



## STATEMENT ON WHITE SUPREMACIST VIOLENCE AGAINST ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS, MAY 17, 2021

Leading up to the May 19 commemoration of [National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#), the Black AIDS Institute, the nation's only uniquely and unapologetically Black HIV '*think and do tank*,' stands in solidarity with the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. In a nation built by people of color, Asian Americans are an inherent part of America's fabric. Yet, following the March 16 shooting in Atlanta that killed 6 Asian women and a year of increased violence against Asian American communities, [April 2021's Pew Survey](#) shows that 80% of the respondents feared increased violence.

**Calling it what it is:** For 22 years, BAI has fought to end HIV by amplifying it as a racial justice issue. Therefore, we recognize the need to identify and hold accountable systems and individuals that perpetuate white supremacy. Asian Americans and Black Americans saw the largest rise in hate crimes in 2020. Yet, while it has taken over 400 years for anti-Black racism to gain awareness, racism against non-Black people of color remains largely invisible.

**The common factor:** The same institutionalized white supremacy that drives hate crimes in the AAPI and Black communities also drives the disproportionate burden of HIV we face. Whether we are Black HIV experts fighting to end the epidemic or an Asian American salon owner trying to make a living, the same *white supremacy is our greatest, common detractor*. It is why we at the Black AIDS Institute continue to identify and confront racism as the true threat to our collective freedom.

**Decolonizing our minds:** White supremacy has thrived by dividing and conquering individuals and groups within communities of color, who remain neutral or align with systems of power. We at the Black AIDS Institute believe that while combating anti-Black racism to end HIV, we also have to stand up for all communities of color who face racism, particularly as it impacts ending HIV. When we unite as people of color, our collective response weakens the colonized mindset that exists in America today and makes way for healthy and whole communities.

As we honor National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, I urge you to [consider supporting organizations that directly benefit the AAPI community](#).

In solidarity,  
[Raniyah Copeland, President and CEO](#)  
[Black AIDS Institute](#)