

To: A Letter to the UConn Community

From: Asian American Cultural Center, African American Cultural Center, Rainbow Center, Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center, Women's Center, Asian and Asian American Studies Institute, El Instituto, Africana Studies Institute, Human Rights Institute, Dodd Center, Center for Judaic Studies, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program, American Studies Program, International Student & Scholar Services, and Office for Diversity and Inclusion

As the concerns about the COVID-19 virus rapidly increase on a daily basis, we want to acknowledge how this pandemic is impacting members of our community differently.

- There has been a rise of incidents of anti-Asian racism in our local community, our state, our nation and worldwide. Asian and Asian Americans have been subjected to verbal and physical attacks, cyberbullying, discrimination against their businesses, and xenophobic portrayals. We would like to firmly state that such acts of hate will not be tolerated in our community. Such acts only further perpetuate the cycle of violence and fuel white supremacy. We encourage those who have experienced bias of any kind to report the incidents at <https://dos.uconn.edu/bias-reporting/>
- Going home is not safe for everyone. For some family, partners, and/or guardians may be abusive. For support around gender-based violence, please visit the Title IX website at <https://titleix.uconn.edu/>
- Going home is not an option for everyone. Many of our International students are facing travel restrictions that preclude them from leaving and/or returning to the US. We encourage you to participate in the University's Town Hall on April 14<sup>th</sup> to share your concerns and suggestions.
- We would like to acknowledge that many folx may be isolated from supportive networks during this time of physical distancing. For many LGBTQIA+ students, returning home may have required concealing one's true identity in order to survive in a space with family members/others who are not affirming/safe. Connecting to positive resources, people, organizations, and leaders at this time can be helpful. Visit the Cultural Centers' websites to learn about the different opportunities for support available to you.
- As the concerns about the COVID-19 virus keeps rapidly changing, more and more anti-immigrant sentiment keeps also growing. Unfortunately, a political narrative of a "foreign threat" has accompanied information about the spread of the virus. This anti-immigrant and anti-Semitic speech is wrong and dangerous. The political environment of the pandemic has given rise to hateful conspiracy theories and disinformation meant to scapegoat Asians and Jews, along with Israel and China internationally. We stand in solidarity with our international

students, our Asian American students, our undocumented and DACAmented students. In particular, we acknowledge our undocumented and DACAmented students who continue to face the threat of deportation while negotiating the constraints of the pandemic. As if these conditions were not difficult enough, the Supreme Court is poised to rule on the DACA case in the upcoming months, putting additional strain on our DACAmented friends, peers, and family members. Additionally reports can be made to the following websites:

[OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates - Hate Incident Reporting](#)

[Asian Americans Advancing Justice](#)

[Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council - Stop AAPI Hate](#)

[Southern Law Poverty Center Reporting](#)

Students have shared with us how vulnerable and targeted they are feeling. We are aware that many of our students are facing unemployment, limited access to health care, and other hardships. We also understand that these experiences, coupled with isolation, may manifest in mental health related concerns as well.

We would like you all to know that you do not need to navigate these difficult times alone and that we will stand and work with you to get through this together. If you find yourself feeling disconnected or not supported in your current living arrangements, please reach out to us.

You all are citizens of UConnNation, and in this nation, we do not discriminate, we do not use a narrative of hate, we are citizens that stand in solidarity with one another. Now is the time for us to be safe, be compassionate and empathetic towards each other, particularly those who have been affected by the COVID-19 virus and be engaged citizens. We would like to remind each and every individual that they are valued and needed in this world.

The Cultural Centers staff are available to discuss any COVID-19 concerns you may have.

[Asian American Cultural Center Website](#)

[African American Cultural Center Website](#)

[Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center Website](#)

[Rainbow Center Website](#)

[Women's Center Website](#)

On-campus resources and updated information about the COVID-19 virus, can be found at <https://uconn.edu/public-notification/coronavirus/>.