

Dear MSP Lowell Members,

The Massachusetts Society of Professors at Lowell (MSP Lowell) condemns the anti-Asian violence and the use of anti-Asian rhetoric. We mourn the victims of the mass shootings in Atlanta on March 16th and extend our support to the Asian, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) members of the MSP.

Asians and Pacific Islanders in this country have endured decades of discrimination, bias, and microaggression, which are presently aggravated by the COVID pandemic and irresponsible remarks made by certain politicians. Since late February 2020, a sharp increase in anti-Asian hate incidents is recorded with 4,000 incidents reported with web-based self-reporting tools. These cowardly acts are more despicable by the fact that perpetrators target people who are more vulnerable and unable to defend themselves (i.e. women and the elderly). Such actions strike at the core of our humanity and sense of decency. A year has gone by, these incidents have only become more violent and deadly. The AAPI community has struggled to be heard and seen, until this irreversible tragedy in Atlanta. These senseless crimes and rhetoric have to stop. To our AAPI MSP members, we encourage you to take the space to care for you and your loved ones, and to know that we stand with you.

We challenge all of us in the UML community (Faculty, Staff, Students) to change the way they see themselves in Society. To care not just for their own family, friends and acquaintances. But to adopt a universal view of everyone as “my people” and care for everyone who exist around their personal space at any time. To adopt the attitude of “brother/sister I got your back”. If I see someone insulting or hurting you I will not observe in silence, I will say something, do something to stop it and/or I will record the incident with my phone as evidence for the police. It is only when all of us say a collective NO! to racist behavior and ACT to stop this kind of behavior because we all believe that the everyone has the right to feel safe to walk on the streets, safe in our place of work, safe when using public facilities like parks and safe to go shopping for necessities. We believe that if we all truly adopt the attitude that “an attack on you is an attack on me and I will not stand for it!”, then racist attitudes/behaviors will be curtailed and racism will go where it belongs, in the dustbin of history.

MSP Lowell is committed to social justice. Educators, as the professionals who prepare young generations in this country for its future, cannot be silent about such social injustice. We all should stand with MSP Lowell to denounce racism and bigotry toward the people of AAPI descent. We particularly acknowledge the contributions made by our AAPI faculty and librarians. The core values of higher education include the cultivation of a tolerant culture and the promotion of a diverse society. We urge all union members to uphold this value and take actions against any anti-Asian racism along with any other racism that may exist in our university, the University of Massachusetts System, the State Public Sector, and our local community.

The following websites provide avenues to anonymously report hate incidents that will be used to promote legislative changes.

STOP AAPI HATE

Asian Americans Advancing Justice: @advancingjustice_aajc

To allies, we encourage you to reach out to your colleagues and friends to offer them any support that they need. We also encourage all MSP members, as educators, to take pride in the value of education and engage in discussions with our next generation as they see the ugly face of racism. These are no easy conversions, but as educators, we educate ourselves along with others.

How to Talk About Race

10 Tips for Teaching and Talking to Kids about Race

We are in this together, sending out a strong and unified voice – “No to Racism”!

This message is endorsed by the MSP Executive Board.

The Board thanks MSP members Chi Zhang (Finance), Ben Li (Economic) and Johanna Choo (Biology) for their contributions to this message.

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