

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 27, 2022
Aislinn Hinyup
WYES VP, Communications
ahinyup@wyes.org
504-460-2850 cell



**WYES-TV TELLS THE STORY OF FRIENDSHIP, HISTORY AND
THE GENESIS OF THE NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM**

New Orleans, LA — A new WYES documentary tells the story of how two University of New Orleans historians sought to salute the spirit of Americans who fought to preserve our freedom.

Produced by Marcia Kavanaugh, **FOUNDED ON FRIENDSHIP & FREEDOM: THE NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM** focuses on the legacy of these two friends: **Dr. Gordon “Nick” Mueller**, the National WWII Museum President and CEO Emeritus, and **Dr. Stephen Ambrose**, the best-selling author and historian who died in 2002. The one-hour documentary will premiere on **Monday, July 11 at 7:00 p.m.** on WYES-TV, wyes.org and on the WYES and PBS apps.

The dream of these colleagues and close friends – Mueller and Ambrose – exists today as The National WWII Museum in downtown New Orleans. Since its opening on June 6, 2000, the museum has drawn more than nine million visitors and expanded into an internationally-recognized attraction which serves to remind us of the price and legacy of war.

Ambrose recognized the importance of preserving the recollections and stories documented in the oral histories of WWII veterans, particularly those of the Normandy Invasion. He turned to Mueller to help establish a brick and mortar location to house the artifacts of WWII and keep the experiences of the WWII generation alive for posterity.

Neither would realize at the time how their idea would expand into one of the world’s most recognized, respected and visited museums. It singularly captures the profound role New Orleans played in winning the war, as home to Andrew Higgins Industries, manufacturer of the "Higgins boats," or beach landing craft named after New Orleanian Andrew Higgins, referred to by President Dwight D. Eisenhower as "the man who won the war for us." Their museum idea broadened into a greater vision of establishing a place to memorialize the fight for freedom waged by the men and women of the World War II generation.

The documentary features archival and new interviews with: Dr. Gordon “Nick” Mueller, Dr. Stephen Ambrose, Diana Bajoie, Günther Bischof, Gregory O’Brien, Donald “Boysie” Bollinger, Bill Detweiler, Malcolm Ehrhardt, Mary Landrieu, Donald Miller, Frank Stewart, Stephen Watson and Grace Ambrose Zaken.

FOUNDED ON FRIENDSHIP & FREEDOM: THE NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM depicts the shared camaraderie and sheer determination of these two UNO professors who overcame challenges, secured support and crafted a pathway to unimagined international success while also bestowing a priceless educational and economic asset to the community.

For additional airdates and times, visit wyes.org.

About WYES:

WYES is the storyteller for New Orleans, southeast Louisiana and the Mississippi Gulf Coast. For 65 years, WYES has earned a reputation for quality PBS programming, award-winning local documentaries and cooking series. Thank you for making WYES a vital source of education, information and entertainment — on air and online. For more information, call (504) 486-5511 or visit wyes.org.

This program is made possible through the support of:

Ed Brauner
American Legion Post 307
Dorothy Clyne



Eugenie & Joseph Jones
Family Foundation
Lori & Bobby Savoie

University of New Orleans