

## **Statement Against Anti-APIDA Racism and Sexual Violence and A Call for Solidarity to Fight for Human Rights**

March 25, 2021

**To our Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) Communities**, our Department of Asian American Studies (ASAM) at California State University, Fullerton acknowledges the pain and suffering caused by the shocking and horrifying shootings in Atlanta, Georgia on Tuesday, March 16. We send our deepest condolences to the communities, families, and friends of Daoyou Feng, Hyun Jung Grant, Sun Cha Kim, Paul Andre Michels, Soon Chung Park, Xiaojie Tan, Delaina Ashley Yaun, and Yong Ae Yue, and hope for Elcias Hernandez-Ortiz's survival.

For all of our community members who have both directly and indirectly experienced the brutality of anti-APIDA racialized and gendered violence, let us stand together and collectively process our pain, sadness, fear, and anger. First and foremost, we must take care of ourselves and our well-being, especially our mental, emotional, and physical health. May we find strength and solace together now and in the future, especially with our families, friends, communities, and allies.

For students, please consider contacting Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), <https://www.fullerton.edu/caps/>. For faculty and staff, please consider accessing our Employee Assistance Program, <https://hr.fullerton.edu/total-wellness/eap/>. If you feel able, report hateful acts, <https://stopaapihate.org/>. What impacts one of us, impacts all of us.

**To our Asian American Studies and APIDA Allies and people who want to help**, we ask you to join us in condemning the racialized, gendered violence that murdered eight people, including six women of Asian descent on March 16, 2021, and the spike of nearly 4,000 intentionally harmful racist acts against our community, particularly women, our elderly, and our children across the nation since March 2020. We thank you for your friendship, affirm our shared struggles, and acknowledge our collective humanity and fight for human rights. We appreciate your solidarity as we demand:

- an end to anti-Asian racism and violence;
- an end to elected and public leaders' intentional use of racist, anti-Asian language that scapegoats and blames APIDA communities for the COVID-19 pandemic and other social and political issues.

We shine the light on the murders of eight people, six of whom were women of Asian heritage, as the most recent episode of America's racist, white supremacist, and male-dominated efforts to maintain existing hierarchies of power and privilege. These thousands of acts of hatred and

violence demonstrate the ways that the intersection of racism and sexism creates an environment of hostility, violence, and terror for APIDA communities and all Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) communities and particularly for women.

**We ask you to educate yourselves, take Asian American Studies and Ethnic Studies classes, and share with others this pattern of violence as historical, familiar, and in our everyday lives.** Through an anti-immigrant lens, one part of America only sees APIDAs as the model minority, perpetual foreigner, diabolical Fu Manchus, deadly martial artist, dragon lady, tiger mother, submissive hypersexualized geisha, Asian food restaurateur, grocer, or math whiz. By viewing us as stereotypes to be ignored, overlooked, and silenced, we become heinously dehumanized, described as “temptations to be eliminated” rather than humans, mothers, grandmothers, daughters, sisters, and aunts who show up to work to make a better lives for our loved ones, and whose brutal deaths create immeasurable loss and trauma. **We ask you to join us to imagine and transform America, holding all of us accountable to ensure that all BIPOC communities in our nation are respected and valued, with affirmation, commitment, and practice of the fundamental human right for dignity, self-determination, life, liberty, and security of all oppressed communities.**

**We ask for your help to end APIDAs’ experience with colonization and violence**, which has a long and cyclical history both internationally and on American soil. This historical pattern of anti-Asian racism and violence includes the use of inflammatory racist language to create a hostile environment, resulting in racist exclusion acts and anti-immigrant policies, race riots, and lynchings, the overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani in 1893, the Philippine-American War of 1899-1913 and subsequent colonization until 1946, the internment of 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War, the ongoing militarization of the “first islands defensive chain” that stretches from Indonesia to Guam to Taiwan and Japan, the racist killings of Vincent Chin in 1982, of five Asian American children and wounding of 29 more in a Stockton, CA school in 1989, of Joseph Ileto in 1999, and tragically, of so much more. **Recognizing the ways that this anti-APIDA rhetoric is used to distract, manipulate and encourage anti-Asian racism and violence is the first step; subsequently speaking publicly, taking action, and devoting resources to check and stop this historical pattern must follow.**

We choose to respond to this violence with dialogue, education, consciousness-raising, and policy making in order to empower both our own transformation and the transformation of our communities. **We call for collaborating, with compassion and commitment, to dismantle the systems of oppression that impact all people.** As activist Grace Lee Boggs reminds, now is the time to grow our souls into more human beings.

Thank you for standing up in solidarity with us, and doing your part to be and make this change.

Sincerely, On behalf of the faculty of the Department of Asian American Studies

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