

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### KEVIN FARKAS RECEIVES WQED VITA AWARD

**PITTSBURGH, PA** – Kevin Farkas is a 2015 recipient of the WQED/Dominion Volunteer in the Arts (VITA) award.

Kevin Farkas is Director and Executive Producer of the Veteran Voices of Pittsburgh Oral History Initiative, an educational media organization that captures, preserves, and shares the experiences of local veterans. He is also director of multimedia with the Veterans Breakfast Club, a local nonprofit that creates communities of listening around veterans and their stories.

Kevin has produced hundreds of oral history interviews and multimedia projects, including audiobooks, dramas, podcasts, videos, and live storytelling events throughout Western Pennsylvania. He is co-editor and publisher of *Veteran Voices: The Magazine of the Veterans Breakfast Club*, and his creative audio short story series based on local veterans has been noted by Donald Ritchie, Historian Emeritus of the United States Senate, as part of an important new genre of public-minded oral history.

“Every veteran has an important story to tell,” Kevin insists, “but a story not told is a story not heard.” That’s why his work emphasizes the importance of sharing veterans’ stories in ways that inspire others to think and feel more deeply about military service—one of our most significant American institutions—and to recognize the humanity within veterans’ experiences.

At seventeen, Kevin enlisted in the US Navy and served aboard the USS Saratoga. After his enlistment, he hiked the Appalachian Trail and traveled throughout the country by bicycle. After attending New Mexico Highlands University and receiving degrees in English, he taught in several universities throughout the US, including the Navajo Nation. Prior to starting the Veteran Voices of Pittsburgh Oral History Initiative, Kevin was corporate director of training in the electronics manufacturing industry.

Kevin is a native of Beaver County, Pennsylvania, where he now lives.

On October 9, 2015, the VITA award was presented to Kevin, along with four other outstanding honorees at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Downtown Pittsburgh.

For 27 years, the Dominion VITA (Volunteer In the Arts) Awards, coordinated by WQED Multimedia, has honored dedicated individuals who have given their time and talents to ensure that the arts thrive in our region.

“The VITA Awards recognize the vitality volunteers bring to arts organizations,” said James Mesloh, executive director of the Dominion Foundation. “It is no surprise that Western Pennsylvania has wonderful arts organizations – it has wonderful arts volunteers. Dominion is proud to help honor them.”

A committee of Pittsburgh area professionals interested in celebrating this invaluable volunteer arts force selects the winners. Since its inception in 1988 Dominion has honored more than 240 volunteers from more than 170 arts organizations throughout western Pennsylvania. As a result numerous individuals and

their organizations have been given recognition on WQED-TV, WQED-FM 89.3 and at the annual VITA Awards reception.

“As the nation’s first community-supported broadcaster, WQED has always relied on volunteers for support,” said Deborah L. Acklin, president and chief executive officer of WQED Multimedia. “Without dedication from members of the community, no arts organization could survive. We are so pleased that with Dominion we have been able to recognize, thank and be the voice for volunteers who have given of their time, talents and energy to support the non-profit arts community in Pittsburgh and the surrounding region.”

For more information, contact Veteran Voices of Pittsburgh

<http://veteranvoicesofpittsburgh.com>

<http://veteransbreakfastclub.com>

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