

APAN statement on anti-Asian racism – 4/5/2021

We, the members of Foothill College's Asian/Pacific American Network, are heartbroken, frustrated, and enraged with the increased anti-Asian racism taking place in our country.

The murders that took place in Atlanta were just one example of the escalated attacks on the Asian and Asian American community since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. These attacks, both verbal and physical, have taken place all over the nation, including the San Francisco Bay Area.

We recognize that the hate and violence directed towards Asians and Asian Americans are rooted in White supremacy and racism that has been historically produced by U.S. imperialism. Repeatedly, our community gets blamed for economic or health crises due to stereotypes that depict us as "perpetual foreigners", model minorities, spreaders of disease, and exoticized sexual objects. Furthermore, we are seen as a monolith rather than a multitude of diverse cultures. In 1875, the U.S. passed the Page Act which prohibited the importation of unfree laborers and women brought for "immoral purposes" but was enforced primarily against Chinese. This led to the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, the only federal legislation that prohibited a specific nationality from immigrating to the United States. Alien Land Laws that were enacted in the early 1900s barred Asians from owning property in the US to prevent our ancestors from settling in the US. Executive Order 9066 authorized the Japanese internment camps during World War II, questioning the loyalty of Japanese American citizens. In 1982, two White men killed Vincent Chin, a Chinese American, on the eve of his wedding day in Detroit because they thought he was Japanese. These are but a few examples of the anti-Asian racism in this country. This violence demonstrates the frightening effects of racism, often compounded with misogyny.

Furthermore, the impacts of racism aimed at people of Asian heritage often pit communities of color against each other. We recognize, reject, and resist these tactics. Instead, we call for community, solidarity, education, and dialogue to make a safe environment for Asian Pasifika Islander Desi American community. We recognize that statements can be performative and that we need to be active in our commitment. Therefore, we demand that the college take the following actionable steps:

1. Disaggregate AAPI data.
2. Challenge and speak out against stereotypes, including the Model Minority myth.
3. Commit to learning about microaggressions, their harmful effects and how to help our AAPI students challenge and mitigate the effects of them.
4. Raise awareness of mental health issues and destigmatize mental health concerns in the AAPI community.
5. Commit to the continued development of Ethnic Studies courses and the Ethnic Studies program at Foothill.
6. Continue to have professional development for faculty and classified professionals that is by people of color for people of color, identifying and compensating individuals.
7. Recognize and acknowledge that employees of color are subject to cultural taxation in the form of unpaid work on equity, diversity, and inclusion work that benefits the college community at large. This labor often comes at a high emotional price to employees of color.

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