

Our nation is facing an extraordinary time in which our people and entire communities are striving to come together in an effort to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the continued macro and micro aggressions, assaults, and insults that occur in our communities and worldwide are dividing our people and detrimental to the progress we have made thus far. The DISC hate crimes subcommittee is committed to responding to all forms of such encroachments that often amount to, or lead to, hate crimes. We are saddened to see many members and individuals in our communities affected not only by the virus, but also by the systematic problems and the negative messages delivered from our nation's leaders, whom we trust to create a healthy and prosperous environment for all. Thus, we as a group, would like to support and empower each other during a time filled with uncertainty, difficulty and fear; not to push each other away or create more hatred for one another.

In current debates over the novel human coronavirus pandemic, COVID-19 has been referred to as "the Chinese Virus" and "kung flu." As a result, these messages, delivered consciously or unconsciously, have created mistrust, disrespect and even riots among our people, who should unite in difficult times. On several occasions we have seen Chinese and other Asian descended members of our community experience racist and bigoted comments, verbal and physical insults, and overt discrimination stemming from fear and ignorance regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe hate cannot alleviate the anxiety and the fear instigated by this global pandemic. Only kindness and wisdom can dispel the darkness. In the past, immigrants have been targeted and scapegoated when our nation faces difficulties; these actions only serve to spur hatred and conflict among our people. Despite these negative instances, organizations such as The Atlanta Chinese Association have donated PPE to Grady to assist in the fight to combat this deadly virus. Acts of unity and support such as this are to be imitated to further establish a sense of security for every individual in our communities.

Unprecedented times of crises like this one require wisdom and unity, not hateful entertainment. As a committee dedicated to advancing the mental health and well-being of the Emory community and beyond, we are cognizant of the effect of such actions on our students, faculty, and members of the community-at-large. We condemn these macroaggressions as acts of hate and racism and call for an immediate halt of those irresponsible actions. We join with members of the Chinese and larger Asian community and stand with them against this act of discrimination and hate and against all racism. Together we can.

We unequivocally condemn all acts of bigotry and hate and commit to supporting victims, families, and communities at Emory and beyond during these difficult times. Humans' civil liberties are fundamental components of psychological and community health. As such, we are especially concerned about the actions of hate directed toward Chinese communities both within the U.S. and globally. We remain vigilant in considering the impact of losing a sense of safety and dignity.

In the wake of this hate crime, we support being mindful not to give in to divisiveness by stereotyping entire communities for the thoughtless actions of a few no matter what

office they hold. We also advise acknowledgement of history and systems of oppression that implicitly or explicitly perpetuate such bigotry. We need to stand together, united in combating hatred and denouncing acts of racism.

As behavioral health professionals, we also acknowledge the devastating impact such bigoted acts have on families, friends, and entire communities that are unfairly targeted and mislabeled by the actions of a minority of individuals. We know that hate breeds hate; we also know that we can break the cycle of hate by remaining empathic and kind. We encourage everyone to transcend the pain and strong emotions by embracing actions of wisdom and patience.

We must all work together to strive to reject derogatory statements and defeat bigotry and racism in all its forms. Behavioral health professionals are tasked with considering how to assist individuals who entertain hate in their hearts toward others because of what they believe and how to proactively approach the apparently flourishing culture of intolerance. We continue to advocate for adopting a positive role in the formation of improved relationships with our neighbors across our differences.

If you or your family are impacted by these events, we encourage you to make yourself a priority and make space for your personal self-care and that of your community. We also encourage you to consider reaching out to your family, friends, religious and spiritual institutions, mental health professionals, and local community and support groups.

For allies and supporters, we encourage you to reach out to folks within your network to allow space for sharing, venting, grieving, fear, and any other emotions that might arise. Make your allyship local and visible. Note that it is important to provide validation for those communities most impacted. At this critical time, we encourage continuing to build a sense of strength through love and community-- all of which have been shown to support healing and mental health.

We support every community and individual impacted by this and all acts of hate. We will not fight hate with hate and are committed to model tolerance and love for humanity. In the face of rising intolerance and bigotry, we fight and share our faith in our petition for peace and unity. We uphold our communities in building an existence free of hate and complete with love and tolerance.

In Solidarity,
DISC Members

Resources

- Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development 2020 Virtual Summit, <https://multiculturalcounselingdevelopment.org/events/amcd-summit/amcd-2020-virtual-summit/>
- For an informed view on naming diseases, <https://theconversation.com/naming-the-new-coronavirus-why-taking-wuhan-out-of-the-picture-matters-131738>

- Guidelines from WHO on best practices for naming infectious diseases.
<https://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/notes/2015/naming-new-diseases/en>



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
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