



# AAG

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
*of* GEOGRAPHERS

May 12, 2020

Dear colleague,

The AAG cares deeply about the safety and health of all of our members amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Stemming from the health crisis in the U.S. and around the world, we have seen statements describing the contagion as a “Chinese virus” or “Wuhan virus,” followed by discrimination and hate crimes against Asians and Asian Americans. Nearly one-quarter of AAG's members who reported their race/ethnicity in their membership registration identified as Asian.

In the past few months reports of anti-Asian sentiment have increased exponentially, beginning with more than 430 [mainstream](#) news articles related to the virus and xenophobia over a four-week period from January 28 through February 24. Since March 19, the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) civil rights organizations reporting center, [STOP AAPI HATE](#), has received more than 1,500 complaints of acts of violence toward other racial minority groups as well.

We encourage any AAG member who has experienced or witnessed COVID-19-related discrimination to [report the incident](#) to AAPI. Your information will support evidence-based reporting and research, as well as policy intervention efforts and community actions to combat prejudice.

We stand against racism, xenophobia and hate, irrespective of race, gender, nationality, country of origin. As emphasized in our new [Professional Conduct Policy and Procedures](#), we support a safe and inclusive environment for all of our members. In addition, we have signed recent letters (one with the [National Council of Asian Pacific Americans and the Democracy Initiative](#) and one with [multiple societies](#)) in favor of [U.S. House resolution 908](#) introduced by Rep. Grace Meng condemning all forms of anti-Asian sentiment as related to COVID-19.

We will continue our support to all members and participate in the efforts with our peer organizations during this extraordinarily difficult time.

Sincerely,

Gary Langham  
AAG Executive Director