

A GUIDE FOR BUSINESSES

Celebrating Asian and Pacific Islander History, Culture and Community

INSIGHTS AND INSPIRATION FOR ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH AND BEYOND



Jiaqi Wang

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FACEBOOK     

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Jiaqi Wang

ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST

Jiaqi Wang is a Chinese-born, Los Angeles-based illustrator and self-described plant addict. Her work revolves around her imagination, daily life, diversity and colors. She enjoys working with geometric shapes, building narratives and adding a poetic feeling to her drawings. She has moved around a lot, and those experiences and memories serve as her inspiration.

For this commissioned artwork, she hopes to show the togetherness of the API community as they share knowledge, joy and kindness with each other, and that by standing together, we will be stronger.



 [@jq.wan](https://www.instagram.com/jq.wan)

01

A mix of vibrant
cultures facing
challenges past
and present





ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDERS HAVE PLAYED KEY ROLES IN AMERICA'S STORY

On May 7, 1843, the first Japanese immigrant came to America's shores. Twenty-six years and a few days later, on May 10, 1869, the last rail was laid on the transcontinental railroad, which approximately 20,000 Chinese immigrants helped build under brutal working conditions.¹ With these two major milestones both occurring in May, the US government designated this period as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, with the aim of celebrating the many dynamic cultures that make up these communities and recognizing their many contributions.²

Today, the API community—which together represents more than 50 ethnic groups speaking over 100 languages³—is a growing population in the US, expected to surpass 47

million by 2060.⁴ They operate 1.9 million enterprises in the US⁵ and are the fastest growing segment of the nation's electorate.⁶ Many Asian and Pacific Islanders were on the frontlines of the fight against the pandemic, comprising 8.5% of all essential US healthcare workers, almost a million of which are immigrants.⁷

However, API communities and their businesses face challenges with increasing xenophobia, racism and violence. The shooting of six Chinese and Korean American women employees at spas and massage parlors in Atlanta, Georgia in March 2021 brought these realities to the forefront, sparking a call to address racist acts against this community.

Source: ¹ "Building the Transcontinental Railroad: How 20,000 Chinese Immigrants Made It Happen" by History.com, April 2020.

² "Teacher's Guide: Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage and History in the U.S." by NEH.gov.

³ "The Economic Status of Asian American and Pacific Islander Women" by Center for American Progress, March 2021.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "The White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders" by the US Department of Commerce.

⁶ "Asian American super PAC launches operation to improve understanding of fastest-growing electorate" by The Washington Post, April 2021.

⁷ "Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans on the Frontlines" by New American Economy Research Fund, May 2020.

And even though the “model minority myth” often paints Asians as well-educated and self-reliant, they often face similar disproportionate economic struggles as other underrepresented groups—struggles that the pandemic has only exacerbated. Asian workers in low-wage jobs were hit hardest by lockdowns of nail salons, dry cleaners and shopping center closures.⁸ Long-term unemployment among the API population in the first quarter of 2021 surpassed that of Black, white and Hispanic or Latino communities.⁹ And while nearly 50 percent of the API demographic has a college degree, less than 20 percent of the segment’s subgroups, such as Pacific Islanders, Cambodians or native Hawaiians, have bachelor’s degrees.¹⁰

What's the most important action businesses can take toward more inclusion and equality for members of the API community?

“Businesses can get involved with the communities in which they are located. Explore what in-language and locally-relevant materials you have available to the community in which you do business and connect with the leaders and organizations who know them best. Businesses without local presence through retail outlets can still make significant impact by ensuring in their daily practices that products and services provided to employees/consumers are linguistically and culturally accessible.”

—Mary Tablante,
Assistant Director, Strategic Communications

—Danielle Wong,
Multi-Media Strategic Communications, Fellow
Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC)

Source: ⁸ Ibid.

⁹ “US Bureau of Labor Statistics, April 2021.

¹⁰ “Asian American super PAC launches operation to improve understanding of fastest-growing electorate”
by The Washington Post, April 2021.





CHALLENGES FOR THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITY

150%

Nearly

17%

Less than

20%

increase in anti-Asian hate crimes in largest US cities in 2020¹¹

decrease in Asian women's employment from March to April 2020¹²

of API subgroups, including Pacific Islanders, Cambodians or native Hawaiians, have bachelor's degrees

Source: ¹¹ "Anti-Asian hate crimes increased by nearly 150% in 2020, mostly in N.Y. and L.A., new report says" by NBC News, March 2021.

¹² "The Economic Status of Asian American and Pacific Islander Women" by Center for American Progress, March 2021.



FIGHTING HATE AND ADVANCING EQUALITY

Supporting the API Community

- ✓ Amplify stories of those in the API community impacted by hate
- ✓ Build relationships and donate to API community groups and organizations
- ✓ Follow and support organizations like 3in5 and the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative that are working to increase inclusivity and accurate representation of Asians in advertising and media
- ✓ Support local Asian-led businesses in your community

SUPPORT #STOPASIANHATE

Acts of xenophobia and racism against the API community have occurred throughout America's history, including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Japanese Internment camps and violence that sparked the Filipino Farm Worker Movement in the 1960s.

But since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a growing number of anti-Asian hate crimes. The Stop API Hate reporting forum received nearly 3,800 reports of hate crimes between March 19, 2020 and February 28, 2021. Women reported 68% of the reports.¹³ However, this may be just a fraction of the number of hate incidents that occur and go unreported, including acts of violence against API elders.¹⁴

These recent attacks, as well as the shooting of six Chinese and Korean

American women in Atlanta in March, have heightened awareness and inspired broad-based activism to fight such acts of racism. Individuals and businesses alike can take action by amplifying stories of those impacted, building relationships with members of the API community and donating to organizations and causes fighting prejudice, such as the [AAPI Community Fund](#), which supports a range of API community groups united against hate.

Another organization supporting the API community includes [Asian Americans Advancing Justice \(AAJC\)](#), a Washington D.C.-based nonprofit fighting for civil rights for this demographic through education, litigation and public policy advocacy.

Source: ¹³“Stop AAPI Hate National Report” by Stop AAPI Hate, March 2021.

¹⁴“Hate Crimes Against Asian Americans Are on the Rise. Many Say More Policing Isn't the Answer” by [Time](#), February 2021.





SUPPORT #STOPASIANHATE

The AAJC team seeks to empower API communities by bringing local and national constituencies together and ensuring that Asian Americans are able to participate fully in America's democracy.

Another organization is South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT), which is committed to advancing racial justice through structural change. And to address the needs of the Pacific Islander community in particular, Los Angeles-based Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC) advances social justice by engaging Pacific Islanders in culture-centered advocacy, leadership and research.



#ShareAPIStories

Born in San Francisco to Chinese immigrants barred from ever becoming US citizens under the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, Wong Kim Ark sued the federal government after being denied re-entry to the US after a trip to China. On March 28, 1898, the US Supreme Court ruled in **United States v. Wong Kim Ark** that the government could no longer deny citizenship to anyone born in America based on the 14th Amendment.¹⁵

Source: ¹⁵ "Asian Americans in the People's History of the United States" by the Zinn Education Project.

ADDRESSING UNDERREPRESENTATION AND HARMFUL, INACCURATE STEREOTYPES

Compared to other demographics, the API community is far less represented in advertising and the media. Only 3% of Asians feel represented in advertising compared to 59% of whites, 26% of Blacks, and 10% of Hispanics.¹⁶ Out of the Top 30 Super Bowl ads in USA Today's Ad Meter for 2021, only six had an Asian appear on screen.¹⁷ When members of the API community are shown in commercials, they are often space fillers on the fringes of the screen or portrayed in stereotypical roles, such as restaurant staff or social outcasts. Such a lack of equal representation as well as misrepresentation strengthens the misperception that members of the API demographic are foreigners who aren't part of the essential fabric of the US.

Organizations like [3in5](#) are working to reverse these harmful trends and to increase the authentic representation of Asians in advertising and media. In April, the organization invited marketers to take part in the 3 in 5

Challenge by creating a public service announcement (PSA) creative concept addressing the underrepresentation of Asian-Americans in advertising media. The winner of the challenge will see their work run throughout the month of May across over 35 national media partners, including **The Washington Post**, Verizon Media, **Buzzfeed**, Meredith and many others.

Another organization addressing representation in media is the [Annenberg Inclusion Initiative](#). The Initiative recently commissioned a [study](#) with Netflix analyzing inclusion across Netflix's US original live-action films and series from 2018 and 2019. The study assessed the on-screen inclusion of people across gender, race and ethnicity, LGBTQ+ and disability.

3%

of Asians feel represented in advertising compared to 59% of whites, 26% of Blacks, and 10% of Hispanics¹⁶

Source: ¹⁶ Diversity in Advertising, Adobe Digital Insights 2019.

¹⁷ USA Today Ad Meter, 2021.





PROGRESS DEPENDS ON ALL OF US

Asian-led business
leaders surveyed were

34%

more likely to report changing their
advertising strategy in response to the
pandemic than average SMB leaders¹⁸

\$1.3T

amount of collective buying power
of Asian Americans projected by 2022¹⁹

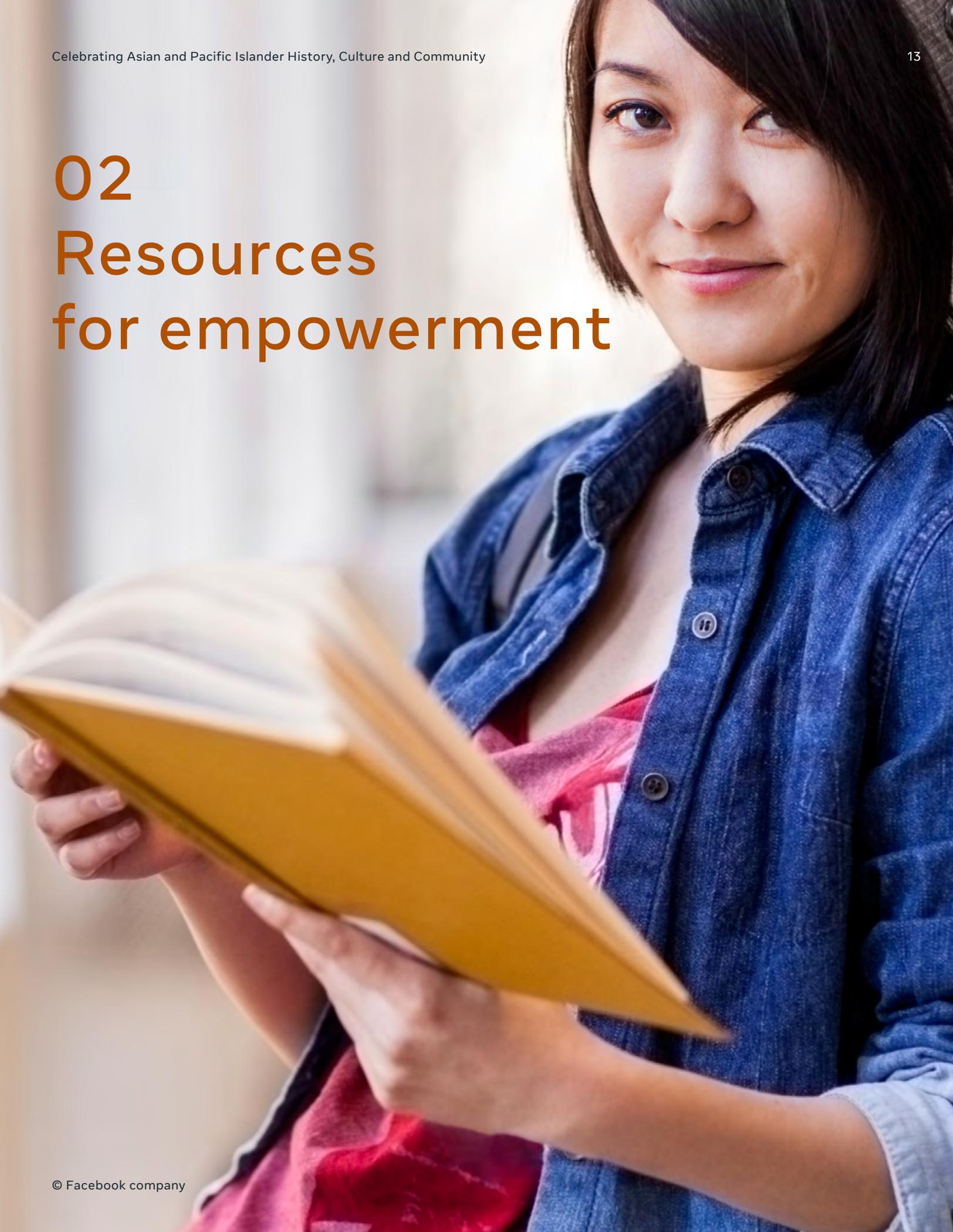
\$5.8M+

raised for the AAPI Community
Fund on [GoFundMe.com](https://www.gofundme.com)

Source: ¹⁸ "The Global State of Small Business: Insights into women-led and minority-led businesses in early 2021" by Facebook/OECD/World Bank (Facebook-commissioned study of a random sample of 17,920 SMB leaders across 26 countries and territories outside the US and 18,434 SMB leaders in the US, conducted over the period 29 January–9 February 2021), April 2021.

¹⁹ Asian-Americans' disposable income was up 314% before Covid-19, study finds" by [CNN](https://www.cnn.com), February 2021.

02 Resources for empowerment



Three ways to support the API community year-round

1 DIVERSIFY YOUR DOLLAR

Commit to working with API suppliers

2 ACCELERATE INCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION

Ensure that members of the API community are represented authentically in your marketing

3 SHARE THE STAGE

Support communities by helping to amplify underrepresented voices

1

DIVERSIFY YOUR DOLLAR

Commit to working with diverse suppliers.

Given the scope and range of API businesses available, businesses that commit to hiring API suppliers have access to a vast range of high quality talent.

Many of today's largest global brands are partnering with third parties such as the US Pan Asian American Chamber of Commerce (USPAACC) to source API suppliers as well as run workshops, professional matchmaking events, capital investment opportunities and management training to help API business owners thrive.²⁰



#ShareAPIStories

DUKE KAHANAMOKU, NATIVE HAWAIIAN OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST, SURFER AND ACTOR

Born in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1890, Duke Kahanamoku was a five-time Olympic medalist in swimming, competing in the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm, the 1920 Olympics in Antwerp and the 1924 Olympics in Paris. Nicknamed "The Big Kahuna," Kahanamoku also was an alternate for the US water polo team at the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles. After his athletic career, Kahanamoku was an actor, sheriff and surfer. He contributed to popularizing the Hawaiian sport of surfing to a new generation all over the world.²¹

Source: ²⁰ "Why You Need a Supplier-Diversity Program" by [Harvard Business Review](#), August 2020.

²¹ "16 Asian American Heroes Our Kids Need to Know About" by Red Tricycle, August 2020.



2

ACCELERATE INCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION

Ensure that members of the API community are represented authentically in your marketing.

Brand and creative leaders can take several immediate steps to accelerate inclusive representation of API individuals:

01

Include criteria for gender, race and sexual orientation in your briefs, scripts and casting documents. Consider representing individuals with intersectional identities that combine these attributes, whether or not diversity is related to a brand or campaign message.

02

Write and cast more API characters in authentic and prominent roles. Avoid common stereotypes of the API community, such as overly sexualized Asian women or socially inept API individuals. Show these characters having agency and authority.

03

Create metrics that assess how well your creative briefs support your inclusion goals before moving into production.

Remember that diversifying your creative is just a start. Business leaders who prioritize inclusion examine all their processes and decisions, from gathering consumer feedback to recruiting talent to developing products and services. After all, in order to speak to API individuals in an authentic voice, brands must include them in the decisions that matter most to the business and to how they engage with customers.



3

SHARE THE STAGE

Support communities by helping to amplify underrepresented voices.

There are many ways businesses can help elevate the stories and interests of members of the API community, each of whom carries a unique perspective and diverse set of experiences and interests. Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is a prime opportunity to share the stage, whether it's raising awareness of API-led businesses or suppliers in your industry, creating a #StopAsianHate campaign or promoting API rights or a similar cause.

Sharing the stage to raise awareness for typically unheard API voices is not only the right thing to do—it can also be an opportunity for a brand to reach and engage new audiences. By reaching out with an empathetic message that resonates, brands can build new customer relationships based on trust and authentic connection.



#ShareAPIStories

KALPANA CHAWLA, INDIAN AMERICAN ASTRONAUT AND ENGINEER

Born in East Punjab, India, in 1962, Kalpana Chawla was the first woman of Indian descent to go to space, serving as a mission specialist and primary robotic arm operator on the space shuttle **Columbia**. Tragically, Chawla and her fellow crew members died when the spacecraft fell apart during its re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere in 2003. Today, Chawla is regarded as a national hero in India as well as the United States. She was posthumously awarded the Congressional Space Medal of Honor and many streets, universities and institutions have been named in her honor.²²

What's the most important action businesses can take toward more inclusion and equality for members of the API community?

“The APIA community is not a monolith: Each part of the larger diaspora faces different issues, and understanding this is key to empowering the community. For instance, supporting the South Asian American diaspora necessitates building protections for those facing caste-based discrimination, including employees.”

—Sruti Suryanarayanan
Research & Communications Associate
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)

Source: ²² “16 Asian American Heroes Our Kids Need to Know About” by Red Tricycle, August 2020.



SHARE YOUR STAGE TO AMPLIFY API VOICES

During a virtual event hosted by The Facebook Partner Center and the Asian American Advertising Federation, members of the advertising industry discussed ways for businesses of all sizes to take action against acts of hate and violence targeting the API community. The following are key takeaways from the event. You can [read more](#) about the event here or [watch a recording](#).



Tell your story

Julia Huang, CEO of Intertrend Communications Inc., shared about [#MakeNoiseToday](#), an event she launched in 2020 that encourages Asian Americans to share their stories in an effort to combat racism and create empathy. “We took a different approach in addressing the issue, focusing on encouraging people to stand up and speak up, to create a robust narrative about what it means to be Asians in the US, to bust ourselves out of narrative scarcity and work toward narrative plentitude,” Huang said.



Don't stop at a solidarity statement

Eric Toda, global head of social marketing at Facebook, offered starting points for brands that are ready to move beyond verbal support for the API community. “What brands could do is start to engage,” he said. “Start to engage their inner communities, start to provide forums, start to provide resources, start to provide support on how they can be better in supporting their own communities, how they can provide more resources in communities that these brands sit in, to support them on a deeper level.”



Hold other brands accountable for doing more

Telly Wong, SVP and chief content officer at IW Group, said that brands can work together to combat issues like systemic racism. A year ago, Telly launched a campaign called #WashtheHate as a direct response to the rise in hate crimes against Asian Americans since the outbreak of COVID-19. Telly and team shared what his team learned from the #WashtheHate campaign with brands to help lift similar movements up.



Be mindful of where your money goes

Christine Ngo Isaac, consumer engagement director at Hennessy at LVMH, made the point that money is power. “We need to remember that as brand owners, we have a privilege and responsibility to use our powers for good,” Ngo Isaac said. “As brand owners, we hold dollars. We need to think about how we’re investing them. We need to give more power to the right voices.”



Enlist and hire subject matter experts

“It’s important to make sure you have allies of people who look like you and do not look like you,” said Elizabeth Campbell, senior director of US marketing and cultural engagement at McDonald’s. “I’m an African American woman, but part of my job is to make sure that I’m representing all consumers.” Campbell acknowledged that brands may not always have the answer at-hand, but there are others who can help.





Ensure diverse representation in leadership positions

When the event participants discussed what true business equality looks like, it came down to two things: Leadership and decision-making power. “Our side of the table cannot look more diverse than the other side of the table,” Ngo Isaac said, referring to her process of evaluating the other companies she works with. “It’s not just about having diverse representation of certain groups within our agency partners. It’s making sure that they’re represented at the leadership level.”



Have and create empathy—every day

At the end of the day, Toda said creating meaningful, lasting change comes down to empathy. “Reach across the table to our white allies and ask them to take the steps to understand cultural nuance, take the steps to understand who’s around the room,” Toda said. “Is this the most diverse room that we can get so we can get the best ideas?”

Ngo Isaac called out a culture that tends to rally only around big moments. She cautions that this model is not something we should deploy. “We can’t wait until there is a crisis to show our support,” Ngo Isaac said. “That empathy needs to happen every single day.”

What's the most important action businesses can take toward more inclusion and equality for members of the API community?

"Pacific Islanders are a community to know, and not just a place to go. Beyond paradise and tourist destinations, we are navigators and storytellers, warriors and healers, descendants and future ancestors. Honor the full breadth of our humanity by not treating us as land or culture to consume but a people worthy and deserving of celebration."

— Tavae Samuelu, Executive Director
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)

03 Facebook commitments to the API community



\$40M

contributed in 2020 to US small businesses. Of the 94% of which self-reported race, one third identified as API.²³

\$1.1B

spent cumulatively with diverse suppliers between 2017 and 2019. The majority of these were API-owned firms.²⁴

Source: ²³ Facebook data.

²⁴ Ibid.



In addition to publicly stating support for the API community and standing against Asian hate, Facebook as a company has made tangible commitments to support API individuals and businesses:

- In 2020, as part of the \$10 million racial justice grants to nonprofits that were chosen by Facebook employees, we gave to many organizations that work on racial justice for all groups who experience injustice, including the API community. We gave to organizations like Undoing Racism, Law Foundation of Silicon Valley and more. We also committed \$277K to the Japanese American National Museum. We expect to donate an additional \$300K in community foundation grants to support diverse communities, including API.
- We have engaged several national organizations over the last few years to ensure the community's perspectives are represented as we develop new products and policies. In 2020, we donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC) to support for Census outreach to the API community.
- Facebook is a member of the Asian American Advertising Federation, working directly with the marketing industry to support its agenda on API issues.
- We have also activated campaigns with the Asian American & Pacific Islander Health Forum as part of our vaccine confidence initiative and with Asians for Mental Health as part of our work with the Mental Health Coalition.
- Through our Accelerator program,



which allocates \$100K in grants and resources for BIPOC-led newsrooms, we have supported media like **NextShark**, one of the largest destinations for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as well as the Japanese-American paper, **Rafu Shimpo**.

- For Asian Pacific American Heritage

Month, we will have a month-long series of activations in support of the API community, including training, Shop Collections, weekly programming and a social media toolkit for up-and-coming entrepreneurs.



#ShareAPIStories

TAMMY DUCKWORTH, THAI AMERICAN ARMY VETERAN AND US SENATOR

Born in 1968 in Bangkok, Thailand, to an American father and Thai mother, Tammy Duckworth is a trailblazer on several counts: she is the first person born in Thailand and the first Thai American woman to be elected to Congress, the first Congresswoman with a disability, the first double amputee woman in the Senate, and the first US senator to give birth while in office. A former US Army lieutenant colonel, Senator Duckworth lost both of her legs and some mobility in her right arm after a rocket-propelled grenade hit her helicopter while serving in the Iraq War. Despite being injured, she obtained a medical waiver so she could continue serving in the Illinois Army National Guard until she retired as a lieutenant colonel in 2014.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH INSTAGRAM STICKER PACK

We worked with artist Dingding Hu (@huishungry), a Chinese illustrator from New York, to create a new sticker pack on Instagram for Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Visit [@design](#) to learn more.



A MORE INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

“Feeling only takes us so far. We must also look at what actions are we prepared to do to make this world one where everyone truly has the opportunity that they deserve.”
—Maxine Williams, Chief Diversity Officer at Facebook

\$1.1B

Facebook has cumulatively spent supporting suppliers certified as minority, women, veteran, LGBTQ or disabled-owned²⁵

\$1B

Facebook’s commitment to spend with diverse suppliers in 2021

50%

of Facebook workforce from underrepresented communities by 2024

For more on Facebook’s diversity and inclusion commitments and progress, please visit diversity.fb.com.

Source: ²⁵ Facebook data.

IT'S MORE THAN A MONTH

Thank you for your commitment to celebrating members of the Asian and Pacific Islander community in May 2021 and beyond.



For additional business resources, visit the [Facebook Business Equality hub](#).

