

## Renowned Korean-American Concert Pianist Elizabeth Joy Roe to Perform Benefit Recital at the Carnegie Institution of Washington this December 17

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Washington, DC - Elizabeth Joy Roe, one of the nation's foremost young concert pianists, will play a benefit recital at the Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1530 P Street, NW, on Thursday, December 17, at 8 pm to support the Esperanza Education Fund, a community-financed college scholarship for immigrant students in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

**Tickets available at [www.esperanzafund.org](http://www.esperanzafund.org).**

Hailed as “brilliant” by The New York Times; “electrifying” by The Dallas Morning News; and “an artist to be taken seriously” by The Chicago Tribune, Roe—a graduate of the Juilliard School and a Steinway Artist—has appeared on the BBC, NPR and MTV, and has performed in concert halls in New York, Paris, Seoul and around the world.

“We are honored and grateful to have one of the nation’s finest pianists join our efforts to provide educational opportunities,” said Alvaro Bedoya, Chair of the Esperanza Education Fund’s Board of Advisors. “It is through collaborations, commitment and grassroots efforts like this that we are able to help advance our community,” added Bedoya.

The Esperanza Education Fund is the only capital region scholarship that openly serves all immigrant students regardless of their ethnicity, national origin, or immigration status.

Immigrants in the area are three times more likely to lack a high school diploma than their native-born peers, and 50 percent more likely to have never gone to college.

Because of the special need that Esperanza fills in the region, the all-volunteer group has quickly gained the support of prominent national and regional donors, including Paul & Daisy Soros, founders of the Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans, the District of Columbia’s Mayor’s Office on Latino Affairs (OLA), and the Inter-American Development Bank through its D.C. Solidarity Program. In the five months after its founding in December 2008, Esperanza raised and distributed \$50,000 in scholarships. These were awarded to six high school seniors, young immigrants hailing from Bolivia, India, Vietnam, Guatemala, St. Lucia and El Salvador. Esperanza aims to double the amount of scholarships it awards in 2010.

“My family came here with very little. We could not have afforded college. The Esperanza Fund was the difference between college being a reality—not just a dream,” said Vietnamese immigrant and Virginia resident Kha Tran, 20, who studies aerospace engineering at the University of Virginia with the support of a \$10,000 Esperanza scholarship. The son of two Vietnamese farmers, Kha obtained perfect scores on his math IB and SAT exams just two years after arriving in the U.S. Kha’s high school computer science professor described him as “one of the finest mathematical minds in the state.”

The piano concert on Thursday, December 17, will be followed by an open champagne reception in the Carnegie’s rotunda with music by the Peach String Quartet.

**To buy tickets and to learn more visit [www.esperanzafund.org](http://www.esperanzafund.org)**

If you are a member of the media and would like to attend or request an interview, please email [Alexander.lawrence.lin@gmail.com](mailto:Alexander.lawrence.lin@gmail.com)

Created in 2008, the **Esperanza Education Fund, Inc.** is a community-financed college scholarship founded by a diverse, all-volunteer group of young professionals in the capital region. Its mission is to increase the immigrant community’s access to higher education by harnessing the energy, resources, and initiative of the immigrant community itself. The Esperanza Education Fund offers scholarships to local immigrant students to attend public colleges and universities, regardless of ethnicity, national origin, or

immigration status. <http://www.esperanzafund.org/>

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