NASW-NYC Mourns: The Ongoing Attacks Against Asian and Pacific Islanders are Based in White Supremacy

March 23rd, 2021

“It may well be that we will have to repent in this generation. Not merely for the vitriolic words and the violent actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence and indifference of the good people who sit around and say, "Wait on time." - Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr-

I write with a heaviness I wish I didn't have to carry as I am yet again forced to confront the reality of being ‘other’ in America and bearing witness to the ongoing assault on human life. I’m weary of this battle and what it means for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals and communities to live in a world that does not acknowledge their right to life, nor value their humanity. I’m tired of speaking about the ongoing trauma and wondering when this will stop. When will people not have to live in fear because of the beauty and diversity of their skin color, ethnicity, gender, social, religious, and personal identities?

The past week has been such an emotional roller-coaster. It has taken some time to gather my thoughts and find a way to articulate my feelings through the tears, through the anger, and through the pain. But to be honest, I’m angry, I’m hurt, and I’m deeply impacted by the reality of the world we live in. It has been soul crushing to hear about the murders of so many lives in Georgia due to racism and gendered bias, and then to hear about the death of Marvin Scott III while in police custody in Texas just two days later.

The National Association of Social Workers-NYC Chapter (NASW-NYC) mourns over the ongoing senseless acts of violence where lives are lost and families destroyed in the name of hate. We are trying to process the recent killing spree mostly targeting Asian Americans in Atlanta, GA on 03/16/2021. We are frustrated that the ongoing rhetoric in our society often dismisses the insidiousness of white supremacy and we are outraged that the attacker was characterized as “having a bad day” after murdering 8 people. The victims, their families, and loved ones, had a horrific day; their loved ones are left to pick up the broken pieces and carry this trauma over a lifetime. Evidently, the tale of two Americas continues to be on display, and as many have pointed out in the last week, the privilege of white supremacy and proximity to whiteness means that the attacker walked away with his life after killing EIGHT people. We know that many BIPOC individuals in the same circumstance, or circumstances when they have not killed anyone, do not have this privilege because Black men, followed by Native American men have the highest chance of dying in police encounters.

NASW-NYC honors the beautiful souls that were lost as a result of this terroristic racist and gender-based mass murder in Atlanta Georgia: Xiaojie Tan, Daoyou Feng, Sun Cha Kim, Yong Ae Yue, Soon Chung Park, Hyung Jung Grant, Delaina Ashley Yuan Gonzalez, and Paul Andre Michels. We also honor the life of Marvin Scott III, a Black man allegedly dealing with a mental health crisis who died while in police custody, just two days after the attacks in Atlanta.

I write to re-affirm NASW-NYC’s position that hate, misogyny, bigotry, white supremacy, oppression, and violence are unacceptable and must be rooted out. They MUST be confronted in ourselves, in our families, in our communities, our professions, and in our society. I write to scream as loudly as I can that the increase in race-based attacks against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (API) this past year is unacceptable and rooted in both Anti-Asian and Anti-Black rhetoric. This harmful rhetoric has been brewing for centuries and was flamed over
the past few years by hate-filled speech from the highest office in this country. I write so that you know Anti-Asian sentiments, just as much and Anti-Blackness, were birthed, and continue to be fed by white supremacy. I write to appeal to you, to all of us, to stop allowing the divisions of our identities to breed the virus of white supremacy. Divide and conquer has always been the method used to oppress. We cannot and should not choose to vote, march, and raise our voices ONLY when an individual or a community we identify with is harmed. We should be supporting #StopAsianHate, #Black Lives Matter, #immigration rights, #gendered based rights #LGBTQ+ rights, and all other groups. We should speak up not only because issues and groups look like us, speak our language, and pray to our God(s). You, me, we, should all be standing up against injustice and we must be united in our efforts protect human rights.

We will continue to boldly respond to, and denounce white supremacy. We will continue to stand and act against terrorism, bigotry, racism, all forms of discrimination, and intolerance.

- To support NASW-NYC’s ongoing efforts for racial and social justice, consider [joining the chapter](#) or [donating](#)
- If you or someone you know has experienced an act of anti-Asian racism, hate, discrimination, or bigotry, you can report anonymously to Stop AAPI Hate at: [https://stopaapihate.org/](https://stopaapihate.org/)
- To learn more about the American Civil Liberties Union and their legislative advocacy on behalf of all communities, visit [https://www.aclu.org/](https://www.aclu.org/)
- If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health distress, please reach out for help [NYC WELL](#)

“Let us stand in solidarity, not to a specific country, race, or religion, but rather to humanity”- David Vox

With love and in solidarity,

Dr. Claire Green-Forde

Dr. Claire Green-Forde, LCSW
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*Please note that NASW-NYC does not receive any compensation for sharing information about other organizations in this letter. Our sharing these resources isn’t an official endorsement, however; we firmly believe that it’s just the right thing to do and are always guided by the code of ethics*