



Iowa State University

Graduate & Professional Student Senate

Executive Memo

March 23, 2021

To the Graduate and Professional Student Body of Iowa State,

The targeted murders that occurred in Georgia on March 16th are a heinous result of hate, racism, and sexism that is part of our culture today. As an Executive Council we mourn for the families of those affected and for the impact this had on Asian and Asian-American communities.

This most recent attack is only one of many in a growing trend of violence and harassment towards Asian-American and Pacific Island (AAPI) individuals in the United States. Research released by the organization *Stop AAPI Hate* has revealed nearly 3,800 anti-Asian hate incidents reported over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic with approximately 500 of them happening so far this year. Similarly, increasing use of xenophobic, sexist, and racist rhetoric normalizes and cements these dangerous prejudices into our society, emboldening some to violence. Where hate exists and is excused, violence will follow. We must not minimize nor view those of non-white or non-American backgrounds as 'others.'

Those to whom this hate is directed should not bear the burden of undoing this pervasive system of oppression on their own; we all must show up. We have the responsibility to call out and condemn racism, sexism, and xenophobia when it is encountered. Whether it is directly engaging with friends, family members, coworkers, or intervening as a bystander; we all must take action.

The GPSS Executive Council is committed to uplift and amplify the voices of those affected and have heard the calls to spread awareness, keep national attention on the issue, and offer support and collaboration. We want to make it clear that we respect, value, and celebrate our AAPI students, especially our international students, and their vital presence within the Iowa State Community. As student leaders of Iowa State University, we mourn with and support AAPI communities.

In solidarity,

President Eleanor Field, Vice President Carrie Ann Johnson, Treasurer Chuck Wongus, Senate Engagement Officer Chelsea Iennarella-Servantez, Senate Information Officer Kate Alucard, Conference Officer Abigail Kropf, Wellness Officer Madelyne Losby