



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 2019  
Listen UP! Media Release

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## **Area Catholic Sisters Spread Peace-Making Message**

Three poignant videos will begin circulating on social media and in movie theaters on March 8, thanks to area Catholic Sisters. Created in collaboration with the Azubuike African American Council on the Arts, the videos feature vignettes of discriminatory and potentially violent situations sparked by ignorance and fear. The situations are resolved by listening.

The campaign "Listen UP!" was created for National Catholic Sisters Week, March 8-14, 2019. Sponsored by Catholic Sisters of the Upper Mississippi River Valley (names below), the 60-second videos were directed and produced by Azubuike using local teenage and adult actors, and filmed in Davenport, Iowa at the Putnam Museum, Kwik Star, and Mid City High School and Rock Island High School in Illinois.

"We are delighted to share a message of listening with the wider community," Prioress Sandra Brunenn, Rock Island Benedictines, says. "*Listen* is the first word in St. Benedict's Holy Rule. We are called to put aside our own prejudices to listen deeply to one another. Through deep listening we can create peaceful community."

Sister Johanna Rickl, Vice President of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary says the message is meaningfully communicated thanks to creative assistance from Azubuike.

"We found a voice to help deliver the message of unity," she says. "Azubuike's mission is to reconcile racial divides and to spark a much larger conversation about race relations in the Quad Cities through the Arts. We are grateful to them and their actors and crew, many of whom are at-risk youth, for their help."

Sister Janice Cebula, President of the Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, says, "Too often we jump to conclusions about people we perceive as being different from us. We hope the videos will encourage viewers to stop to think about their own prejudices, value diversity and step out of their comfort zones."

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**Funding for “Listen UP!” comes from the following:**

Benedictine Sisters of St. Mary Monastery, Rock Island  
Congregation of the Humility of Mary, Davenport  
Dubuque Presentation Sisters  
Eldridge Carmelites  
Mercy Sisters West Midwest Community  
Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton  
Sisters of St. Francis, Dubuque  
Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dubuque  
Sisters of the Presentation, Dubuque  
Trappistine Sisters of Our Lady of the Mississippi Abbey  
Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters, Sinsinawa, Wisconsin  
Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, La Crosse, Wisconsin  
The Hilton Foundation