



DIVERSITY STILL A TOP ISSUE AT NJCU: PLANS, PROGRESS, AND TRENDS

by Haresh Oudhnarine - Contributing Writer



Hepburn Hall. Photo by Oudhnarine.

It has been almost a year since the Black Alumni, Administrator, Faculty, Student, and Staff Organization (BAAFSSO) released a letter with 10 demands for the university. The school has been working towards addressing them.

The university is in the process of hiring a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, and the University Senate continues to show its support towards BAAFSSO.

Aaron Aska, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer and presidential liaison for BAAFSSO, said, "The administration provided responses to BAAFSSO's 10 demands, and I believe the executive team at BAAFSSO are currently reviewing those responses."

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ANTI-ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER HATE CRIMES IN AMERICA

by Nicholas Felix - Contributing Writer



Jersey City Protest Against Asian Violence. Photo by Felix.

Hate is a powerful weapon often favored by persuasive leaders who twist politics, the media, and other public and private institutions to spin people towards dangerously directed agendas. Hate is venomous to society and a person's wellbeing. Its only function is advancing hysteria, violence, toxic politics, and misinformation. Racist acts against Asian and Pacific Islander communities are not new. It predates Covid, and if we look at history, this problem occurred even before World War II. This nation's-

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ANTI-ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER HATE CRIMES IN AMERICA

-recent surge in hate crimes directed towards one group is sadly a historical repeat of attacks linked to disease outbreaks such as what happened during the Spanish Flu of 1918. During the H1N1 swine flu of 2009, some blamed immigrants, particularly those of Mexican descent. In 2014, Ebola caused trouble for people of the African community. Now we are thrown back into the cycle of xenophobia, hysteria, racist hatred, and violence to innocent bystanders for their non-white appearances.

U.S history is filled with examples of racist policy directed at AAPI. During World War II, for example, Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered the establishment of Japanese internment camps in California and other western states. There was also the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (repealed in 1943), the banning of Asian children from public schools, and the infamous Chinese Massacre of 1871 when 17 Chinese men and boys were hung and brutalized by a mob.

During the recent pandemic, names such as Wuhan Virus, China virus, Kung Fu Virus were thrown around by irresponsible politicians.

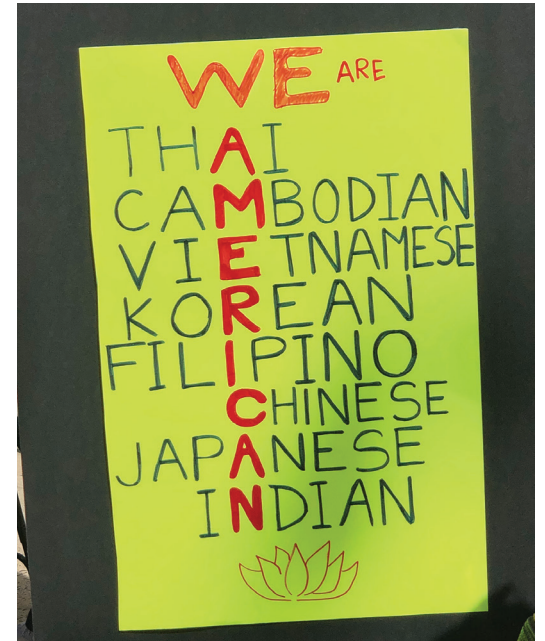
These offensive titles are more than controversial, these names are dangerous and marked the Asian community as targets for racist violence. The Asian community has been in the crosshairs of two conflicts, the war on Covid and Anti-Asian violence. Young and older AAPI generations fear for one another's family and friends who travel through their hometowns, fearing the worst. Imagine having to keep yourselves and your family safe from COVID-19 and racism.

The range of emotions running through a person's physical and mental state with fear, stress, anger, and even depression, especially from losing loved ones from either COVID-19 or violent encounters that led to deaths.

In the state of New Jersey, from late March through December of 2020, the rise of hate crimes in the North area of New Jersey has involved major verbal attacks, bullying, and 17 percent of assaults of the North Jersey population. Across the rest of the world, Germany, France, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Italy to name a few have all reported data on high rises in anti-Asian hate crimes. Growing concern and fear of repeated incidents for Asian and Pacific Islander related citizens in other countries like Milan and the Netherlands, cases of assaults by people filled with Sino phobic hate, attacking innocent bystanders on the streets for their heritage.

It's clear that hate crimes transpiring today are an echo of past transgressions and underlying tension that has not been given the proper attention. For example, the recent murders that took place in Atlanta, Georgia, where eight people were murdered; seven of whom were Asian women and sadly the police department seemed to write off the incident as the Gunman just having a bad day.

In response to rising surges of hate crimes, at the "Stop Asian Hate Jersey City Rally" City Councilman at Large, Rolando R. Lavarro, Jr commented with compassion and concern," the recent hate crimes towards Asian American citizens has become the effect of former president Trump's inappropriate termi-



Jersey City Protest Against Asian Violence.
Photo by Felix.

nology for the coronavirus, like China virus and other things, he felt uncomfortable with the terms he didn't want to reiterate the hurtful words. Furthermore, Councilman at Large Lavarro commented" these prejudice titles have somehow given a reason for the bigots of the world to attack the Asian community.

From Christiana Reyes of the Anakbayan North Jersey "she was heartened with hope from hundreds of people who came to support the cause in stopping Asian hate".

It was astounding to hear that there were people of different ethnicities, ages, etc. showing true solidarity in the cause to protect the AAPI community.

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In an update from Venida Rodman Jenkins, the President of BAAFSSO and Director of the Speicher-Rubin Women's Center for Equity and Diversity, she said, "BAAFSSO received an informal draft statement that did not address all of the outstanding concerns. We are attempting to work with Dr. Aaron Aska, the Presidential Liaison, to better understand what is open, what is closed, and what is in progress."

In a statement provided by the Student Government Association (SGA) in November 2020, they said that their president, Ricky Cruz, has spoken with the university president, Sue Henderson, about the lack of diversity within faculty, dating back to June 2019.

SGA said, "Since then, we have challenged the president to investigate the staff and administration in the sense of diversity. At the time, President Henderson responded with the diversity of staff takes time because faculty have tenure which we must wait for them to leave to replace them and most of those faculty members are white."

Diversity Plans and Progress

Andres Acebo, chief of staff to the president, explained in a March zoom interview that the university is in the process of hiring a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO). He said that the hiring process should be completed by the end of April or early May.

Aska will be serving as the chair of the committee for the hiring of the CDIO. An email from the Office of the President sent out in mid-April announced a

series of "Meet the Candidate" sessions for the CDIO position.

Acebo also said that there is an ongoing search for an associate vice president for Human Resources who will work closely with the CDIO.

During the April 5th University Senate meeting, there were four resolutions passed related to the BAAFSSO demands.

1. The Senate requests that the administration immediately identify all committees that will work to ensure a safe campus reopening and, given the fact that the pandemic has disproportionately impacted people of color, appoint a BAAFSSO representative as a member of each said committee.

2. The Senate requests that during the Spring 2021 Semester, the administration invite representatives of New Jersey Anti-Racist Alliance anti-racist for training for all University administrators, managers, faculty, staff, and supervisors.

3. The Senate requests that the administration hire BAAFSSO-recommended outside consultants to study and develop a concentrated and strategic plan for admitting and retaining students of color and provide that commitment to the University community by April 15, 2021.

4. The Senate requests that the administration hire only a BAAFSSO-recommended outside consultants and/or only and/or BAAFSSO-recommended Chief Diversity Officer to study and develop a concentrated strategy for admitting, recruiting, and retaining faculty, staff, and administrators of color and include

that in the University Strategic Plan. We would request this commitment by April 15, 2021.

President of the University Senate, Chris Shamburg, gave some insight into the resolutions in an email interview. He said, "On the first resolution, the administration clarified that the University has remained opened throughout the pandemic, thus reopening is not an issue."

He continued, "One suggestion by the Senate Executive Committee was to have a BAAFSSO representative on the University's Safety, Security, and Sustainability Committee. The Administration is going to review the charge of that committee and see if that would be appropriate."

Why Is There a Lack of Diversity in Higher Education?

Candice Staples, a professional who has worked in and studied higher education, supplies information on the relationship between minority success in faculty and administrative positions in colleges and universities. Staples received her Ph.D. at the University of Maryland where her research focused primarily on the career path and trajectory of Black women who transitioned from faculty to administration positions such as Provosts, Deans, or other associate positions.

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In a March zoom interview with Staples, she explained that many colleges and universities tend to hire a group of faculty of color during a small period of time in hopes that they will be able to support one another, but they tend to end up across different programs/departments and inevitably still feel isolated. Without adequate support for faculty members, there is not as diverse of a group to choose from when new administrative positions become open. In addition, professors who do not achieve tenure become limited in their career trajectory into higher positions.

Explaining why many professors might struggle to attain tenure, Staples said that it may be in part to them not being able to do enough research. She said, “When you have a faculty member of color, a lot of times students want them to be their advisor and advisor of their organizations. They are pulled in a lot of directions; the college may want them to be on a diversity committee, etc. That takes away time from doing research and research is what helps you get tenure. Not that service and teaching are not important, but you also have to do research.”

Staples continued, “In my studies, I have found that sometimes they would take professors at an associate level and ask them to take on a temporary administrative assignment that becomes permanent before you know it. If you become a chair or a program head, you might want to become a dean or may want to go back to faculty. If you want to be a dean or provost, you might need to be a full professor. Again, there are all these different ways for you to hit a ceiling, and for faculty of color, it is more pronounced

because you are most likely conducting more service along the way.”

Molly Morin, a professional who has worked in higher education for over 12 years, provided insight into the pathway of Hispanic women in colleges/universities, and specifically Latina senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) whom her research focused on. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Maryland in Higher Education.

In a March email interview, Morin said, “There are many reasons why Latino/Hispanic populations are not well represented in positions of power at colleges/universities, some of which include: (a) systemic barriers (e.g., racism, sexism, xenophobia), (b) the glass ceiling that limits women’s advancement, (c) a limited or lack of mentors and role models, (d) limited or lack of access to the hidden knowledge/hidden curriculum to promote career advancement), (e) a lack of institutional commitment to the retention of Latino/Hispanic administrators once they are recruited, and more.”

Morin explained that while there has been an increased representation of women in SSAO positions over the past 60 years, a majority of them are white. Citing NASPA, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, Morin revealed that only six percent of vice presidents of student affairs are Hispanic in the entire country while 77 percent are White, and 13 percent are Black.

10 Year Faculty Trends at NJCU

Data provided by the Office of Human Resources shows the changes in the race

demographics represented in both full-time and part-time faculty from 2010 to 2019. The differences are determined by the overall representation each race has on the total number of faculty.

The group that has seen the most positive increase is Asian. Asian faculty increased by 100 percent for full-time professors while part-time increased by 26.6 percent.

White faculty saw decreases in both groups over the 10-year span with full-time decreasing by 16.4 percent, and part-time decreasing by 13.9 percent.

Most interesting, Black and Hispanic faculty continue to represent the smallest amount of all professors.

Representation of Black full-time faculty decreased by 25 percent over 10 years and decreased by 8.3 percent for part-time.

Full-time Hispanic faculty increased by only 12.5 percent, and part-time increased by 28.6 percent.

Notably, Black and Hispanic students represented 66 percent of the undergraduate population in 2020.

New Data from 2020 for Faculty and Students

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Q&A WITH KENISE BROWN

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF WILL GRADUATE THIS JUNE

by Nick Camejo - Contributing Writer

GT: What are you most looking forward to about graduation?

Kenise Brown: I am looking forward to walking on a stage, grabbing my diploma, and saying 'I did it.' I am free from college, so I don't have to worry about studying and taking tests anymore. I just want to be free from it all and move on.

GT: What made you want to get involved in The Gothic Times?

KB: The Gothic Times changed my entire experience of college. I was introduced to journalism in high school. After high school, I didn't want to do it anymore because it was a lot of work. In my sophomore year of college, I applied for work-study and ended up at The Gothic Times. I didn't know what it was or researched it before coming to the interview. When I stepped my foot in the door for the interview, my mouth dropped as I saw multiple stacks of newspapers. Overall the adviser (Theta) was excited to have someone who had some experience in Journalism and made me news-editor on the spot."

GT: What advice would you give to current students at NJCU?

KB: Always try new things. Open your life to new opportunities. You don't know where it could lead you to. I went from the news editor to editor-in-chief in one year. Broaden your experience and never be afraid to try new things.

GT: What are your plans after graduation?

KB: After college, I plan to publish my own children's book. I always had a love for it. I want to be a part of this new generation's life and publish books and TV shows one day. After that, I want to turn the book(s) into short films and then create more magic for the younger generation. I am also planning family comedy films. I want to create happiness for African-American people and create films for them.

Different colors, different sizes, and diversity for the black community is what I am striving to show. I want to highlight African-American people correctly, especially for young girls and women. We are more than just a black girl wearing an afro. Many children's shows and books have African-American girls with their hair in a bun or a ponytail as well and not the unique hairstyles we are known to have. I want to show people that there's more to that.

GT: How do you think the pandemic is going to impact your job search?

KB: I think I can find a job, even with the pandemic still around. I have been taking classes outside of NJCU and I want to start my own brand. I have been saving a lot of money since college and I plan to use it wisely.

GT: Any additional thoughts?

KB: "Journalism is not a scary occu-

-pation. There are people throughout the entire world that risk their lives to publish the facts of their city, state, and the world. When you publish an article, you are telling the facts and letting the world know what's going on whether interesting or important. You can not be scared to address the facts. We can be able to impact the environment we are in as journalists."



Editor-in-Chief, Kenise Brown.

BOYZ N THE HOOD NEARLY THIRTY YEARS LATER

by Paul Tannucilli - Contributing Writer



Ice Cube, Cuba Gooding Jr. and Morris Chestnut. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

John Singleton released his worldwide sensation *Boyz n the Hood* back in 1991, but the message he sends is still relevant today.

Twenty-nine years ago, Singleton set out to make a film that would tell the story of African American teens growing up in South Central Los Angeles. The story follows main characters Tre (Cuba Gooding, Jr.), Tre's dad, Jason (Laurence Fishburne), Doughboy (Ice Cube), and Ricky (Morris Chestnut) on how the boys grow up despite experiencing gang violence, drug use, and poverty.

However, with all this going on-screen, the message is really what's buried in the dialogue, rather than the action.

The film opens with a young Tre in school, where he gets into a fight with a classmate. His mother, very unhappy, sends him to live with his father across town. While Tre's father is a wise,

peaceful man, he can't help but to show Tre the on-going violence after a robber breaks into their house in the middle of the night.

Tre meets his newest friends, Doughboy and Ricky, who he grows up with throughout the film. As the boys grow up, it is evident to see Tre is struggling growing up in LA. After a brush up with a local gang at a drive-in, shots are fired into the night sky, and Tre tells Ricky, "I gotta get out of LA."

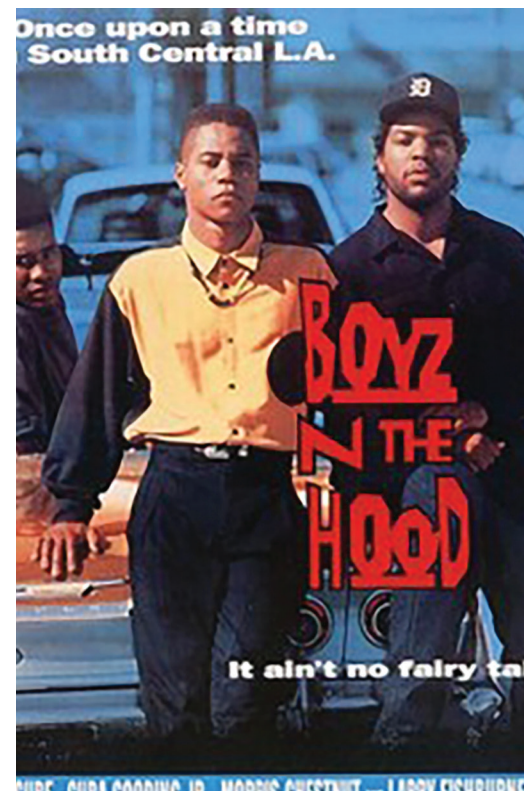
With college around the corner, Tre couldn't be more excited as he is finally getting his wish of leaving the West Coast with his girlfriend, Brandi. But right before he's set to move away, the same rival gang takes his life.

Doughboy then delivers the line that packs the most punch: "Either they don't know... don't show... or don't care about what's going on in the hood."

This line still rings true today. Everyone gets so swept up in what's going on in other parts of the country, and other parts of the world, and not focusing on what's going on in their own backyard.

People being killed because of their beliefs, their relationships, the color of their skin, and anything else that separates us, is such a heavy subject, but one that needs to be looked into more. By spreading wisdom, peace, and compassion like Tre's father, Jason, we can all make society a safer place to be.

The film has grossed over \$57.7 million in the US and won the NAACP Motion Picture of the Year in 1992.



Theatrical Poster. Photo courtesy of Rotten Tomatoes.

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In data based on the fall 2020 semester from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the faculty demographics have not shifted much. The data is presented as the percentage each race makes up of the entire faculty body, and changes are determined by those percentages. Representation of Asian faculty increased by 11 percent. White faculty decreased by 1.7 percent. Black faculty decreased by eight percent. Hispanic faculty representation remains the same.

Similarly, within the undergraduate student population, the race demographics are fairly similar. Most notably, the representation of Hispanic students has increased by 10 percent. Asian students remain the same. Black students decreased by four percent. White students decreased by five percent.

César Sanchez, a senior Philosophy major, is known for being a student activist and for his solidarity work as a member of the International US-Cuba Normalization Committee in the New York-New Jersey area.

Speaking generally on hiring practices in the United States and relating it to NJCU, Sanchez said, “When it comes to the labor force in this country, Blacks and Latinos are dropping slowly or have been slightly stable for a few years now. However, new hires and prospects for new jobs for Blacks and Latinos are scarce in many communities throughout this nation. So, when it comes to hiring Black Afro-Americans and Latinos at NJCU, it is clear there is bias or a systemic racist hiring process not only on campus but nationwide.”

Citing the Economic Policy Institute, Sanchez continued, “Unemployment between Blacks and White hiring gap widens where Latinos are not far behind getting left out with no jobs as well. In other words, whites still have more opportunities and a better of getting hired than Blacks and Latinos. So, Blacks and Latinos Faculties are not going to reflect that of students because of the ongoing racist and bias hiring process. I believe that we are currently living in a Caste system and what NJCU needs to do first is recognize that when it comes to employment by race and ethnicity, we have a major problem.”

Acebo, the chief of staff to the president, explained the university’s hiring goals. He said, “The University recognizes that an ultimate objective of an authentic and sustainable commitment to diversity and inclusion is to work towards ensuring that historically marginalized and underrepresented communities see themselves reflected in positions of authority and influence.”

Acebo further explained, “The University is proud of the rich diversity of its student body and we seek to not just celebrate it but empower it. There are clear systemic barriers to a fully inclusive and equitable society that our country must resolve. NJCU is committed to being an institution that leads with conviction and intention efforts to ensure that our ever more diverse communities are met with inclusivity and equity. In the coming months, that commitment will be enshrined in our inaugural Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and strategic plans. I welcome the opportunity to meet and

work with anyone that wants to engage in the hard work of breathing life into the promise of a diverse, inclusive, and equitable society.”

National Statistics

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 75 percent of degree-granting postsecondary institutions faculty are white based on data from fall 2018.

Black faculty are represented at six percent. Hispanic faculty represents six percent as well. Asian faculty represents 12 percent. The remaining one percent are two or more races, unknown, and non-resident aliens.

The “Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups 2018” report from the NCES states that enrollment of Hispanic students has more than doubled in the United States from 2000 to 2016.

Read more of this story on our website at www.GothicTimes.net or on our app at College News Source.

ANCESTRAL TIES IN ART

by Julie Marie Frances DeVoe - Contributing Writer



Palmroot Exhibit. Art by Jaz Graf.

Jaz Graf, is an artist whose work was featured in NJCU's Virtual Studio Visit called: The Art and (Im)Possibilities of Belonging, "Art is a space where we can find that sense of belonging".

The visit gives a tour around Graf's art studio of things that have been created and are in the process of being created through technology. She even includes videos of her adventures through Thailand, discovering her family's history,

"I hope that it sets in motion, a contemporary discourse around intergenerational memory and cultural preservation," Graf said.



Graf doing preparation for Studio Visit.

Graf is an adjunct professor, of Visual Art and Design at Caldwell University. She has exhibited both locally and internationally as well as appeared on NJTV. The artist has earned her Master of Arts degree in Studio Art Printmaking from the University of Notre Dame and has her Master of Fine Arts in Print Media from the University of Iowa.

Graf is currently an Artist-in-Residence at Gallery Aferro in Newark, NJ. A piece that she made in the same studio is called, "Between What Was" media – "Cyanotype and Serigraph". She conveys the following themes into her creative practice: family history, identity as mixed race, spirituality, and ritual. "Art is like breath. It is essential for life. I try to breathe deeply and consciously as I move through the world," Graf said. Her grandma, auntie, and uncle are a few people who have inspired her projects.

Having been in the art industry for the past 20 years, her first art exhibit was at Edward Hopper's old house in seventh grade. It is now a charming gallery locat-

ed in Nyack, NY. Graf has learned valuable lessons from her projects, whether they were short or long-term.

Her current project required the sacred cloth of worn Buddhist monk robes. As a result of her creating paper, she "has been able to connect with communities, here and abroad, engaging in unexpected and remarkable conversations". Her art titled, "Of the Same Root" was actually used by handmade paper from monk robe fabric.

For anyone who were unable to attend the event, NJCU's Center for the Arts will have a video recording available soon on their website. Featured in this article are two of her works; the exhibition view of "At My Feet for Ages" and an art piece from the series, Between What Was, Cyanotype and Serigraph on paper. Graf's work can be seen on her website at www.jazgraf.com and she can also be found on Instagram under the handle, [jazgraf](https://www.instagram.com/jazgraf).



Family in Thailand. Art by Jaz Graf.

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THE FRENCH CONNECTION: NEW ADDITION TO NJCU'S TENNIS

by Angel Madera - Contributing Writer



Theo Bourghelle. Courtesy of Bourghelle.

Since the age of five, junior Theo Bourghelle, a transfer student from France, enjoyed tennis, and is glad to be a part of the program at NJCU. "I really liked the way that the coach approached me. We talked a lot and he always showed a big interest in me."

Bourghelle was also appreciative of NJCU's diversity and the close-knit bonds with his teammates on the tennis team, "I really like the diversity at NJCU. I met people from everywhere and it is super exciting. I also love my team and we are ready to work hard to prepare the coming season."

Having transferred from Wright State University, Bourghelle, a junior and Global Business major, was interested in business as an international student and looks forward to building a career in the New York City area.

Nicolas Teynie, a transfer student from Rouen, Normandy, France, a Business Management major, has a background in soccer and tennis. Though he stopped

playing soccer at eleven years old, he found himself interested in tennis and decided to pursue his dreams as he left his hometown.

Inspired by the drive of Nadal and the love from his family, Teynie looks forward to experiencing a slew of tennis matches and the complexities of his degree program, "I want to learn more about management, marketing, business, entrepreneurship and how important people of a company act to make it work."

Decidedly, Teynie chose NJCU due to its many remarkable qualities offered to students, considering, "the tennis level, its location, attentive professors and an incredible experience for a student." In order to pass the time during the COVID-19 pandemic, he has found interest in watching anime (especially Naruto) and spending time with friends.

In contrast, Bourghelle has noted the difference in American and European tennis matches, saying, "Playing a tennis match in the United States is so much funnier than playing a match in Europe. In Europe when you hit a winner, you are not going to scream or anything and most of the time, it is only you and your opponent on the court."

He added: "In the United States, you have all of your teammates supporting you and cheering for you. You also have your coach on the court to motivate you, give you advice and motivation. It is also more stressful to play in the States because you are playing for your school, your teammates, and your coach but I love it."

Bourghelle admits after spending two years in Ohio, the location of NJCU and being near New York was beneficial in the cementing of his decision, but also being in a city as diverse and welcoming as Jersey City. "The location of the school also helped me to make my final decision." Teynie admits to an initial surprise of culture shock, especially by the length of skyscrapers when he first arrived.

With his future career path, he hopes to blend finance with his athletic background, "I would love to work in the finance field for a sports company because my whole life has been connected to tennis, but I also love finance and business."

Teynie even shares what he does to stay motivated, "The quote that motivates me to give my best in tennis and at the gym is a French quote: 'Ma tactique: te bouffer au physique'."



Nicolas Teynie. Courtesy of Teynie.

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ANTI-ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER HATE CRIMES IN AMERICA



Protester in Jersey City. Photo by Felix.

The Councilman was grateful to the Jersey City community that came together at the rally in response to the recent murders in Atlanta. The rally's purpose was to spread awareness of this problem and spread a message of unity to let bigots know racism has no home in our city and state.

In February of this year, Asian Americans for Equality, a non-profit organization based in New York City, released a statement on the eruption of hate crimes towards Asian American people. They found contributions to the discrimination of the Asian community such as the results of the current higher reports of racism and structural inequality. These results had to do with limited access to healthcare, overcrowded housing ar-

reas with household members troubled with rent. Further research discovered Chinese New Yorkers had the highest mortality rate out of all ethnicities and 1.5 times more likely to die than whites. Besides the rising rates of assaults, murders, and harassment, Asian Americans are also facing disparities in the economy, health, and housing.

What Can We Do?

We as one American community cannot tolerate this cycle, or else our cities will be overrun with attacks on the elderly and children for being Asian, what ethnicity will be targeted next if this persists? There are many directions to

take in fighting against Anti-Asian hate: support Asian businesses and non-profit organizations: "Gabriela New Jersey" a Filipina Women's organization, "Asian American for Equality (AAFE)", "Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPI)" and these non-profits are three out of dozens more we can all support and fight for, followed by urging the implementation of Asian American Studies in school curriculums. Of course, the most important way to support fellow American's right to embrace their heritages is to stand up for Asian Americans is to fight for those who can't fight back. We as a unified community must stand tall against bullies who confuse hate for Patriotism and toughness.



Protester in Jersey City. Photo by Felix.

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Theta Pavis *Advisor*

David Wilson *Photographer*

kbrown8@njcu.edu

jburgostorres@njcu.edu

amadera2@njcu.edu

mpervaiz@njcu.edu

nperkins@njcu.edu

smendez4@njcu.edu

rrichardson@njcu.edu

houdhnarine@njcu.edu

iestime10284@gmail.com

dgreene@njcu.edu

mvaldes1@njcu.edu

tpavisweil@njcu.edu

davidwilson764@ymail.com

GSUB, 2039 Kennedy Blvd. Room 301
Jersey City, NJ 07305
201-200-3575