Association welcomes [StoryWagen](#) as a new [Incubate partner](#) and affiliate that is committed to innovative approaches to health and social service ministry.

StoryWagen is a faith rooted social enterprise and the brainchild of Pastor Jose Martinez, who serves as Associate Minister with Disciples' [New Church Ministry](#) team, which focuses on training and equipping congregations and leaders.

Pastor Martinez is also an endorsed chaplain, who works in both hospital and military settings. In his chaplaincy work, Martinez has seen many people that had spiritual health issues and didn't even know it.

StoryWagen serves as a mobile resource and listening center focused on spiritual health. The organization's goal is to provide free resources about issues such as grief, moral injury, shame, guilt, and other spiritual health issues that affect the mental health of individuals, community groups, and faith communities. In addition to offering resources, StoryWagen serves as a platform for community members who want to share their story.

StoryWagen ensures they are providing a safe space when doing so by meeting people where they are at and giving these storytellers an opportunity to be heard without judgment or shame.



*StoryWagen Founder Chaplain  
Jose Martinez*

"Something powerful happens when we listen to a person's story," Martinez explains. "We believe this practice to be a [sacred and divine act](#)."

The organization's name, StoryWagen, has dual meanings. While they provide a platform to share resources and tell stories, they do so in a 1979 Volkswagen bus. Since 2019 the Kansas City, Missouri, based nonprofit has recorded people's experience with spiritual health issues. Their hope is that by sharing these stories, they will create a culture of care within the communities they visit.

"I am excited that both of our new Incubate Partners are led by people of color," Director of Social Entrepreneurship Darnell Fennell says. "I believe this moment reflects the values of the NBA to be more equitable as we connect with social enterprises that are part of communities we have yet to connect with. I believe we will both be enriched and transformed by this relationship."

When stories are shared and told in the Volkswagen, they don't just stay there, Martinez uses the stories he gathers as inspiration when hosting the [StoryWagen podcast](#) where he covers a variety of topics including bereavement, military support and race. The podcast is in its second season.



*The 1979 Volkswagen used to capture stories. The bus made an appearance at the 2019 General Assembly!*

Like all NBA Incubate partners, StoryWagen is a Disciples-related health and social service organization that has entered into partnership with NBA through a Memorandum of Understanding. Aligned with the mission of NBA, StoryWagen is an organization that equips faith communities with the knowledge and resources necessary to provide emotionally healthy environments.

"We feel very honored to join the NBA family through the Incubate partnership program," Martinez says. "We hope through this partnership that we are further able to empower churches, neighborhood associations, and other community groups to provide compassionate spiritual support and holistic care to their communities."

For more info on StoryWagen visit [storywagen.org](http://storywagen.org). Keep up with the organization on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook @storywagen.

Through the Incubate Initiative, the NBA incubates new ministries, empowering Disciples-led health and social service projects to focus on their growth, strengthen their impact, and work toward sustainability. Learn more at [nbacares.org/incubate](http://nbacares.org/incubate).

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*As the health and social services general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the National Benevolent Association partners with congregations, regions, general ministries, and a variety of Disciples-related health and social service providers to create communities of compassion and care. Founded in 1887 by six women responding to the needs of the day and on their doorsteps, for 130 years the NBA has continued to serve "the least of these." Learn more at [www.nbacares.org](http://www.nbacares.org).*