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Filipinx-American Student Union President

I, Stephanie Badua-Smail, ASSC PRO and President of the Filipinx-American Student Union am in support of the SCC Senate Statement in Solidarity with the AAPI Community.

Racism against Asian Americans has been engrained in American society since these cultures immigrated here. I'd like to touch on the history of discrimination but know that this is just the tip of the iceberg.

America brutally colonized the Philippines while killing hundreds of thousands of Filipinx. Then during WWII, Filipinx nurses were brought to fill the need for nurses in the war and in America. While American advertising promised happiness, Filipinx nurses came to America experiencing minimal stipends for their work and experienced discrimination. Similarly, today, I think of how Filipinx nurses make up only 4% of nurses in America but made up 31.5% of the COVID deaths of nurses last year.

Chinese immigrants came to America as farmhands, laundry workers, and railroad workers and were used for cheap labor. Then America made racism into the law by creating the first significant law restricting immigration with the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Then not only were hundreds of thousands of innocent Japanese-Americans wrongly forced into inhumane Internment camps but they came home to waves of hostility. Many found that their properties had been seized for nonpayment of taxes or otherwise appropriated.

Much like Chinese immigrants, Mexican American citizens were relegated to the worst-paying jobs under the worst working conditions.

Then America stole engineers, doctors, mothers from African countries to America for literal slavery.

I believe one of the reasons these AA hate crimes feel so overwhelming is that they are a puddle in the span of the ocean that is a discriminatory institution with long-term cycles of hatred.

I ask you how can you care for yourself and your community so that these cycles of oppression are put to an end in our lifetime? What passion can you offer to the cause?

My plan is to voice community needs and fighting for them. It is important to prioritize healing and joy in ourselves and in our communities. Lastly, I refuse to let our culture and pain be turned into a joke or to sand down this history of discrimination like it is something small. I stand firm in the belief that we all need each other, our community, and love. With the love given to our communities, we can facilitate healing and growth. With this we can change a system that was not created for Asian American communities, for people of color, and for immigrants but it has been a system that needed us and abused us. Immigrants built this country and are asking for respect in our own home.

Thank you.