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Thursday, January 22
7:30 pm

**Building the Solidarity Economy in the Northeast US
Visions, Practices & Strategies**

Pasqualino Colombaro, Michael Menser & Nancy Romer

Since its formulation in the 1970s, the solidarity economy framework (SE) has sought to connect existing non-capitalist and anticapitalist economic forms so as to construct an alternative economy while simultaneously undermining and transforming capitalism in its various forms. Beginning in South America, it has spread across the globe and now includes national networks in over 80 countries: from Europe to West Africa to Southeast Asia and, since last year, the US. In this session, organizers and researchers from the US Solidarity Economy Network will discuss existing practices in the US, and the kind of politics required to to democratize the local and regional economies in the US and make them anti-racist, feminist and ecologically sustainable. Particular focus will be on the labor movement, social forums, food, and participatory budgeting and organization strategies in the current "Obama/Meltdown" moment.

Pasqualino Colombaro is a founder of the Global Economic Alternatives Network (GEAN) which seeks to establish contacts with "best" alternative economic practices in the social/solidarity economy (including agricultural, union and governmental experiences) in the US, France and Italy. GEAN is organizing three workshops at this year's World Social Forum in Belem, Brazil.

Michael Menser is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Environmental Studies Brooklyn College. Among his most recent publications are "Disarticulate the State! Maximizing Democracy in "New Autonomous Movements in the Americas" and "Transnational Participatory Democracy in Action: the Case of La Via Campesina." He is a member of the coordinating committee of the US Solidarity Economy Network and has participated in Social Forums at the global, national, and local levels since 2001.

Nancy Romer is a professor of Psychology at Brooklyn College, Executive Director of the Brooklyn College Community Partnership, and is on the Executive Committee of the Professional Staff Congress (the faculty union at CUNY). A longtime member of the Park Slope Food Coop (now the largest Food Coop in the US), she is organizing the Brooklyn Food Conference: Local Action for Global Change taking place on May 2, 2009.

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