



Asian American Federation

In Response to the Shooting Attack on the Jewish Community in Pittsburgh, PA

In response to the terrible shooting on October 28th, 2018, at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, JoAnn Yoo, Executive Director, issued the following statement on behalf of the Asian American Federation:

“On Saturday morning, we watched in horror as the news filtered in about the 11 Jewish elders who were gunned down at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Less than an hour before attacking the synagogue, the shooter had posted hateful comments on social media, attacking HIAS, the oldest refugee protection and resettlement organization in the world, for their support of immigrants. Many of us in the immigrant rights arena have long standing ties with HIAS for their important work in support of refugees of every background and faith fleeing persecution.

On Wednesday, just days before the synagogue shooting, Maurice Stallard and Vickie Jones, two African American elders, were killed in a grocery store parking lot in Kentucky in yet another hate crime by a gunman targeting the Black community, who randomly shot the two victims after he failed to gain entry into a Black church.

That same day, in an attempt to harm former Presidents Clinton and Obama, as well as other prominent leaders, bombs were mailed to their homes and offices. CNN was also a target.

The Asian American Federation's Board of Directors and staff, along with our 70 member and partner agencies, mourn the victims and their families, and strongly condemn these violent acts. Our leaders cannot continue to use hateful rhetoric and publicly vilify immigrants and communities of color – whose members include our parents, siblings, neighbors, and friends – without taking responsibility for the fact that their words spur these terrible actions.

Today, and for all the days to come, we stand in solidarity with all of our friends and allies in the social justice field, and reject hate and discrimination.

Today, we redouble our commitment to building a peaceful city, state, and country, where we respect, celebrate, and value the contributions of all who call our country home. We will work to create a place for those fleeing war, poverty, and persecution from their homelands. We commit ourselves to making America a compassionate and welcoming place for immigrants again.

As Dr. King reminded us, ‘Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.’ **We ask you to stand with us!”**

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