
FROM ADVERSITY TO ADVOCACY

A Stop AAPI Hate Conversation in Orange County

Co-hosted by
Stop AAPI Hate & OCAPICA



**STOP
AAPI
HATE**

Stop AAPI Hate and Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA) co-sponsored “From Adversity to Advocacy: A Stop AAPI Hate Conversation in Orange County” on October 22, 2022 with members of Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC). Organized by OCAPICA, the event convened community members with lived experiences of anti-Asian hate together with elected officials to discuss solutions to interpersonal and structural violence.

During the dialogue, community members shared their personal stories of resilience amidst hate with local leaders and elected officials, and proposed both community-based and systems-level solutions to address the hate and harm occurring within our communities. Elected officials across all levels of government listened to their stories and shared their successes, challenges, and responses to address hate and violence.

The calls for change that emerged from this convening were consistent with the community demands voiced in [San Francisco](#) at a Stop AAPI Hate roundtable dialogue in July 2022. This event in Southern California centered around lived experiences of discrimination, resilience, and healing. The Orange County convening can be viewed in its entirety [online](#), and this report highlights key takeaways for CAPAC and others working to support and grow the AAPI movement.



“People may use this as an opportunity for division, anti-Blackness, for targeting individuals... but we need to see each others’ humanity to move forward and collectively heal.”

– Jenna Dupuy
Community Member



IMPACTED COMMUNITY MEMBERS' PERSPECTIVES

The event centered a panel of community members who had directly experienced anti-Asian hate or worked to support impacted communities. Panelists connected their personal experiences with the need for structural and cultural changes to address the harm and root causes of discrimination.

KEY THEMES

Sharing our personal stories of hate, discrimination, violence, and erasure is critical to increasing understanding and inspiring action

- » Leaders at all levels of government must listen to community members discuss their own experiences with hate, which will reduce stigma and inform policy making.
- » We need space for dialogue across linguistic, racial, cultural, and generational divides in order to heal.
- » In addition to sharing our own stories of anti-Asian hate, we must listen to other communities impacted by hate and discrimination and particularly work to build trust and healing between the Asian and Black communities.

We do not have to swallow our pain

- » Voicing our pain is an act of resistance against white supremacy and the forces of shame and erasure that seek to minimize our experiences.
- » All kinds of pain are valid and worthy of support and healing, not just the pain of physical violence.
- » It is critical that we name and condemn hate and acknowledge the pain of survivors.



“I want to stop paying for this debt of being an immigrant in this country with my joy, with my body, with our lives. I want to stop feeling grateful to be here, and I want to stop feeling like anything less than death is a blessing.”

– Catt Phan
Community Member

Intersectionality and intergroup solidarity must be acknowledged and embraced

- » We can not separate ourselves from our multiple and intersecting identities, and we must recognize that the Asian community is also harmed by sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, and other forms of oppression.
- » The Asian community is not the only group targeted for hate, and Asian community members do not exclusively experience discrimination because of their race or ethnicity.



L to R: Uyen Hoang, Sherry Huang, Jenna Dupuy, and Catt Phan



Uyen Hoang, Executive Director, Viet Rainbow Orange County



“Growing up I thought that in order to survive I needed to leave Orange County... **The fact that young people in our community feel that they are going to die at any moment because of who they are is a real call for more inclusive structures.**”

– Uyen Hoang
*Executive Director,
Viet Rainbow Orange County*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Invest in education to prevent hate and empower communities

- » Mandate and fund ethnic studies programs and critical race theory curriculum in schools, which must include Asian American and Pacific Islander history, culture, and contributions.
- » Invest in ongoing professional development and training for public-facing government employees and private sector workers to ensure they understand how to recognize and address bias and hate.
- » Support ongoing educational opportunities for adult community members, particularly immigrants with limited English proficiency to learn about Asian history, structural racism, and models for community healing and solidarity.

Empower and resource communities impacted by hate and violence

- » Invest in bystander training and self-defense classes to build community and increase people's confidence to navigate difficult situations when they arise.
- » Denounce hate, listen to survivors, and connect them to in-language and culturally relevant resources to support their healing.

Ensure all communities have access to in-language information and resources

- » Require all levels of government to offer translated written resources, hire bilingual staff, and secure interpreters to ensure community members with limited English proficiency can access the same support as English speakers.
- » Foster community and cross-cultural dialogue by hosting live-interpreted events that are accessible to all.
- » Ensure that there are in-language and culturally relevant mental health resources available to support survivors of hate.



Sherry Huang, Director, Orange County Herald Center



“There are resources available, but my immigrant community has difficulty accessing it or [they] don’t even know about it.”

– Sherry Huang
Director, Orange County Herald Center

Expand access to reporting options that allow survivors to feel heard and supported

- » Ensure that there are options beyond calling 911 to report harm, regardless of whether or not an incident is technically a crime, so that people can seek help and raise awareness outside of the criminal legal system, if they so choose.
- » Create reporting systems that are language-accessible and do not overly burden victims.

“

“The next step is to develop non-carceral solutions to address the hate and harassment we’ve been experiencing”

– Dave Min
California State Senator



Above: California State Senator Dave Min

BEYOND REPRESENTATION: ELECTED LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES

The event convened elected officials from across all levels of government to hear directly from impacted community members and share recent challenges, successes, and opportunities moving forward.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Federal

- » Since the outbreak of the pandemic, CAPAC has hosted press conferences on combating anti-Asian hate and met with the Biden administration to urge their response.
- » Representative Grace Meng authored and passed two pieces of legislation to combat hate, the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act and a bill to study the potential establishment of the museum in Washington, DC.

State

- » In 2021, California became the first state to pass an API Equity Budget, committing over \$165 million to support AAPI community based organizations and other measures to address hate.
- » In 2022, California State Senator Dave Min championed and passed [Senate Bill 1161](#) to develop a community survey tool to understand how harassment affects public transit riders, and put California in the position to make transit safer by centering the experiences of transit riders who are all too often overlooked.
- » California Attorney General Rob Bonta's office established a Racial Justice Bureau, which tracks and responds to hate crimes and works to address the root causes of bias and hate, and the Community Response and Engagement (CARE) office, which is working to increase community awareness and access to resources provided by the Attorney General's Office.



L to R: Mary Anne Foo, Executive Director, OCAPICA and California Representative Judy Chu

Local

- » Irvine City Councilmember Tammy Kim worked with the city and the Irvine Police Department to establish a portal to report hate crimes and hate incidents in multiple languages.
- » Dr. Jeff Kim established a groundbreaking Asian American Studies curriculum available within the Anaheim Union High School District to ensure that students can learn about Asian American history and contributions.



Photo of Dr. John Cheng courtesy of South Coast Medical Group

PRIORITIES

- » To understand and address the current wave of anti-Asian hate, we must teach, learn, and remember Asian history
 - COVID-related racism and xenophobia is the latest chapter of a long and dark history of anti-Asian hate.
 - We must address the immediate harm of hate while simultaneously naming and fighting the root causes of white supremacy and xenophobia.
- » Invest in building interracial coalitions and solidarity
 - The Asian American community must build bridges with other communities of color to fight white supremacy and hate.
 - It is necessary to call out and resist anti-Blackness within the Asian American community so that we can come together to work toward our mutual interests of racial equity and economic justice.



“I think the worst thing that can happen is if we become numb. That we hone in on the statistics and the headlines and forget that these are real people.”

– Cynthia Choi
*Co-Founder of Stop AAPI Hate
& Co-Executive Director of
Chinese for Affirmative Action*

- » Support and uplift Asian American community leaders and elected officials
 - We must develop leadership pipelines that support civically-minded Asian American community members that want to run for public office and represent their communities.
- » Improve collaboration between community based organizations and federal, state, and local government actors
 - Government has a critical role to play in establishing the systems and structures to prevent and respond to hate, but they must listen to and partner with community-based organizations to guide and refine the work.
 - Establish continuous partnerships and funding streams between government and community organizations to support outreach and long-term systems change.
 - Government should partner with immigrant-serving organizations and ethnic media to improve language access and cultural competency with public services.
- » Improve data collection and storytelling so we can understand and communicate the full picture of anti-Asian hate
 - Without valid and disaggregated data, it is very difficult to quantify a problem, develop targeted solutions, and measure their impact.
 - We must also support narrative change to help drive the work and create spaces where we can share our stories and engage in dialogue.



“It’s about building a pipeline, making sure we’ve got great people representing us in all facets.”

– Tammy Kim
Vice Mayor, City of Irvine



“I always feel like we have a deadline of some sort, like if incidents stop happening on such a large scale, would people still care?”

– Representative Grace Meng
Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus

POTENTIAL PATHWAYS FORWARD

In order to continue to address interpersonal and systemic discrimination against AAPIs in a holistic way, we need decisive policy changes and budgetary commitments across all levels of government. Stop AAPI Hate and OCAPICA have and will continue to partner with community members, advocates, and elected officials to replicate model policies to confront anti-AAPI hate across the country.

- » API Equity Budgets
 - Commit ongoing federal, state, and local resources to AAPI community-based organizations working to prevent and respond to harm, as [California](#), [New York](#), and [Massachusetts](#) did through their historic AAPI Equity Budgets.
- » No Place for Hate
 - Denounce and respond to the full spectrum of hate by tracking and addressing harassment in public streets, on transit systems, and in businesses, in line with the [No Place for Hate California](#) policy agenda.



KEY SPEAKERS

The event featured comments, reflections, and a robust discussion from the following leaders:

Mary Anne Foo

Executive Director, OCAPICA

Representative Judy Chu

Chair, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus

Representative Grace Meng

Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus

Representative Mark Takano

Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus

Dave Min

California State Senator

Tammy Kim

Vice Mayor, City of Irvine

Dr. Jeff Kim

*School Board Member-elect,
Irvine Unified School District, and Educator,
Anaheim Union High School District*

Damon Brown

Special Assistant California Attorney General

Catt Phan

Community Member

Jenna Dupuy

Community Member

Sherry Huang

Director, Orange County Herald Center

Uyen Hoang

Executive Director, Viet Rainbow Orange County

Cynthia Choi

*Co-Executive Director, Chinese for Affirmative Action,
and Co-Founder, Stop AAPI Hate*

Additional Information

OC Roundtable Recap Reels

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qVyYkyJEjc5IVT08JLRqtfe4DmqkiHB0?usp=share_link

OCAPICA Reels

<https://www.instagram.com/ocapica97/reels/>

Love Irvine Convenes Faith-Based Community Response to Laguna Woods Incident

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13399QgTkE>

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Special Thanks

Julie Vo, Christina Nguyen, Clara Ahsiu, Nikki Oei, Jay Kim, Sara Kim, Cayla Zhang,
Andy Wong, Shanti Elise Prasad, Kiran Bhalla, Yamuna Hopwood, Carly Finkle,
Cynthia Choi, Mary Anne Foo, and Stephanie Chan

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