



Anti-Hate Rally in Support of Asian-Americans Held in Huntington

By Eve Krief

On Sunday March 21st, nearly 150 community members gathered in Huntington Village to stand against the disturbing rise in anti-Asian hate incidents and crimes over the past year. The event was organized by local artist Patricia Shih and Huntington Anti-Bias Task Force member Dr. Eve Krief and was highlighted in Newsday and News 12. The crowd was treated to music performed by local musicians Toby Tobias, Janice Buckner, Stuart Markus and Karen Bella who sang songs including 'Lean on me' and 'We Shall Overcome'. Speakers included NYS Senator Jim Gaughran, Long Island Chinese-American Association member Lucy Liu, Nassau County Legislator Arnie Drucker, Suffolk County Human Rights Commission member Rabbi Lina Zerbarini, Health and Welfare Council of Long Island president Rebecca Sanin and Dr. Krief.



As Americans we have a dark history of Anti-Asian racism and scapegoating that is rarely talked about or studied in school, but spans the generations. The so called 'Yellow Peril' of the 1880s described a fear of Asian invasion and a resentment of cheap labor from China that led to a ban on new and existing Chinese residents from becoming citizens in the Chinese Exclusion Act. At the turn of the century, Indian immigration triggered what was called the 'Dusky Peril' with many of the same fears leading to the Asiatic Barred Zone Act that put an end to most Indian and Asian immigration. In World War Two, with America suspicious of its own Japanese citizens, Roosevelt ordered 120,000 Japanese Americans into internment camps. After 9/11, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs -- many of them South-Asian Americans -- were targets of hate crimes across the country.

As a result of misinformation about Covid-19 and the use of hateful rhetoric over the past year, this country has been experiencing a wave of anti-Asian hate. Members of the Asian community, many of them elderly, most of them women, have been viciously assaulted. They have had racial slurs shouted at them. They have been attacked on subways and on the streets in broad daylight. Businesses and properties have been vandalized. They have been spit on and coughed at and shunned across the country, targets of brutal violence and verbal harassment. All in all an estimated 3,800 anti-Asian racist incidents have taken place in the last year alone. All this, as nearly 2 million Asian-Americans have been working on the frontlines of the pandemic, working in healthcare attending to our relatives and friends, and in other industries helping to keep food on our tables.

We must understand that an attack on one of us is an attack on all of us. We stand together side by side with our Asian neighbors and friends. We are with you, we support you and we stand with you always.