New Jersey’s Bengali community leaders join the faculty and students of Rutgers University to launch the **Bengali Language and Culture Initiative (BLCI)**.

You and your family and friends are invited to a lunch on December 2, 2006 at 12:30 PM in Brower Commons, Faculty Dining Hall, 145 College Avenue, Rutgers University campus, New Brunswick


The purpose of the lunch is to
- to raise community awareness of BLCI and the Bengali program at Rutgers
- seek your advice and support (financial and voluntary activities)
- raise an initial fund to support the Initiative

To learn more about the BLCI and the Bengali Program at Rutgers, please read the leaflet enclosed.

**Current Rutgers Program and Future Needs**

The South Asian Studies Faculty and the Director of Rutgers International Programs are very supportive of expanding the program. However, Rutgers is facing significant budgetary shortfalls and funding increase for the Bengali program is not likely in the near future. The formation of BLCI is the first step towards an effort in expanding and creating a sustainable program with adequate resources and funding.

**About BLCI**

The purpose of BLCI is to forge community/university collaboration and promote perpetuation of Bengali language and culture in NJ where a large number of second-generation Bengali-speaking students live and attend Rutgers, the State University of NJ. It is estimated that over one hundred thousand Bengali-speaking people live in NJ and surrounding areas. Clearly this large Bengali community can help enrich the students’ learning experience with various cultural and social interactions and events. This kind of effort already exists at Rutgers for other ethnic groups.

At this nascent stage, BLCI is very encouraged by many local Bengali organizations and community leaders who have already pledged their full support and financial commitment.

**RSVP:** Please call anyone from the list below to learn more about BLCI and to confirm your lunch attendance. The cost of the lunch is $25 per person.

*Dr. Sumit Guha : 732 932-1870 email: sguha@history.rutgers.edu*

*Dr. Dipak Sarkar: 732 932-1529 email: sarkar@aesop.rutgers.edu*

*Nadia Hussain: email: snhuss@EDEN.RUTGERS.EDU*