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One year after the death of Vicha Ratanapakdee, advocates call for community investments

Street outreach, victim wraparound services, and ambassador programs could help provide prevent future incidents of violence, according to the Coalition for Community Safety and Justice (CCSJ)

Today, the [Coalition for Community Safety and Justice \(CCSJ\)](#) acknowledges the anniversaries of two deaths of two Asian elders in San Francisco, Vicha Ratanapakdee and Yik Oi Huang, and the countless number of tragic incidents that have harmed our communities and brought painful visibility to the rise of anti-Asian violence, racism, and xenophobia.

CCSJ formed in 2019 in response to similar incidents targeting vulnerable Asian Americans, including non-English speakers and the elderly, which are the products of longstanding safety issues affecting the Asian American communities in San Francisco. Our goal is to address violence and racial inequity by building a culturally-competent, citywide network and developing programs that prioritize survivor and community care, violence prevention and intervention.

Right now, we are witnesses to an unprecedented and tragic increase in hate and violence targeting Asian Americans in San Francisco. More than ever, we must take action with urgency.

We call upon our City leaders and our communities to continue making investments and supporting compassionate and comprehensive solutions, such as increased funding for culturally-competent victim wraparound services, street outreach, and ambassador programs. We further ask for the strengthening of policies to ensure City agencies develop in-language and culturally-competent responses when incidents do occur and to support cross-racial solidarity programs. These investments must be cross-racial and address systemic racism – the underlying, root cause of the real harms we face. It's time that our City's robust resources match the needs of our communities, so that our public safety systems keep all of us safe.

We know that this kind of investment works. Since our programs launched less than a year ago, we've engaged over 17,000 people through our street outreach, connected with more than 15

partner organizations and agencies, provided victims services to over 70 individuals, and held countless workshops focused on personal safety, de-escalation tactics, and bystander intervention. Our cross-community listening sessions and community solidarity events have created space to listen deeply and with humility to the experiences of others and identify what our communities need to reimagine compassionate and comprehensive safety. This work was made possible with initial investments from the City and County of San Francisco last year, and we urge City leaders to sustain and further expand resources to continue this critical work.

We are reminded that this year, the advent of Lunar New Year falls on February 1st, the same date marking the start of Black History Month. CCSJ believes that we are strongest when we are united, which is why we are committed to working with Black, Indigenous, Latino, and Pacific Islander communities to achieve our long-term vision to stop violence in all our communities.

Our four organizations – [Chinese for Affirmative Action](#), [Chinese Progressive Association](#), [Community Youth Center](#), and [Chinatown Community Development Center](#) – have a combined 200 years of grassroots experience working within and serving San Francisco’s Asian American communities. For decades, we have built a legacy of multi-racial community building and advocacy, fought for civil rights, and defeated attempts to undermine justice for our communities. Now, we unite to reaffirm our resolve in fighting for permanent personal and public safety by eradicating systemic racism and cultivating a pathway towards collective liberation.

You can learn more about CCSJ at ccsjsf.org.