

# Juliana Tafur

OBAMA SCHOLAR • FILMMAKER • TEDx SPEAKER • LISTEN COURAGEOUSLY CREATOR

Juliana Tafur is an Obama Scholar, an award-winning documentary filmmaker and the creator of the [Listen Courageously](#) movement and workshop series. With extensive experience in the production world, both as content executive for Discovery, and as producer on hundreds of hours for National Geographic, Facebook Watch, A&E, History and others, Juliana's documentary films use listening to foster human connection. As the founder of [Story Powerhouse](#) - a training organization using films to cultivate understanding - her workshops invite participants in the business sector, K-12 and higher ed institutions and nonprofits, to listen. Her award-winning documentary "[List\(e\)n](#)", which brings together Americans with opposing viewpoints and facilitates opportunities for them to connect across their differences, inspired the launch of Listen Courageously. Her work in this space recently led to a TEDx talk titled "[Listening Courageously Can Bridge What Divides Us](#)". Selected as a leader by the Obama Foundation Scholars Program, Juliana has been in residency at Columbia University's World Projects 2021-2022, as part of an initiative that brings together practitioners and academics to tackle some of the pressing issues of our time, and was named by former president Barack Obama as one of the rising leaders tackling the global phenomenon of misinformation and polarization during his recent keynote at Stanford.



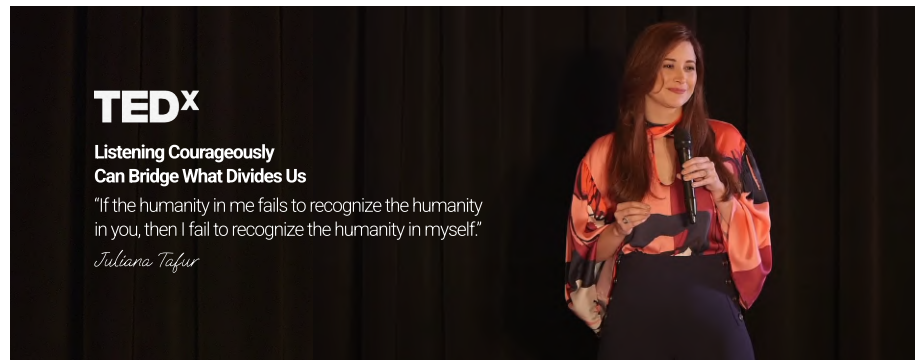
## As featured on



## TEDx talk

"How can we transform judgment to understanding? In a talk perfectly suited for our polarized times, Juliana Tafur invites us to listen courageously to create understanding across differences... A powerful talk, inspiring us to go past the surface, to see people - not as issues or labels - but as multidimensional beings."

[Watch the Ted talk](#) →



"Your TEDx talk is brilliant and beautiful, both as a call to action (listening), and a work of performance art. I trembled inside at times, listening to it. You have embodied a truth that I feel is so important: that the road out of our current cultural polarization is to learn and practice genuine curiosity toward those who are different for us, those who believe differently from us, those with whom we have built walls to avoid understanding."

DOAK BLOSS, ACTOR & SOCIAL JUSTICE FACILITATOR

"I loved this framework for listening courageously: curious and non-judging listening to understand without ego. A simple formulation, but difficult because of emotions and the conditioning of us against them. Your dad was right that each of us is our own universe, but as long as we are disconnected and separated, othering will always occur."

DAVID SIMAS, PRESIDENT, OBAMA FOUNDATION

## Past speaking engagements



## Speaking topics:

- As a Colombian-American woman, she shares her personal journey from judgement to understanding, and how "othering" hurts us all.
- She talks about her award-winning film "Listen", with specific success stories of listening across differences, as seen through the film participants in her documentary.
- She lays out the conditions necessary for courageous listening, including staying genuinely curious and fully present, while withholding ego and judgment.
- She emphasizes the importance of understanding people's identities and stories, and how this is the first step to combating the "us vs. them" mentality that doesn't serve us, but hurts us.
- She invites us to explore different ways to have conversations that are heart-centered, highlighting the importance of vulnerability, empathy and intellectual humility.
- She allows us to acknowledge that we all have listening blocks, and that we must let go of the shame associated with that, to move forward in our individual journeys, and as a society.

