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**NEW PODCAST 'GRAPPLE' GIVES VOICE TO PA. COMMUNITIES STRUGGLING UNDER SEVERE SOCIOECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PRESSURE**

**Philadelphia Pa** – Through personal narratives, in depth analysis and long form storytelling, new Keystone Crossroads podcast *Grapple* gives a voice to Pennsylvanians in the State's most distressed areas. Beginning September 21, 2016, Grapple lets listeners delve into the challenges of living and working in these once vibrant communities.

"You can hear both frustration and hopefulness in the voices of the individuals we interview," says Keystone Crossroads editor Naomi Starobin. "We talk to leaders and neighbors, teachers and shop owners about what's causing such tremendous decline in these former symbols of industrial excellence."

From Mahanoy in Schuylkill County to Chester in Delaware County, Grapple brings attention to the distress that both small towns and big cities across Pa. have been experiencing for years. Produced by public media initiative Keystone Crossroads, this series deeply explores the urgent challenges pressing upon so many in Pennsylvania.

Along with gripping storytelling, the 10 episode season includes breakout installments featuring leading economists, planners and entrepreneurs as well as experts and writers, like Planet Money co-founder Adam Davidson and New York Times Mid-Atlantic bureau chief Sheryl Gay Stolberg to bring the issues people are "grappling" with into a broader context.

"Our goal isn't to simply focus on pension deficits, empty factories and brain drain," says Starobin. "Just as importantly, we report on success stories of reinvention and on promising solutions, documenting this important moment when communities answer the question: Rust or revival?"

This season Grapple will feature Mahanoy in Schuylkill County, Chester and Millbourne in Delaware County, Hazelwood in Pittsburgh, Clairton in Allegheny County, and Scranton in Lackawanna County. Grapple's trailer and website can be found at:  
<http://www.keystonecrossroads.org/grapple>

The first episode will be available on **September 21, 2016** and can be found each **Wednesday** thereafter on Soundcloud, iTunes and Stitcher:  
<https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/grapple/id1151885032>,  
<http://www.stitcher.com/podcast/keystone-crossroads/grapple>, or  
<http://www.whyy.org/podcasts>.

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*Keystone Crossroads* reports on radio, Web, social media, television and newspapers, and through public events on topics like aging infrastructure, immigration, local government and tax policy. WHYY leads four public media newsrooms collaborating to provide in depth reporting on the root causes of our state's urban crisis.

WHYY advances civic life through storytelling, arts, education and civic dialogue. WHYY's multimedia outreach includes WHYY-TV, WHYY-FM, WHYY's award-winning online home for news and civic dialogue, NewsWorks.org and "off-air" community forums, artistic performances, lectures and media education programs through the Dorrance Hamilton Public Media Commons.

