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Queens College Promotes Cross-Cultural Dialogue

The Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding (CERRU) and the office of the president of Queens College announced today that they will co-host CERRU's First Annual Innovation Exchange: Re-Imagining America on December 12 in LeFrak Concert Hall from 4 p.m. until 9 p.m. There will be a Kosher and Halal Buffet/Networking Hour, from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. Given the enormous diversity of Queens College and the borough, CERRU's Innovation Exchange will offer participants a rich opportunity to celebrate innovation, foster cross-cultural networking, and inspire change within the Queens community and beyond.

"Diversity is key to fostering innovation and, as one of the most diverse colleges in the nation, QC is in a unique position to champion social innovation," CERRU Assistant Director Steven Appel said.

At this unprecedented event, 12 social innovation leaders from government, the nonprofit and social entrepreneurship sectors, the arts, and education will each speak for 12 minutes. Among the innovators is Elspeth Gilmore, Executive Director of Resource Generation (RG), a national nonprofit that organizes young people with financial wealth to leverage their resources and privilege for social change. Herself a member of the One Percent, Gilmore is working to increase taxes on the rich, and has been featured by such national media as MSNBC, WNYC, "Marketplace" (American Public Media) and Town and Country magazine. Her topic is "Re-Imagining the One Percent: Young People with Wealth Reinventing Our Role in Social Change."

Other presenters, including some of Queens College's own innovators, and their topics are:

- Epic Theatre Ensemble Co-Founder and Executive Director Ron Russell, "Reimagining the Role of Theater in Civic Engagement".
- QC Center for Teaching and Learning Pedagogical Technologist Rob Garfield, "Games as Integrated Problem Sets in Trans-Disciplinary Education".
- Mycelium School for Social Enterprise Founder Matthew Abrams, "Regenerative Entrepreneurship".
- Queens College Center for Jewish Studies and CERRU Director Mark Rosenblum, "Hope without Illusion: A New Model for Teaching the Middle East".
- George Lewis, photographer and painter, former Court Painter to Sultan of Oman, "Empathy and Art".
- Elan Magazine Founder Moniza Khokar, "Technology and Cross Cultural Understanding: The New Global Youth Frontier".
- Immigration Advocacy Matters Founding Director Alexandra Ruiz, "The Power of Dialogue in Immigrant Integration".
- Queens College Provost James Stellar, "The Brain, Experiential Education, and Tolerance".
- Queens Borough President's Office Immigrant and Intercultural Affairs Community and Cultural Coordinator Susie Tanenbaum, "Diversity Innovation Within Government".
- Queens College Hillel Director Uri Cohen, "Peer Networks: A Catalyst for Jewish Engagement".

Social media will play a crucial role at this event. Suggestions solicited from the audience will be displayed on a projector screen; videos from the exchange will be posted on CERRU's Web site and other social media to create an online space for inspiring innovation.

Those who wish to attend should RSVP events@cerru.org. For more information visit www.cerru.org.

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