

MARCH 23, 2021

Response to Ongoing Anti-Asian Violence

When last week a white man murdered eight human beings in the Atlanta area, seven of them women and six of those Asian women, this was a highly disturbing signal for us that there is something we need to pay attention to and speak out against. We are deeply concerned about the increasing incidents of hatred and violence against the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community locally and throughout the United States. Just last week, two Asian elders, aged 83 and 75, were brutally attacked in downtown San Francisco.

While the recent uptick in anti-Asian rhetoric **was spawned** by the mis-labeling of COVID-19 as “The China Virus,” anti-Asian discrimination is not a recent phenomenon. Nor, unfortunately, is it rare for such rhetoric to escalate into violence. From the outset of Asian immigration to the U.S. around the time of the Civil War, Asians have suffered intense racism, extending from the Page Act of 1875 (the first restrictive federal immigration law in the United States, effectively prohibiting the entry of “immoral” Chinese women), the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (banning immigration by Chinese men as well), the forced internment of Japanese Americans during WWII, the forced migration of refugees from U.S.-led military conflict in Southeast Asia, post-9/11 surveillance targeting Muslim and South Asian communities, and ICE raids on Southeast Asian communities and Asian-owned businesses, to the present-day pattern of racist street assaults.

Amid this reality, we need to acknowledge the pattern of invisibility of AAPI people in a lot of social justice conversations, and that this invisibility has also been exacerbated by stereotypes reinforced by the **model minority myth** (the erroneous generalization that all Asians are “a polite, law-abiding group who have achieved a higher level of [socioeconomic] success than the general population”).

We want to acknowledge that our whole community is damaged by acts of hate. We also understand that one’s identity and proximity to an act of hate changes how it is felt. Many of us at Adler & Colvin are Asian Americans, and thus more directly and personally affected by this wave of anti-Asian hate and violence. Some of us have parents and other elderly family members who are afraid to go out on the streets by themselves. Some are forced to make decisions of how we structure our lives to try to protect ourselves and our families, and are worried that whatever we do may not be enough.

We join the many calls that have been so forcefully and eloquently made by civil rights,

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racial and social justice organizations in denouncing anti-Asian discrimination and violence. We as a firm are committed to continue to learn, know, and share the stories of AAPI peoples' contributions and activism as part of our country's long history of resistance against discrimination. There are so many in our country who experience the impacts of discrimination, whether in the form of racism, sexism, xenophobia, U.S. policies, or an inequitable response to the coronavirus. Learning their separate stories, and stories of solidarity across groups in our country, are steps we can all take toward increasing understanding and lessening hate. The same vocal responses and actions toward justice are needed from all of us, for all of us.

We invite our community to continue on this journey with us to build a better world. Here are some things you can do:

1. Learn more about actions you can take at [Stop AAPI Hate](#), a coalition of the following organizations:
 - › [Asian Pacific Planning and Policy Council \(A3PCON\)](#)
 - › [Chinese for Affirmative Action \(CAA\)](#)
 - › [Asian American Studies Department of San Francisco State University](#)
2. Attend a free, 1-hour, online [Bystander Intervention to Stop Anti-Asian/American and Xenophobic Harassment](#) workshop presented by Hollaback! and Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAAJ).
3. Learn about [Compassion in Oakland](#), an amazing grassroots response started by a Latinx person that provides on-demand chaperones to anyone who wants one.
4. Learn techniques for disrupting anti-Asian violence via [Learning For Justice's](#) "How to Respond to Coronavirus Racism" (see this handy, [printable pocket guide](#)).