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New Racial Justice Movement Emerges Post-911

Activists and Academics Gather at National Conference on Race and Public Policy

Berkeley, CA — In the three years since the September 11 attacks, communities of color in the US have faced a resurgence of racial profiling, unequal education and repressive immigration policies. In this political climate, however, there has emerged a new “racial justice movement” that has won local and statewide policy victories that promote racial equity. Community activists, policy advocates and academics are gathering to discuss the future of the racial justice movement at a conference on Race and Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley, November 11-13, 2004.

The conference is cosponsored by the Applied Research Center (ARC), the Center for Social Justice at Boalt Law School—UC Berkeley, the Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity, and the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law.

“This will be the first conference about racial justice to follow to presidential elections,” said **Tammy Johnson**, Director of the ARC’s Race and Public Policy program. “It is an opportunity for the movement to assess the possibilities for policy victories in 2005.”

Policy workshops at the conference will highlight the work being done around the country to defeat or curtail legislation that has negatively impacted Asian, Arab, Black, and Latino communities in the wake of September 11. Local organizing efforts have established hate-free zones to protect immigrant communities, have developed new multiracial alliances, and have won local pledges of non-compliance with discriminatory federal laws.

In time for next year’s 40th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, the conference will also be a venue for discussing the status of voting rights today based on the experiences of the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, as well as recent efforts to expand the franchise to formerly incarcerated people and to immigrants.

Featured speakers include **Tavis Smiley**, host of *The Tavis Smiley Show* from NPR, and *Tavis Smiley* on PBS, **Jacqueline A. Berrien**, Associate Director of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, **Maria Blanco**, Executive Director of the California Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights of the Bay Area, and **john powell**, Executive Director of the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.

“Whoever wins the election, communities of color have to be prepared to defend and expand their rights,” said Johnson. “But it will take innovative public policies to achieve racial justice for the long term.”

Call Rinku Sen, Communications Director, to arrange interviews.

For more information on logistics and conference agenda, visit: www.arc.org.

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