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***In Her Kitchen: Culinary Talents of Immigrant Women to Be Showcased
In Cooking Videos Screening and Food Tasting on December 4th, 2019
This public event is a collaboration of In Her Presence and Maine College of Art***

PORTLAND, MAINE - On Wednesday, December 4th, at 4:30 pm, cooking videos of seven immigrant women preparing their most treasured recipes will be screened at Maine College of Art (MECA), Osher Hall, 2nd floor, 522 Congress Street, Portland. A tasting of the dishes in the videos will follow from 5 - 7 pm. On hand will be the immigrant women who participated in the project - a partnership of the ***In Her Presence*** non-profit and MECA - and the MECA student filmmakers who made the videos. The screening and tasting event is open to all members of the public.

This will be the second iteration of the In Her Kitchen partnership. “After last year’s successful community dinner, the staff of the ***Cafe @ Meca*** is once again looking forward to hosting the culminating event this year. Working with the chefs and founders of In Her Presence and the participating students was a highlight from last year that we look forward to repeating,” said Pam Ryder, Cafe Manager.

“Maine College of Art appreciates the opportunity to partner with ***In Her Presence***, which is doing so much to empower women and girls from minority communities in Maine,” said Amelia Garretson-Persans, the MECA faculty behind the In Her Kitchen project. “We encourage the Portland community to join us on December 4th to get to know the chefs behind the recipes, experience their delicious dishes, and gain insight into cultures from all over the world.”

Claudette Ndayininahaze, co-founder with Abusana Micky Bondo, ***In Her Presence***, said, “We are thrilled to be able to share the talents of some of the remarkable women from In Her Presence. We hope this series will help them raise their visibility in the community and achieve their personal ambitions.”

Among the chefs and recipes showcased in the videos is Lydie, who came to Maine from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Lydie spends her time cooking for large groups of people at different events in the Portland area. Eugenie, another featured chef, when asked for any advice to share, said “You need to learn from others and you need to also share the skills you have so others can take it.”

Each year, Maine College of Art partners with a local nonprofit organization on a public engagement project designed to benefit the community. This year, students are working with seven female chefs from

the local organization *In Her Presence* to create engaging recipe videos that combine the talents of both the students and chefs involved. Both parties benefit from this project, the students being able to learn and create videos while simultaneously being exposed to new cultures, while the chefs from *In Her Presence* are given a platform to educate others on their cultures as well as voice their goals.

When asked what it was like to be a part of a project like this, student Bridget Foner said “It’s a life changing experience, being able to meet with these women I would not be able to meet with normally and experiencing their culture through cooking.”

For updates on the project, visit inherkitchen.org or follow them on Instagram (@in.her.kitchen). To RSVP to the screening and tasting (RSVP recommended) email agarretson-persans@meca.edu. There is a suggested donation of \$10 for this event to benefit In Her Presence.

About *In Her Presence*

In Her Presence is created by and for women from minority communities in Maine. Through increased educational opportunities and providing access to knowledge through high level training, the nonprofit’s goal is to empower more women and girls to reduce systems of inequity, to advocate for themselves and their families, understand, analyze and assess the impact of racial injustices and learn tools to combat inequities. (www.inherpresence.org)

About Maine College of Art (MECA)

Founded in 1882, Maine College of Art is located in the heart of downtown Portland's thriving Arts District. It offers a [Bachelor of Fine Arts](#) in 11 studio majors (including [Animation & Game Art](#)), [Master of Fine Arts](#) in Studio Art, [Master of Arts in Teaching](#), and the [Salt Graduate Certificate in Documentary Studies](#), as well as [Pre-College](#) and [Continuing Studies](#) programming. Visit the [Institute for Contemporary Art](#) (ICA) at MECA, the [Bob Crewe Gallery](#), and the [Joanne Waxman Library](#) at Maine College of Art, 522 Congress Street, Portland, Maine 04101, Tel. (207) 669-5521 (www.meca.edu).

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