



## STATEMENT ON THE RISE OF ANTI-ASIAN VIOLENCE IN 2021

Penn APALSA and SALSA **once again condemn** the horrific surge in anti-Asian violence over the past several weeks and calls our greater community to action. Since the start of the pandemic, Asian people have been widely discriminated against as the source of the virus, and over 2,800 hate crimes against members of our communities have been reported.<sup>1</sup> During the first few weeks of 2021, this disturbing trend has not only persisted but worsened.<sup>2</sup> Alarming, many of these recent assaults have targeted some of the most vulnerable members of our communities: our elders.<sup>3</sup> Senior citizens of all races already bear a disproportionate risk during the pandemic. Now, our Asian elders – our grandparents, parents, aunts, and uncles – live in fear of a second pandemic: horrific, racist violence.

Anti-Asian racism is not new. Through the 19th and 20th centuries, Asian Americans were caricatured as disloyal: a “Yellow Peril” which informed racist laws and policies like the Chinese Exclusion Act and, Japanese internment.<sup>4</sup> Similar anti-South and anti-Southeast Asian sentiment manifested itself through atrocities like the Bellingham and Watson Race Riots and the more recent *Dotbusters* hate group. Tragically, these stories are untold and overlooked in American history, erasing our past and contributions to this country.

Today, we are simultaneously ignored and stereotyped as the “model minority.” This false designation erases our historical and contemporary struggle, insidiously divides racial minorities, and perpetuates anti-Blackness.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, the American

<sup>1</sup> Press Statement, Stop AAPI Hate, New Data on Anti-Asian Hate Incidents Against Elderly and Total National Incidents in 2020 (Feb. 9, 2021), <https://secureservercdn.net/104.238.69.231/a1w.90d.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Press-Statement-re-Bay-Area-Elderly-Incidents-2.9.2021-1.pdf> (“Between March 19, 2020 (when Stop AAPI Hate began collecting reports) and December 31, 2020, Stop AAPI Hate received over 2,808 firsthand accounts of anti-Asian hate from 47 states and the District of Columbia.”). See also Jill Cowan, *A Tense Lunar New Year for the Bay Area After Attacks on Asian-Americans*, N.Y. TIMES (Feb. 12, 2021), <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/12/us/asian-american-racism.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Morning Edition, *New Surge Of Violent Attacks Against Asian Americans In Bay Area*, NAT’L PUB. RADIO (Feb. 11, 2021), <https://www.npr.org/2021/02/11/966757154/new-surge-of-violent-attacks-against-asian-americans-in-bay-area>.

<sup>3</sup> New Data on Anti-Asian Hate Incidents, *supra* n. 1 (“Between March 19, 2020 and December 31, 2020, Stop AAPI Hate received 126 accounts of anti-Asian hate involving Asian Americans over 60 years old (7.3% of total incidents).”). See also Jada Chin, *Covid Fueled Anti-Asian Racism. Now Elderly Asian Americans Are Being Attacked*, WASH. POST (Feb. 9, 2021), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/02/09/attacks-asian-american-elderly/>.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Neil Gotanda, *New Directions in Asian American Jurisprudence* 17 ASIAN AM. L.J. 5 (2010). Policies like Japanese internment have been widely recognized as clearly objectionable, and as having “no place in law under the Constitution.” *Trump v. Hawaii*, 138 S.Ct. 2392 (2018) (Roberts, C.J.).

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., Pat Chew, *Asian Americans: The “Reticent” Minority and Their Paradoxes*, 36 WM. & MARY L. REV. 1 (1994); FRANK WU, *YELLOW: RACE IN AMERICA BEYOND WHITE AND BLACK* (2002).

zeitgeist steadfastly refuses to perceive Asian Americans as participants in the American story, continuously othering through erasure<sup>6</sup> and stereotyping,<sup>7</sup> or in more serious cases, false accusations of espionage<sup>8</sup> and terrorism.<sup>9</sup> While these depictions most frequently manifest themselves in cultural depictions (or lack thereof), they also are the root cause of decades of xenophobic and racist violence.

**In light of the surge in anti-Asian racism, we call upon our allies to stand in solidarity with the Asian American community and condemn these attacks. In this spirit, APALSA is launching a matching fundraiser to support AAPI social justice organizations listed below.** Organizations at both the local and national level are supporting AAPI communities across the nation to combat this newest surge of anti-Asian racism, which compounds the already deeply-felt difficulties of COVID-19. **If you are able, please consider donating** to these organizations to help ensure that their incredible support and services continue to reach AAPI communities during this critical time. APALSA commits to matching up to \$2,000 to maximize the impact of each dollar donated to these important causes. **(Please see below for specific instructions on how to donate to these organizations through APALSA's matching initiative.)**

Finally, we condemn *all* racism laid bare by COVID-19 and the enduring legacy of racist policing. We stand with other communities of color, and we refuse to scapegoat and demonize each other. We stand especially with our Black siblings in resistance to the racism that has pitted our communities against each other. We honor their leadership in fighting for equality and the eradication of white supremacy in our society and echo their calls for solidarity, justice and peace.

Our struggle to combat anti-Asian violence is inseparable from this broader movement seeking equality, and we are stronger when we all stand united. We ask for your support in amplifying the voices of our elders and drawing attention to this horrific pattern of violence largely underreported in the media, and we ask for your active allyship as we launch fundraising efforts to directly support our communities.

**Thank you for your support, empathy, and commitment.**

**Penn APALSA | Asian Pacific American Law Students Association**  
**Penn SALSA | South Asian Law Students Association**  
**Penn LALSA | Latinx Law Students Association**

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<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., Thad Morgan, *Casting White People in Asian Roles Goes Back Centuries*, HISTORY.COM (Feb. 25, 2019) (available at <https://www.history.com/news/yellowface-whitewashing-in-film-america>).

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., THE PROBLEM WITH APU (Hari Kondabolu, truTV, 2020).

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., Teresa Watanabe, *Is it police work or racial profiling? U.S. crackdown puts Chinese scholars on edge*, LOS ANGELES TIMES (July 22, 2019) (available at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-07-21/trump-china-racial-profiling-university-fbi-spy>).

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., *How Social Media Smeared a Missing Student as a Terrorism Suspect*, NPR NEWS (Apr. 18, 2016) (available at <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2016/04/18/474671097/how-social-media-smeared-a-missing-student-as-a-terrorism-suspect>).

**Penn BLSA** | Black Law Students Association  
**Penn Law Lambda** | LGBTQ+ Law Students Association  
**Penn Law MLSA** | Muslim Law Students Association

### **Fundraising Details:**

**To make a matched donation,** Venmo @Penn-APALSA with the description naming the organization you would like to donate to (e.g., “Stop AAPI Hate” or “Oakland Vietnamese CC”).

*We encourage you to go through the list of organizations listed below and specify which organization you would like to contribute to. This allows APALSA to meaningfully represent your personal wishes and interest in AAPI social justice. However, if you do not specify which organization you would like to donate to, APALSA will, at the very end of the fundraiser, gather, match, and send unnamed donations to the least donated-to organization within the organizations listed below.*

*We understand that we are asking for donations during a difficult time for many people, and we are very appreciative of your generosity in supporting Asian American social justice groups during this difficult time. Truly, any amount helps.*

*Penn APALSA commits to matching up to \$2,000 in donations.*

### **Report a Hate Crime: <https://stopaapihate.org>**

### **Organizations:**

- **Asian Law Caucus** <https://www.advancingjustice-alc.org/> (focuses on providing legal support to AAPIs, housing rights, labor rights, etc.)
- **Asian Pacific Environmental Network** <http://apen4ej.org/> (currently organizing and leading things in the Bay Area, where most of the elderly attacks occurred)
- **Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR)** <https://www.cair.com/> (advancing the civil rights and political engagement of American Muslims)
- **Filipino Community Center** <https://www.filipinocc.org/> (helping with actions in CA)
- **National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance** <https://www.nqapia.org/>
- **New Breath Foundation** <https://www.new-breath.org/> (helps deported and criminalized AAPIs)
- **Oakland Vietnamese Community Center** (community center that recently burned down and delivers 30k meals/month for elders and the poor)
  - [Oakland: Vietnamese American center damaged in 'devastating' fire \(mercurynews.com\)](https://www.mercurynews.com)
- **SALDEF (Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund)** <https://saldef.org> (advocating for Sikh American civil rights and legal protection)
- **South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)** <https://saalt.org/> (advocates for South Asian civil rights)
- **Stop AAPI Hate** <https://donate.givedirect.org/?cid=14711> (documenting and reporting anti-Asian hate crimes)