San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulín Cruz will speak at TEDxPittsburgh

"We think Pittsburgh's biggest export can be ideas, when it used to be steel."

The crowd settles into their seats at last year's TEDxPittsburgh. CHRIS SPROWLS / FLICKR
(HTTPS://WWW.FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/TEDXGRANDVIEWAVE/35457898625/IN/ALBUM-72157685350237545/)

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Editor's Note: The Incline *is a media partner of TEDxPittsburgh. Readers can use promo code INCLINE to get 10 percent off VIP and general admission tickets.*

Carmen Yulín Cruz, mayor of San Juan, Puerto Rico and Carnegie Mellon University alumna, will speak at TEDxPittsburgh in June, organizers announced.

"She's been on our radar for a while," said Chris Daley, the event's co-organizer, who added that Cruz both has a connection to Pittsburgh and can share a lesson that's relevant to here and to the rest of the world. She's been a champion of building a community — while also rebuilding it, Daley said.

In September, Cruz was under an international spotlight (http://triblive.com/local/allegheny/12791922-74/san-juan-mayor-targeted-by-trump-has-strong-ties-to-pittsburgh) after Hurricane Maria ravaged San Juan, and President Donald Trump tweeted that Cruz had "poor leadership ability." She responded by saying the goal was to save lives and to not be distracted from doing so.

Cruz last visited Pittsburgh earlier this month (http://www.post-gazette.com/local/city/2018/04/02/Rosana-Guernica-Puerto-Rico-fundraiser-filmmakers-documentary-hurricane-maria-cmu/stories/201804020048), when she attended a fundraiser for relief flights to Puerto Rico, led by CMU junior Rosana Guernica. She also spoke at a forum during CMU's Energy Week, which was also part of the city's Inclusive Innovation Week, the *Post-Gazette* reported.

During that visit, Cruz told *TribLive* that Trump continued to neglect Puerto Rico (http://triblive.com/local/allegheny/13474264-74/san-juan-mayor-blasts-trump-federal-puerto-rican-relief-effort-in-return) after it was ravaged by Hurricane Maria.

> "He (Trump) has turned his back on the Puerto Rican people, and by doing so … that image of the president throwing paper towels at us will continue to go around the world."
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> …."I don't know what's worse: if he doesn't get it, or if he doesn't care," continued Cruz, who lived in Squirrel Hill, Shadyside and Bethel Park from 1984 to 1992. "Fortunately for us, the American people are totally different and have a totally different heart.
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> "And they've really made sure that we feel with their actions that we're not alone."

It's a small world

The theme of the 2018 TEDxPittsburgh is "small worlds."

"They say Pittsburgh is a small world," yet people from all fields tend to get tunnel vision in their area of expertise, Daley said. But it turns out there are many connections and overlap between different fields.

"The whole reason that we do [TEDxPittsburgh] is we think Pittsburgh's biggest export can be ideas, when it used to be steel," he said.

TEDxPittsburgh is an opportunity to learn about the newest ideas and innovations through one of the oldest forms of communication: a speaker, their idea, and a crowd, he said.

Often, speakers talk about an idea for the first time or about something that's not known outside their industry, Daley said. The event features speakers from a variety of fields including tech, entertainment and design and a majority are either Pittsburghers or have a connection to the city.

It also includes performers and an interactive innovation showcase, as well as time for attendees to chat and start thinking about putting their own ideas into action. Watch highlights from TEDxPittsburgh 2017 here. (https://www.facebook.com/plugins/video.php?href=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FTEDxPittsburgh%2Fvideos%2F1582679528493288%2F&show_text=0&width=560)

This year, Cruz will be accompanied by speakers including:

- Darieth Chisolm, cyber civil rights activist and filmmaker
- Courtney Ehrlichman, transportation policy maker
- Leon Ford, author and advocate for improving community-police relations
- Jackie Gartner-Schmidt, voice specialized speech-language pathologist
- Samir Lakhani, social entrepreneur and soap-recycler
- Dominique Luster, archivist
- Carola Neumann, breast cancer researcher and research advocate
- Aradhna Oliphant, leadership evangelist
- Curtiss Porter, writer, educator and griot
- Ashley Priore, chess enthusiast

If you go

Tickets, which go on sale at 9 a.m. today (https://trustarts.org/production/59723/tedxpittsburgh-2018), are $35 for general admission, which includes all-day access and lunch, and VIP are $60 and also include networking with speakers and a wine toast and light appetizers, as well as a one-year partners membership (https://trustarts.org/pct_home/support/membership/member-benefits) to the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust that includes early access to select tickets, discounts to participating restaurants, and invites to cast parties.

For attendees who can't afford the ticket price, email organizers (mailto:info@tedxpittsburgh.org) or text 412-897- 2988 to arrange a pay-what-you-can option. Student scholarships (http://TEDxPittsburgh.org/student) are also available.

[Discover new ideas at TEDxPittsburgh (https://theincline.com/2018/04/18/discover-new-ideas-at-tedxpittsburgh/)](https://theincline.com/2018/04/18/discover-new-ideas-at-tedxpittsburgh/)

Hear from Pittsburghers and speakers with a connection to the city from a variety of fields, including tech, entertainment and design. TEDxPittsburgh also will highlight performers and an interactive innovation showcase, as well as time for attendees to chat and start thinking about putting their own ideas into action. *(Use promo code INCLINE to get 10 percent off VIP and general admission tickets.)*

WHERE: Byham Theater at 101 Sixth St. (Downtown)

WHEN: June 16, 2018 from 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

HOW MUCH: $35 general admission │ $60 VIP

Find out more
On Pittsburgh Cultural Trust [(https://trustarts.org/production/59723/tedxpittsburgh-2018)](https://trustarts.org/production/59723/tedxpittsburgh-2018)