



California Democratic Party 2020 Summer Executive Board Meeting
Asian Pacific Islander Caucus
Meeting Minutes

Friday, July 24, 2020 – 7:45 PM – 9:45 PM

WEBINAR STYLE

7:45 PM – Melissa calls meeting to order

Board members present: Alfred Twu, Emily Ann Ramos, Shawn Kumagai, Deepa Sharma, Melissa Ramoso, Harris Mojadedi, Hannah Cho, Matt Yagyagan, Nate Epstein, Adam Ma. Aref Aziz joined later. 83 Total Participants.

- I. Approval of Agenda. Motion Deepa, 2nd Shawn, approved unanimous.
- II. Approval of Minutes – tabled until November

7:48 PM - IV. Elected Officer Reports (9 minutes)

a. State Chair Report (1 minute) – we are about 102 days to Election Day. In 70 days ballots will go out, in 40 days voter guide will go out. CDP Chair Rusty Hicks met with party to go over Election 2020, make sure voters get the info they need. DEM 2020 and Trail Raisers fundraiser for CA Dems will make sure our downballot candidates get the support they need.

b. Treasurer Report (1 minute) – we have \$9145.94 in our account. We usually get our dues at Convention. Since we haven't had convention this year, make sure you renew your Caucus membership. Shawn motion to approve, Harris 2nd, unanimous approved

c. Secretary's Report (1 minute)

d. Northern California Report (3 minutes):

Upcoming:

Silicon Valley Asian Pacific American Democratic Club (SVAPADC) is having an online Dinner with a Dem & Membership Meeting on Wednesday, July 29th, 6-9pm.

Past Events

- Ed Lee Dem Club in San Francisco hosted a candidate forum for SF Supervisor District 1 & 7.
 - Muslim Dems & Friends of Alameda County had a Town Hall meeting with Assemblymember Bill Quirk (AD20).
 - Filipino American Democratic Club of San Mateo County co-hosted a Feeding Our Community In Times of Need event, providing free meals in Daly City.

- CA Young Dems API Caucus co-hosted an event with CYD and State Controller Betty Yee on how Asian Americans can advance racial justice and combat anti-blackness.

Other

- API healthcare essential services action passed by Santa Clara County.
- 1 endorsed candidate, Alex Lee, running for State Assembly.

e. Southern California Report (3 minutes) –

- Dave Min for State Senate is running in Orange County
- ___ is running for Assembly.
- Lots of great API candidates for City Council in various cities. Even in cities without an API majority, people are forming coalitions.
- In San Diego, Todd Gloria is running for Mayor. Endorsed by SD Dems. Would be first API and first LGBTQ mayor. Also a slate of API candidates running for other seats in SD.
- At least 11 API candidates running in Orange County.
- Nate is one of the two California co-chairs for Filipinos for Biden.
- San Diego also passed a resolution to address the Coronavirus in the API community.

Rusty: Thank you for the work you're doing not just with the Caucus but in the communities. We need to be confronting the racist policy and rhetoric coming from the White House and working to getting a change in 102 days.

8:00 PM – 9:15 PM – V. Looking Within: Addressing Anti-Blackness in the API Community

Introduction

For too long, our community has not been sufficiently vocal on confronting racism against the Black community. We need to look within to answer this question. As we only have an hour we will not get to everything, but let tonight be a start to the work we do.

Panelists

Candice Custodio-Tan– DJ Kuttin Kandi – organizer of Asian Solidarity Collective, etc.
Zahra Billoo from CAIR SF, one of the largest CAIR offices in the country.
Dr. Connie Wun – from AAPI Women Lead
Dr. Sunny Lee – Dean of Students at UC Berkeley
Asm. Ash Kalra from San Jose

Question 1: What does Anti-Blackness mean to you?

- Racism is prejudice combined with power. The power is what makes something not just prejudice, but racism. Anti-Blackness is the worst type of racism, as it is where Black people are not seen as human beings by corporations, by police officers, by government.
- Anti-Blackness began with the US constitution, it is the foundation of this modern world, not just in the US. It is in institutions such as prison, police, school, child protective services, medical industrial complex. Origin of policing is from slave patrols to capture Black people. It shows up in places like the impacts from COVID. It is the blueprint of how white supremacy functions.

- The issue is not just police, but policing done by other institutions. "If you want to abolish the police, you want to abolish the police in your heart and mind as well".

- It is also a global phenomenon.

- Anti-Blackness shapes access to freedom and safety. We need to be vocal and speak up when seeing Anti-Blackness in our own communities, whether it's a parent turning away a Black neighbor who wanted to play, store owners being suspicious of Black customers, calling police on people doing ordinary things. Skin lightening cream. Benefiting from Anti-Blackness without showing up to take it on. Opposition to marrying a Black person, opposition to affirmative action. Not acknowledging own privileges.

Question 2: What do you think of the analysis of certain API communities conflated with the Black experience and what do we do about it?

- The racism that API communities experience is different than what Black communities experience. API communities do not experience the same dehumanization that goes on.

- Labelling certain API communities "the Black people of Asians" etc is a form of anti-Blackness, it hides the actual differences.

- Race is a construct of white supremacy, we cannot talk about race without talking about white supremacy. It is not just individual instances, but part of institutions. Non-Black people are elsewhere in the racial hierarchy. "It's not about us".

- Anti-Blackness is a structure that enabled this modern world to exist. It made the slave trade possible. Racism can be seen when you see premature death. The hierarchy is built on top of Anti-Blackness.

- Among immigrants, once we gain the racial literacy of being in the US, we have responsibility. Media, and also school curriculum of children are how many first understand it. Many don't know the full scope of anti-Blackness and its history. A lot of things are ingrained in our communities and need to be rooted out.

- Remember that Anti-Blackness doesn't make sense, it's illogical. But some play into it because "someone has to be on the bottom so others can feel better about themselves."

Question 3: in conversations about Affirmative Action, some API communities view their identity as a liability. What do we say to them?

- Understand that opposition to affirmative action comes from a selfish place.

- Today, 70%+ of Asian Americans support Affirmative Action.

- Quotas have been banned since 1978.

- Diversity benefits students and society as a whole.

- API community should not assume that Black students are taking up their slots, when it's usually

White legacy admits.

- Getting into an elite college does not protect people from elitism, racism, etc. API still underrepresented in arts, leadership, management. So much more goes into making a full and fulfilling life than going to a top college.

- We need to refuse to be used as a wedge, and be in solidarity with Black and Brown communities. "Justice, not Just Us"

Question 4: Why is important for API women to stand in solidarity with Black women.

- #1 we should be in solidarity, just because.

- Black women, cis and trans, have been at front of many movements and struggles that we have benefited from. At the least we owe it to them. If Black women are not free, no one is free.

Question 5: Why is coalition building so important, how do we build it without taking up too much space and speaking on behalf of others?

- These battles are too big for any organization to take on alone.

- Remember that you're there to be of service but not lead. Recognize that others are being pushed to their limit. Listen to the people closest to the pain, they are the ones closest to the solutions. Know that it's messy and that we all have a checkered past.

Question 6: What's our role as API within our party to see and grapple with its own forms of policing?

- We take a lot of money from corporations that keep these systems in place? Are we willing to challenge it? We have to challenge who we partner with. Identify where policing takes place across institutions and across relationships.

- "We're better than Republicans" is not good enough.

Question 7: Please share thoughts on importance of ethnic studies in K-12

- Asking the question: what are people not learning? What are they reading? Go more in depth into the issues.

- Making sure kids learn about it earlier, not just in middle school, and that adults also learn outside of schools. Political workshops.

Question 8: for grassroots activists new to this work, what are recommendations for coalition building?

- Identify what's happening in your own backyard, in your own communities. Focus on what you're most passionate about.

- Criminal justice reform, housing, affirmative action are on the ballot.

- Right now is a great time to find your political home. Make sure those are studied homes, that they do education, that they're working across communities, with Black and Indigenous people.

MEETING OPENS TO ALL

9:16 PM - VI. Committee Reports (5 minutes)

Resolutions – Hong Kong resolution (20-03.24) and Taiwan resolution (19-08.09) will be going to CDP Resolutions committee tomorrow. *Note: both were adopted by the CDP on 7/26/2020.*

Diversity and Equity – we hope the party will officially support Prop 16 and afterwards we have a lot of work to do on demystifying Affirmative Action.

We will be updating our list of AAPI candidates running for office.

CDP Finance Committee will have hearing tomorrow at 10am about taking police money.

9:21 PM - VII. Speakers and Announcements

Keith Umemoto – DNC API Caucus is having virtual meetings in key states to get volunteers.

Harini Krishnan – CA state director, South Asians for Biden. Weekly phonebanks. Aug 3rd mobilization for high school students. <https://m.facebook.com/southasiansforbiden/>

Otto Lee – There will be two API Caucus meetings at the DNC. Exact time TBD. Also running for Santa Clara County Supervisor. Vote yes on Prop 16! This is the time to repeal Prop 209!

Janelle Welker – DPOC, candidate running for Santa Ana City Council, to bring voice to Vietnamese community.

Terry Sandoval from SEIU– Support Prop 23, protect dialysis patients. Require onsite doctor, data reporting, limit closure of clinics unless state approves, ban discrimination due to type of insurance. YesOnProp23.org also contact me directly: Terry Sandoval tsandoval@seiu-uhw.org or cell: 408-859-3591

Jenny Bach – look forward to more discussions and organizing!

Vandearlyn Vong – Long Beach 6th District, CDP endorsed candidate. Beat a 3-term incumbent by 16%, have virtual fundraiser coming up!

Suely Saro for Long Beach City Councilmember Virtual Fundraiser on Thursday August 16th at 6 PM <https://facebook.com/events/s/virtual-karaoke-fundraiser-in-/310527080313356/?ti=icl>

Julie Soo – can we have another way of communication besides Facebook. (due to job) sent an essay on why API should support Prop 16. <https://medium.com/@jessicajho/why-this-chinese-american-supports-affirmative-action-and-black-lives-matter-2264396606f0> MOCA museum of Chinese Americans has a great video on allyship w Black community.

Calvin Sung from Prop 16. The team is one of the most diverse ever. There are no racial quotas, no bonus points for being a certain race. It's about a holistic look. We're also bring a speakers series / speakers request program. Contact info: calvin@voteyesonprop16.org

9:45 PM - VII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn

Thank you to our ASL interpreters