

# REDDIT RELIEF

## Reddit co-founder donates to future Queens techies

BY LIAM LA GUERRE  
lguerre@queenscourier.com  
@liamlaquerre

Alexis Ohanian, the co-founder of social networking and news site Reddit, may get tons of karma points for his dedication to the Queens tech community.

Ohanian is raising thousands of dollars with a crowdfunding site and through donations at his 31st birthday party for the tech nonprofit Coalition for Queens, which offers classes that teach coding to adults from communities that are traditionally underserved in the technology industry — such as women, minorities and immigrants — as part of its Access Code program.

The goal of the initiative is to foster the Queens tech industry by preparing Queens residents to become developers to work in companies or launch their own startups. The money will go to partial and full scholarships for students in the program, according to the Coalition.

"All I want for my 31st birthday is a new class of Queens natives to carry on the spirit of the internet age and have the skills they need to succeed," Ohanian posted on the crowdfunding site.



THE COURIER/Photo by Liam La Guerre  
Co-founder of Reddit Alexis Ohanian will make significant donations to the Coalition for Queens.

ing site.

Ohanian has personally donated \$1,000, and on his birthday on April 24, he will throw a party for the Coalition,

asking residents to donate to the program instead of bringing him gifts, said Jukay Hsu, founder of the nonprofit coalition.

Ohanian started a campaign on Crowdfunder for the program and has raised more than \$8,200 as of print time. He promised that anyone who donates more than \$150 will get an autographed copy of his best-selling book, "Without Their Permission." Also, the person who donates the most money will have the opportunity to have dinner with Ohanian in Queens.

The program costs a hefty \$10,000 for each student. Coalition officials had 21 students enrolled in the inaugural group last year but are not sure how many students they'll take on this year as yet.

"It's really an honor that Alexis Ohanian, a prominent and established tech entrepreneur and investor, is interested in donating funds and his birthday to Coalition for Queens," Hsu said. "This is a testament to the talent of Queens residents and the potential for them to create great tech companies."

The site will collect donations until Ohanian's birthday. Anyone who wishes to donate can visit <http://bit.ly/c4qilt2014>.



## BREWING UP FUN IN QUEENS

BY ANGY ALTAMIRANO  
aaltamirano@queenscourier.com  
@aaltamirano28

The city will raise a toast to Queens in the borough's inaugural beer week starting Friday.

Since 2009, more than half of the city's breweries have opened up in Queens, with a total of seven breweries in the borough, according to Astoria resident Dan Bronson, organizer of the first annual Queens Beer Week.

The nine-day event, which begins Friday, April 18, and runs through Sunday, April 27, celebrates the best beers, bars and breweries the borough has to offer. Queens Beer Week will bring together over 60 bars and restaurants for a week of promoting the rapidly growing craft beer scene.

"We thought it was time that Queens got its own beer week to share its own achievements," Bronson said. "We thought it was time to have a week of our own."

On Friday, the borough's newest brewery, Transmitter, will make its debut at Crescent and Vine, located at 25-03 Ditmars Blvd. in Astoria.

The official kick-off for Queens Beer week will take place during an open invitation party, 21-years and older and no tickets needed, from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at Singlecut Beer Smith, at 19-33 37th St.

The Taste of Queens party will feature all of the borough's breweries, local vendors, music, and the debut of the event's exclusive "Queen of Tarts" ale from Barrier Brewing Company.

Queens Beer Week will then continue with a week of more than 40 innovative beer-centric events, spread across the borough, including event pairings of beer, wine, chocolate and music.

"It is a great week to go explore the bars and breweries in Queens," Bronson said.

For more info on participating venues and up-to-date notifications of events going on during Queens Beer Week, visit [www.queensbeerweek.com](http://www.queensbeerweek.com) or follow @QueensBeerWeek on Twitter.

## Queens priest seeks to preserve ancient language

BY ERIC JANKIEWICZ

The Rev. Joseph Palackal saves more than souls. The parochial vicar at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in Maspeth is trying to save the ancient language of Aramaic, said to be spoken by Jesus and early Christians.

This summer he plans to revisit the unlikely home of the last Aramaic speakers — in the southern Indian state of Kerala, where many Christians trace the origin of their faith to Thomas the Apostle.

"Few people know this, but up until recently Christian Indians held religious services in the ancient language Aramaic," Palackal said.

He explained that since the 1960s the churches in India held mass in the ancient language that much of the Middle East spoke in the early Christian years. Much like Latin, the spoken language has since faded into history.

"In Kerala, the language was kept in a time capsule," he said, explaining that Christians in Kerala, unlike those in the Middle East, weren't persecuted



THE COURIER/Photo by Eric Jankiewicz

and could thus speak the language freely. "And so I've been trying to record as many people as possible who have knowledge of the language."

The trick, Palackal said, is finding people who were born no later than the

1950s and attended the local church, where Aramaic was used for songs and worship. People born after that time wouldn't have been exposed to the language because the church adopted the local language of Malayalam.

"So it is a very time-sensitive project and I have to hurry before all those who remember the language are gone," Palackal said, explaining that he tracked down Indians who were part of the Syro-Malabar Church, the largest of the St. Thomas Christian denomination, which has its own forms of worship and theology. Many were able to sing the Aramaic religious songs of their youth.

Palackal hopes to have enough recordings of the language, which is preserved through religious song, to submit it to the Library of Congress.

And if he succeeds in his quest, the movie "The Passion of the Christ" won't be the only place where Aramaic is heard or appreciated.

"It's like a gold mine of musical melodies," he said. "And if I don't do it, no one else will. It will be a complete loss for humanity."



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