

Statement Condemning Anti-Asian Racism and Xenophobia

Dear College of Law Community,

The Asian Law Students Association ("**ALSA**") stands in solidarity with our peers, community, and leaders and are committed to denouncing the continuous rise of anti-Asian violence and racism. On the night of March 16, 2021, a white supremacist, armed with a gun, targeted Asian-owned spas in Atlanta and senselessly murdered eight people. Six of the victims were Asian women. While more details of the shooting are still unknown, the narrative painted by the media and law enforcement officials undermine what the attack was: **an anti-Asian hate crime**. We cannot ignore the background of this shooting which follows at least 3,800 *reported* incidents of hate crimes and assaults against Asians this past year.¹ Out of those reported incidents, Asian women experienced 2.3 times more violence than Asian men.² In 2021 so far, the group Stop AAPI Hate received 503 incidents reports – that's 6-7 incidents per day.³ Our condolences go out to the family and friends of all the victims of this shooting.

The Asian and Pacific Islander population in the U.S. has faced an appalling surge of hate crimes and violence amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic and fueled by the former administration. Discriminatory remarks used by the former president such as, "Kung Flu," "China Virus," and "Wuhan Virus" have escalated anti-Asian sentiments and xenophobia. The state-sanctioned rhetoric made us the targets of harassment and assaults and has largely been ignored. The daily interactions and discriminatory expressions, the increasingly violent and targeted white supremacist violence, and the history of labor exploitation, misogyny, and anti-Asian sentiment that is endemic to this nation have left us afraid for our safety and the safety of our families, friends, elders, and our community. The reality is that anti-Asian hate is present even in the Champaign-Urbana area and UIUC campus. Our Asian and Pacific Islander peers at the College of Law have reported incidents of derogatory remarks they've personally encountered while walking around *on campus* and at County Market including, "Ching chang chong" and "Go back home, Chino!" We carry the weight of fear, disbelief, anger, and pain even while doing daily, normal activities that most people don't think hesitate to do.

This is not the first time Asians in the U.S. have coped with state-sanctioned racism and alienation. Starting with the Page Act of 1875, the first law to restrict immigration specifically targeted against Asian women, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Japanese concentration camps during WWII, the My Lai Massacre of 1968 in Vietnam, the murder of Vincent Chin in 1982, and the xenophobic backlash against Arab-Americans, Muslims, Sikhs, South-Asian Americans communities after 9/11 including the "Muslim Ban" signed in 2017. The centuries long state-sanctioned discrimination against Asians and Pacific Islanders advances the message that Asians do not belong here. We have always been perceived as foreigners and potential threats while also, ironically, characterized as "model minorities". We are still navigating these opposing stereotypes today which have only served to divide us and constrain our identities. We belong here and as a fundamental human right, we deserve to feel safe.

Our community is in pain. During these difficult times, we call on our friends, peers, educators, and community to join us in solidarity. Check in on your Asian and Pacific Islander friends and colleagues. Learn about our history in the U.S., both the good and the bad, and learn about what

we have faced this past year. We have linked some resources below. Hate, xenophobia, and violence towards *any* individual in *any* form cannot be tolerated.

Resources:

- **Stop AAPI Hate report on COVID-19 sparked racism:**
<https://secureservercdn.net/104.238.69.231/a1w.90d.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/210312-Stop-AAPI-Hate-National-Report-.pdf>
- **Stop AAPI Hate:** <http://StopAAPIHate.org>
- **Stories told by the AAPI community organized by the Asian Americans Advancing Justice:** <https://www.standagainsthatred.org/stories>
- **Bystander Intervention Training organized by Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Chicago:** <https://www.advancingjustice-chicago.org/what-we-do/bystander-intervention-trainings/>
- **NAPABA Hate Crimes Task Force and Pro Bono Legal Resources:**
<https://www.napaba.org/page/HateCrimeResources>

In Solidarity,
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¹ Russell Jeung, Aggie Yellow Horse, Tara Popovic, & Richard Lim, *Stop AAPI Hate National Report*, STOP AAPI HATE, <https://secureservercdn.net/104.238.69.231/a1w.90d.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/210312-Stop-AAPI-Hate-National-Report-.pdf> (last visited Mar. 17, 2021).

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*