

Good afternoon everyone,

I want to hold space for and lift up our Asian American and Pacific Islander leaders and staff in Community Action today. My heart goes out to all of those in a state of grief and mourning. Six Asian American women were among eight people killed yesterday in a targeted spree in Georgia. Not all of the details are known, but it is clear that a 21 year old white man was driven by some conviction that these women were the source of his dissatisfaction with life. Following Charleston, El Paso, Kenosha, and now Atlanta, we're confronted again with the urgent reality that too many young white men in America are being radicalized toward hateful violence.

At this point we know the names of six victims: Julie Park, Hyeon Jeong Park, Delaina Ashley Yaun, Paul Andre Michels, Xiaojie Tan, and Daoyou Feng. I hope in the coming days the media will focus on their lives (including making make an effort to pronounce their names correctly) and tell the story of hopes and aspirations cut short. I hope the response by leaders and laypeople alike will reflect a spirit of solidarity, empowerment, and self-determination, rather than more surveillance and criminalization of communities whose economic opportunities are restricted to exploitative industries. I hope there will be courageous, vulnerable conversations between white men about these dynamics and our role in perpetuating them.

In our equity work, we need to better understand the interlocking nature of the threats posed by white supremacy, sexism, and xenophobia. More than 2/3rds of the almost 4,000 reported hate crimes against the AAPI community in the last year targeted women. We need to reshape our mindsets against [“model minority” narratives](#) that distract from the core issue of white supremacy and keep marginalized groups pitted against each other. This is our calling if we hope to show up as a network of leaders committed to racial, social, and economic justice. Our AAPI communities and other communities of color in Washington should not have to fight this fight alone. To that end, I want to share this resource posted just last month by our new colleague Shalimar Gonzales at Solid Ground, particularly the links to historical resources, AAPI-led nonprofits that are responding directly in WA communities, and the free and accessible Bystander Intervention trainings and resources: <https://www.solid-ground.org/standing-with-aapi-people-against-racism/>

May the victims' families find peace and may those of us with disproportionate power redouble our commitment to the work necessary to extinguish this hate from our communities.

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