Dear Colleague:

UC Davis has recently become a member of Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life (IA). Initiated by the Davis Humanities Institute and the Center for the Study of Regional Change, UC Davis’s membership in IA provides access to a national consortium of colleges and universities committed to public scholarship in the arts, humanities, and design. (For details about public scholarship, go to www.imaginingamerica.org.) The consortium was established at the University of Michigan in 2001, and is now hosted by Syracuse University. While the President or Chancellor of each member campus appoints one or two representatives to Imagining America, its activities and benefits are available to all.

Imagining America acts at individual institutional and national consortium levels. For individual member institutions, IA serve as a knowledge resource for all faculty and students of member institutions. IA consults on planned or existing projects, programs, and curricula. IA “matchmakes” for faculty seeking advice, model programs, or potential partners. Any faculty or student may contact the IA office with requests for assistance (ImaginingAmerica@syr.edu).

The IA annual national conference, open to all, offers a unique opportunity for public scholars and artists to come together to encounter new ideas, advance projects, and invigorate practice and thinking. This year, the conference will be held October 2-4th, in Los Angeles. Sessions and proposals are complemented by site visits. Our regional meetings, held in different locations over the course of the academic year, offer geographically proximate universities and colleges the opportunity to discuss regional issues and challenges to public scholarship. The meetings also encourage collaboration between member institutions.

Critical Exchange Grants are seed monies for which you are eligible to apply. They are intended to catalyze partnerships between member institutions, or to support members as they learn from each other’s programming, curricula, or project. The call for applications for these grants is issued annually in the fall, with an early December deadline. We will distribute this call to you; you may also contact the IA office for information (315-443-8590) or visit the IA website.

PAGE (Publicly Active Graduate Education) is our program for graduate students. PAGE runs an annual Summit, offers conference fellowships to IA’s national conference, mentoring and occasional publication opportunities. For more information on the PAGE program, contact PAGE director Kevin Bott at kevinbott@nyu.edu.

At the national level, Imagining America brings its collective weight to bear on the place and value of public scholarship.
within the academy. The **Tenure Team Initiative on Public Scholarship**, a multi-year research project, is articulating a broad understanding of the university’s public mission and its impact on expanding scholarly and creative practices in the cultural disciplines. Its final report, due out this spring, will make recommendations for the evaluation of public scholarship for tenure and promotion. The project will then move to implementing its findings at participating member campuses this fall.

The **Curriculum Project** is Imagining America’s approach to the growing number and influence of higher education-based programs for community artists. As the field has grown, so has the need for assessing how we educate community arts practitioners, and how we may effectively embody the field’s commitments to scholarship, training, and engagement. This project is currently at the research stage, with a final report to be released this fall.

You may learn more about IA’s work, view examples of the publicly-engaged arts and scholarship at our other member campuses, and learn more about participating by visiting [www.imaginingamerica.org](http://www.imaginingamerica.org). IA’s telephone number is 315-443-8590.

At UC Davis, the Davis Humanities Institute and the Center for the Study of Regional Change have launched a joint initiative called the Art of Regional Change (ARC). ARC seeks to engage the arts and humanities with the social and environmental sciences to explore and re-envision regional identities and sustainability. ARC provides resources for diverse constituents of particular regions to tell and share stories about their engagement with economic, social and environmental changes in their communities.

ARC’s pilot project, Up from the Understory, is a multi-media project through which youth document community engagement in the revitalization of the economy and forests in the “Blue Mountain” region of northeastern Calaveras County. To learn more, visit [http://upfromtheunderstory.blogspot.com/](http://upfromtheunderstory.blogspot.com/). Funding for Up from the UnderStory is provided by the California Council for the Humanities, UC Davis Outreach and International Programs, the College of Humanities Arts and Cultural Studies and the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

A celebration of the UnderStory will be held on June 4 from 4-6pm in MU II. We hope you can join us. For more information see: [http://dhi.ucdavis.edu](http://dhi.ucdavis.edu) or [http://regionalchange.ucdavis.edu](http://regionalchange.ucdavis.edu).

Please contact us with any questions or with expressions of interest to engage in the Art of Regional Change and Imagining America.

Most sincerely,

Carolyn de la Peña, Director, Davis Humanities Institute
Jonathan London  Director, UC Davis Center for the Study of Regional Change