For immediate release

Not In Our Town/School community statement supporting our Asian American neighbors

On March 22, Not In Our Town met with representative from our local Asian-American, Pacific Islander community. The recent shootings in Atlanta raised many questions about inclusion and safety in our community.

Not In Our Town/Not In Our School drew up this statement with the involvement of those community members. Local representatives and organizations from education, health care, labor, religious groups and community organizations were invited to sign on as supporters.

Here is the statement and the co-signers. For more information, contact Dr. Achana Shekara, Illinois State University professor and a Not In Our Town steering committee member. She can be reached at 309-825-1087.

Not In Our Town – Not In our School

Supporting our Asian-American & Pacific Islander neighbors

We are a better and a stronger people when we celebrate the human gifts of every individual. Our human fabric was torn again with the recent March 16th deaths in Atlanta, Georgia of

Delaina Ashley Yaun, 33
Xiaojie Tan, 49
Daoyou Feng, 44
Paul Andre Michels, 54
Elcias R Hernandez-Ortiz, 30
Hyun Jung Grant, 51
Soon Chung Park, 74
Suncha Kim, 69
Yong Ae Yue, 63

We say and celebrate their names. Too many people are dying of mass shootings in this nation. Daily we face stark headlines, a reminder to our nation and our world that tragedy strikes again and takes our innocent friends and neighbors. Our Asian-American neighbors have been targeted not just with this killing, but with numerous attacks in the past year. These are shameful and not who we are as a human family.

The undersigned organizations and individuals sign here to call for an end to violence, an end to discrimination based on age, race, national origin, gender or sexual identity. We embrace all our neighbors in McLean County as vital to our community, enriching us all with their spirit and

their gifts. Please join with us in pledging to stand up for human rights, equality and equal protection for all.

Our co-signers

Education
Dr. Larry Dietz, President, Illinois State University
Dr. S. Georgia Nugent, President, Illinois Wesleyan University
Dr. Keith Cornille, President, Heartland Community College
District 87 Schools – Dr. Barry Reilly, Superintendent
McLean County Unit 5 School District – Kristen Weikle, Superintendent
Deborah Halperin, Illinois Wesleyan University Action Research Center
Dr. Doris Houston, Interim Assistant to the President for Diversity and Inclusion, Illinois State University
AsiaConnect, Illinois State University
The Center for Civic Engagement, Illinois State University
Dr. Miranda Lin, President, Chinese American Educational Research and Development Association
Illinois State University Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program
Ms. Sally Ann Turner, National Board Certified Teacher and Illinois Master Teacher, Retired

Health Care
Carle BroMenn Medical Center

Elected Officials
State Representative Dan Brady
City of Bloomington – Mayor Tari Renner
Bloomington Council members Donna Boelen, Kim Bray, Jennifer Carrillo, Jeff Crabill, Julie Emig, Jamie Mathy, Mboka Mwilambwe, Joni Painter, Mollie Ward
Town of Normal, Mayor Chris Koos
Normal Town Council, Chemberly Cummings
Normal Human Relations Commission
Sharon Chung, McLean County Board District 7

Labor
Laborers International Union of North America – Midwest Region

Community Organizations
McLean County India Association
YWCA of McLean County
League of Women Voters of McLean County
NAACP – Bloomington-Normal Branch
The Immigration Project
BN Welcoming
BCAI Cultural Arts & Humanities
Elijah S. Betts Lodge #23, Free & Accepted Masons, Prince Hall Affiliation
National Pan-Hellenic Council of Bloomington-Normal, Illinois
McLean County Moms Demand Action
Telugu Association of Bloomington-Normal

Religious Organizations
African American Ministerial Bloomington Normal
Rev. Dr. Teresa Dulyea-Parker, Regional Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Illinois and Wisconsin
Rev. Holly Irvin, First Christian Church, Bloomington
Joe Bandy – First Christian Church, Bloomington, Board President
Hindu Temple of Bloomington-Normal
Brian Hastings, Pastor, First Baptist Church of Bloomington
Pastors Kent King-Nobles & Kathy King-Nobles, Rev. Kim Burke, Student Ministries, Normal First United Methodist Church
Rev. Sara L. Isbell, Senior Pastor, Rev. Justin Iverson, Associate Pastor, Wesley United Methodist Church, Bloomington
Rev. Christine McNeal Senior Staff Chaplain & Coordinator for Faith Community Relations, Carle BroMenn Medical Center, Carle Eureka Hospital
Carolyn Gray, Bloomington-Normal Oblates
Rev. Rebecca Gant, Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington-Normal
Christopher and Madeleine Callahan, Benedictine Oblates of St. Mary Monastery
James H Turner, Jr., Board Certified Chaplain, Retired
Fr. John Richmond, Priest-in-Charge, Christ the King Episcopal Church

Individual

Dennis Kirby

NIOT STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Rev. Dr. Brigitte Black, Tristan Bixby, Dr. Miltonette Craig, Rabbi Rebecca Dubowe, Kevin Jones, Angelique Racki, Erica Rosenberger, Martin Ross, Aditi Sharma, Archana Shekara, Yvin Shin, Rev. Mollie Ward, Janessa Williams, co-chairs: Camille Taylor and Mike Matejka