



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Planet Word Launches 'Having Hard Conversations' Series on Constructive Dialogue Amid Polarization

Michele Norris and Timothy Shriver to Share Insights on Navigating Difficult Topics

WASHINGTON – Planet Word, the museum of words and language, today announced “[Having Hard Conversations](#),” a new speaker series on fostering dialogue amid polarization. Attendees will hear from thought leaders, including **Michele Norris** and **Timothy Shriver**, on strategies to engage respectfully and bridge ideological divides around critical issues. Events include:

Michele Norris on Our Hidden Conversations

Thursday, May 30, at 6:30 p.m.

Peabody Award-winning journalist Michele Norris will speak about her new book, *Our Hidden Conversations*, on Thursday, May 30. This compilation of stories, essays, and photographs was gleaned from her decade-long work on [The Race Card Project](#). Michele will lead the audience in an interactive presentation about the complexities of race and identity and the importance of an empathetic ear.

Timothy Shriver on The Dignity Index

Friday, September 13, at 6:30 p.m.

Timothy Shriver, Ph.D., Chairman of the Board of the Special Olympics, will present on [The Dignity Index](#) on Friday, September 13. He will offer insights into how The Dignity Index, an eight-point scale that scores speech along a continuum from contempt to dignity, aims to foster respectful dialogue by focusing on the words, not the people behind them.

“Words matter,” said **Ann Friedman, CEO and Founder** of Planet Word. “We see this axiom play out every day in our civic life, in our schools, and around our kitchen tables. Too often in recent years, by choice or by chance, words have become weapons. This new and timely series illuminates a fundamental and powerful truth: Each of us has a choice in how we use our words in ways that are constructive or destructive, helpful or hurtful.”

Subsequent programs in the lead-up to the November election will be announced. Each hour-long program will conclude with a Q&A session with the audience at Planet Word’s Friedman Family Auditorium.

Tickets are \$15 per person. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit

<https://planetwordmuseum.org/events/having-hard-conversations-michele-norris-the-race-card-project/>.

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Planet Word is the only museum in the country dedicated to renewing and inspiring a love of words and language. Located in the historic Franklin School on the corner of 13th and K Streets in downtown D.C., Planet Word opened in 2020 as a new kind of interactive and self-guided museum. Using the museum’s state-of-the-art technology, visitors determine their experience through their own words and choices. Planet Word is a bold and imaginative response to the life-long importance of literacy and to the challenge of growing a love of language. As a private, non-governmental museum, Planet Word is free for visitors and supported primarily by the generosity of donors.