Columbia Provides Office Space to Small Business Disaster Relief Centers

By LAUREN MARSHALL

In response to the ripple effect on the New York City economy after the World Trade Center attack, a coalition of regional institutions, the University of St. Thomas, Columbia's School of Journalism, and the New York Times, provided small businesses with office space to help them deal with the business downturn.

Panelist Louis Cristillo, a researcher at the The Muslim Community, said that the work in the media and from schools on speak to the subject of Muslims in New York and specifically, on the Dutch and Muslims have experienced since the WTC attacks. He hoped teachers could help students understand their perception of diverse ethnic and religious groups. "The ethnic diversity of Muslims in the U.S. and in New York City cannot be overemphasized," Cristillo told the teachers. "Muslims here represent other countries of origin, many are not Arab, speak English and have a majority in their native countries." Cristillo said Muslims themselves are often caught in the range of diversity between Muslims in New York, and that such respect and understanding should be considered in the classroom.

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While Columbia Institution at Real Estate responded by reaching out to the affected area office space free of charge for as long as it is needed, more than 200 small businesses students have volunteered to disseminate information on a grant to help small businesses that have not been destroyed but have been hurt by the Sept. 11 attack. Carole Bourscheidt, president of the Alliance for the Arts, a non-profit arts advocacy and educational organization in New York. As a billion industry, theater must continue to lead their students through the increasingly complex maze of current religious, geographical and political issues.

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