**Stories Untold Video Transcript**

For 16 weeks during the fall of 2021, 12 students from the University of Illinois College of Media came together to research and produce 19 video biographies to honor the men represented in the Spurlock Museums’ “Sewn in Memory” exhibition. The student’s produced 11 short films but were unable to discover the identities and/or sufficient verifiable facts for eight men to move forward with production of their biographies. These men’s stories remain untold.

00:29 Owen Henderson, Producer

When we talk about the queer community, very rarely do we talk about the queer people who live in rural areas, and what it's like to live there now, let alone what it was like to live there in the 80s and 90s. One of the panels I worked on was the panel for Grant Granger. This was a case where we did actually have a first and last name. And we still knew nothing. Didn't know who made the panel didn't know anyone who knew Grant. To know that you have this opportunity, and you have a name and you even have a last name and you still can't bring this person's story to life is just really, I think is heartbreaking.

01:19 Sydney Wood, Producer

I had David K. French, Benji and Mike. With David K French, we found his obituary, and I found other obituaries of people in his family. But there's not really a ton you can go off of when you're looking for people to talk to and you're only finding obituaries. I spent a lot of time trying to make connections. But as a journalist, I didn't want to make connections that I couldn't prove with 100% accuracy. So Benji. We know he's from Arcola, Illinois, and he went to our Arcola High School. Our team found where his tombstone was located and we also made a couple of Google searches and found the potential number to contact his mom. And we called a couple of times, and we didn't receive any responses. So that was another dead end. We worked on Mike, but there was just nothing. We didn't have a last name, we didn't have a panel maker. Mike is an incredibly common name. I was looking through some of the books from when the Memorial Quilt was in Washington, DC. There are columns and columns of names, just first names. Like you'll have 20 Stevens and no last name. And so we just couldn't find anything on him.

02:42 Gabriella Trani, Producer

With Chuck Harshbarger, we never did find much about him. It's sad to put his panel alongside other individuals that we did uncover things about.

02:52 Anisha Kasem, Produer

We weren't even sure that his last name was Hershberger for quite a bit of time. And then we drove to what we thought could have been his hometown. And we look through the cemeteries for like any Chuck or Charles Harshbarger.

03:06 Owen Henderson, Producer

These are people whose stories were ignored and downplayed for so long. So many people didn't talk about AIDS. So many people kind of pretended AIDS wasn't happening. So many people took the attitude like, “Well, these amoral, sinful gay men, this is their punishment.” And so many of their stories were lost.

03:39 Sydney Wood, Producer

People hear like the AIDS epidemic, they think New York, San Francisco, big cities. Washington, DC. But they don't think of Champaign-Urbana. And you know, father's partners, lovers, friends, sons, they all died. It's happened here and it's still here. It's not going away. That's just part of history.