11/4 DISCUSSION GUIDE

Overview
Thank you for joining us for The American Dream in Wisconsin. We hope the following discussion questions will provide a framework for thinking and talking about this important subject. If you are watching the series online through Facebook Live, we encourage you to send your questions to our presenter through the Facebook discussion thread or post questions to Facebook or Twitter with #AmericanDreamWI and we will try to share them with the speaker and audience during the Q&A session. Or you can e-mail your questions to questions@wisconsinacademy.org.

Contact Wisconsin Academy associate director Jason A. Smith at jsmith@wisconsinacademy.org or call 608-263-1692 x21 with general questions about how to best view and share the American Dream in Wisconsin series broadcasts with libraries and discussion groups.

Guidelines
• Try to refer to specific points/perspectives from the talk at hand before you offer your own insights.
• Respect others’ rights to hold opinions and beliefs that differ from your own. When you disagree, challenge or criticize the idea, not the person.
• Listen carefully to what others are saying even when you disagree. Comments that you make should reflect that you have paid careful attention to the discussion.
• Be courteous. Don’t interrupt or engage in private conversations while others are speaking.
• Support and take responsibility for your statements. Use evidence and avoid generalization.
• Share responsibility for including all voices in the discussion. If you have much to say, try to hold back a bit; if you are hesitant to speak, look for opportunities to contribute.
• Recognize that we are all still learning. Be willing to change your perspective, and make space for others to do the same.

General Series Questions
• What does the American Dream mean to you?
• Does the American Dream unite or divide us?
• How has the American Dream changed during your lifetime; how has it remained the same?
• What do we all share as Americans that is central to the promise of the American Dream?

Whose Dream Is it? Questions
• Is there an archetypical American Dream? If so, what are some components of this dream and how does your experience align with them?
• Who or what (e.g. the President, mass media, prominent public figures) is responsible for articulating the contemporary version of the American Dream?
• What does liberty mean to you, and what role does it play in our shared American Dream?
• Can you think of an instance when differing versions of the American Dream might clash? How do you propose reconciling these versions?