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World-Renowned Urbanist Richard Florida to Headline LGBTQ Alliance Symposium on Diversity and the Creative Economy

Laguna Beach LGBTQ Alliance yesterday

LAGUNA BEACH, Calif., April 10, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The Laguna Beach LGBTQ Heritage & Culture Alliance, along with Visionary Sponsor and real estate investment firm Laguna Beach Company, and Title Sponsor, Bank of America, today announced registration is open for [Diversity and The Creative Economy](#), a symposium featuring international best-selling Author and Urbanist Richard Florida. The symposium will be held on Monday, April 29, 2019 at Montage Laguna Beach from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and will provide a platform for community members, local business, civic, legislative, cultural and educational leaders to discuss how inclusion and creativity can foster economic mobility and prosperity for Orange County. A portion of the event's proceeds will be donated to Laguna Beach Pride 365, Club Q Laguna at Laguna Beach Seniors and The Blaze Bernstein Memorial Fund.

"Many people don't know what we mean by 'inclusive prosperity,'" said Chris Tebbutt, co-founder, Laguna Beach LGBTQ Heritage & Culture Alliance. "We want people to understand. We want them to be inspired by what's possible when our differences are truly honored and everyone feels like they belong. We want our communities to be excited about how taking specific actions can impact their bank accounts, from increased profits and home values to stronger service industries and talent retention. We want to take the word 'diversity' from being an elusive catchword to being a prosperous future with clear benefits to the economics, social vitality and well-being for everyone."

Keynote speaker Richard Florida is a researcher and professor at University of Toronto, a distinguished fellow at New York University's Schack Institute of Real Estate and a visiting fellow at Florida International University. He has penned several international best sellers, including the award winning *The Rise of the Creative Class* and his most recent book, *The New Urban Crisis*. He is a senior editor for *The Atlantic*, where he co-founded the online publication *CityLab*, for which he also serves as editor-at-large. An entrepreneur, he also is the founder of the [Creative Class Group](#) which works closely with companies and governments worldwide.

"My research has long suggested that tolerance and openness are key drivers of economic growth, I'm thrilled to join the LGBTQ Alliance in Laguna Beach and talk about the region's future for inclusive prosperity," said Richard Florida.

“Orange County is a tremendous place to live, work and do business and we can all play a role in attracting and retaining rich diverse talent in our creative and economic marketplace,” said Allen Staff, Orange County market president, Bank of America. “Diversity and inclusion helps make our company not just a great place to work, but also that the diversity of our employees – in age, thought, style, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture and experiences – makes us better positioned to serve our clients and drive business.”

The event will feature live musical performances from students at the Orange County School of the Arts, remarks by U.S. Congressman Harley Rouda, a keynote from Richard Florida and a panel discussion featuring Richard Florida, Chris Tebbutt, Mo Honarkar, CEO, Laguna Beach Company, and Alex Rhodes, Diversity & Inclusion executive at Bank of America. The event will be followed by a book signing and VIP roundtable.

“Compass is proud to be a partner in such an important initiative happening in Orange County as the message of the event is aligned with the fundamental values embraced by our company,” said Cari Young, Compass Managing Broker. “At Compass, belonging and inclusion are at the core of our mission to help everyone find their place in the world.”

General admission is \$125 and includes complimentary breakfast. Sponsorship opportunities are still available. For more information, visit <https://lagunabeachlgbtqalliance.org/tickets-sponsorship> or contact Chris Tebbutt at chris@lagunabeachlgbtqalliance.org.

About Diversity and the Creative EconomyLaguna Beach Company is the Visionary Sponsor, Bank of America is the Title Sponsor and Compass is the Book Signing Sponsor of the event. Additional symposium sponsors include Chris Tebbutt, Julie Laughton Design Build, Visit Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach School District, Siteline Productions and Catmosphere Laguna. Community Champions are Orange County School of the Arts, Laguna Beach Seniors, Laguna Beach Pride 365, City of Laguna Beach, Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach Community Clinic and Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce.

About Laguna Beach CompanyFounded by local Laguna businessman and entrepreneur Mo Honarkar, Laguna Beach Company is a real estate investment and development firm dedicated to developing visionary projects including the upcoming renovation of Hotel Laguna – a landmark jewel on the Southern California coast. The Laguna Beach Company team is passionate about ensuring that artists, students, local employees and long-time residents alike can continue to call Laguna Beach home while reviving revenue to local Laguna Beach businesses.

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