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2023/04/17 Roundtable on a National Media Alert Network



Asian American and immigrant communities are in turbulent times again, facing enormous cross-cutting challenges, including but not limited to:

1. Legalizing discrimination at the state and federal levels
2. Return of the Red Scare and McCarthyism
3. Warrantless surveillance
4. Mini "China Initiative" conducted by the National Institutes of Health
5. Cross-border profiling, interrogation, harassment, and denial of entry
6. Continuing fallout from the now-defunct "China Initiative"
7. Collateral damage from the deteriorating U.S.-China relations
8. Anti-Asian hate and violence

On April 17, 2023, the Inaugural Roundtable continued the conversation to survey the landscape and established the purpose and functions of a national media alert network and strike teams to (a) assertively address immediate xenophobic challenges to our freedoms and (b) longer-term proactive actions to ensure fairness and justice for all, including the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) and immigrant communities.

As moderator, **Jeremy Wu** outlined the ground rules, logistics, and the purpose and goals of a dynamic process to start the Roundtable. **Paula Madison**, adviser and affectionately called the "conductor of the symphony," opened with remarks about her fear and concern of Texas Senate Bill 147 that would cease the constitutional rights of Chinese and other nationalities to own land in the states of Texas. It reminded her of the Chinese exclusion Act, but it did not appear in national media.

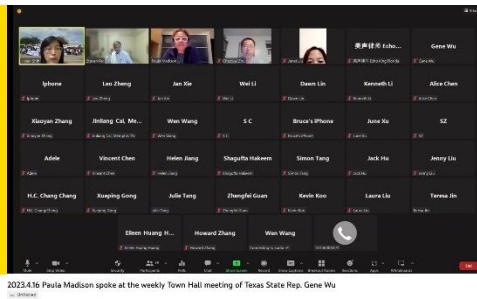
As a U.S. citizen born in Jamaica, raised in Harlem, and her maternal grandfather was a Hakka from Southern China, Paula became a very successful media journalist and editor, executive, and businesswoman.

Paula straddles both cultures and races. She brings to the Roundtable her perspectives of how and why the AAPI communities can better make use of the news media and similar institutions for us to tell our stories effectively, for us to assertively create our own narrative, and for us to proactively challenge the untruths that are told about us.

The concept of a Roundtable is to bring together national and local community leaders to regularly and frequently have conversations with various media to build a trustworthy relationship so that we are seen as American citizens and residents who contribute to the American society, not to be targeted or discriminated. The second prong is to develop local, regional, and national strike teams to appear in print media, television, and digital platforms and speak with knowledge and conviction about the AAPI communities and matters.

About 100 organizations and individuals spoke or participated in the Roundtable. A written summary is being prepared at this time.

1. Town Hall Meeting on Media Training and Strike Teams



On April 16, 2023, **Paula Madison** spoke at Town Hall Meeting #6 with Texas State Representative **Gene Wu**, leading the discussions and providing guidance for media training and strike teams with Florida AAPI leaders in short time. Watch the video: <https://bit.ly/41qzNyh> (1:24:26)

2. Discriminatory Land Bills in Florida and Texas



Photo: Zheng, T. stands between her father Xubin Zheng and mother Peng Li. To protest SB256 and HB-155, which would prevent Chinese-Americans from buying homes in Florida, outside the Florida Capitol on Wednesday, April 19, 2023. All rights reserved. ©2023 American Overseas Community Center.

2023/04/22 [WE WON'T GO BACK! Statewide Civil Rights Protest](#)

WHAT: Protest against the Texas Legislature quietly taking away the CIVIL RIGHTS that our communities have fought so hard to earn

WHEN: Saturday, April 22, 2023, 12 pm ET

WHERE: Antioch Park, 554 Clay St, Houston, TX 77002

DESCRIPTIOON: Join members of the Texas House Democratic Caucus, local elected officials, and community leaders for a march against efforts to turn back the clock on decades of progress on diversity, equity, and inclusion & roll back civil rights of minority communities across the State of Texas. Meet at Antioch Park (554 Clay) and march to Hermann Square at City Hall. Choose your transportation (rail, bus, carpool, Uber, walk, bike, park and walk, etc.) and bring your signs, and march safely and legally along sidewalks, obeying traffic signs, etc., to reach City Hall for a free speech rally.

2023/04/20 *Herald-Tribune*: ['Terrified': Chinese protesters tell Florida lawmakers bill threatens their 'American dream'](#). There were tears. There were yells. There were more than 100 people who signed up to testify against a bill they say will discriminate against Florida's Chinese community. Most of them, a mix of Chinese Americans and visa and green card holders, came from around the state to protest at the Capitol Wednesday, driving, bussing and even flying in. **Echo King**, from China herself and an Orlando immigration attorney, says such public demonstrations within her community are rare. It's a testament, she said, to how worried they are over the legislation.

2023/04/20 *Florida Phoenix*: [Chinese-Americans fear hate crimes and discrimination as FL legislation heads for final vote](#). **Zheng Dauble** says she has lived in the United States for 25 years and loves the country, but recently, when she was shopping with her 10-year-old boy, she heard someone yelling at her: "Go back to China." "I never meet this person," she says. "The only reason is because I am Asian."¶¶ Zheng Dauble was one of dozens of Chinese-Americans who came to the state Capitol this week to testify against a legislative proposal (HB 1355) that would ban the sale of agriculture land and property within 20 miles of military bases and other critical infrastructure facilities to interests tied to the Chinese government and six other "countries of concern."¶¶ The Chinese-Americans who signed up to speak against the measure said it could lead to more hate crimes and discrimination against their community. "I'm 8 years old," said **Manman Chen**. "I want to ask a question: Did Chinese people do something bad to Florida? Why does the government not allow them to purchase property. I only get punishment when I do something wrong."

2023/04/19 *AsAmNews*: [Florida moving to ban Chinese from owning land](#). A coalition of Asian American groups rallied outside the Florida state capitol today to oppose bills that would place restrictions on Chinese buying land in the state.¶¶ The proposal which has already passed the state senate unanimously is now moving its way through the assembly where it has already won the support of the Appropriations Committee, reports Florida Politics.¶¶ The protest held outside the House State Affairs Committee this morning declared the bills discriminatory and compared it to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Alien Land Laws of 1913, 1920 and 1923.¶¶ "These two bills, revived out of the coffins of the notorious "Alien Land Laws" and "Chinese Exclusion Act" in American history are unconstitutional and pose significant threats to the livelihoods of the AAPI community," said the coalition in a statement.¶¶ It compared SB264 and HB1355 to "what has happened during World War II to Japanese Americans and at the time

of the McCarthyism.” ¶¶ The coalition said the legislators failed to remember that many immigrants fled China to get away from communism. They suggested the bills will fuel more anti-Asian hate and lead to more violence against Asian Americans.

2023/04/19 *KERA News*: [Bills aimed at foreign nationals reminiscent of US' racist past, critics say](#). A bill headed to the Texas Senate floor would bar citizens from China, Iran, North Korea and Russia — and businesses with ties to those countries — from buying property in Texas. Senate Bill 147 is just one of several bills filed this legislative session aimed at immigrants and foreign nationals. And that has members of these communities worried.¶¶ **Lily Trieu**, executive director of Asian Texans for Justice, says bills aimed at Chinese nationals, or any nationality for that matter, are discriminatory and could cause irreversible harm. “Here's the reality. The reality is the average Texan cannot look at an Asian American and know without a doubt whether they're Chinese or Korean or Vietnamese or Japanese, etc.,” Trieu said.¶¶ Trieu's concerned about what could happen if this bill ultimately becomes law. Even if it doesn't, she and others in the Asian American community believe the damage has already been done.

2023/04/18 *Spectrum News 13*: [Asian-American group rallies against bill regulating foreign control of land](#). An Orlando group is making their way to Tallahassee to protest House Bill 1355, which would prohibit foreign countries, specifically China, from purchasing agricultural land.¶¶ The Orlando Chinese Professionals Association is opposing the bill, stating it is harmful to their community and the Florida economy. **Echo King**, an immigration lawyer who immigrated from China 20 years ago, said the bill is discriminatory and could result in more hate crimes against Asians.¶¶ “I've helped hundreds of immigrants become U.S. citizens. I know their story. They are real, they are nice people, and they all contribute to this country,” said King. King expressed concern that good businesses and people could be penalized for the actions of bad actors, and she hopes that by speaking out, her voice and those in her community will be heard. “We think it's extremely discriminatory. It'll affect all Asian communities,” said King.

2023/04/18 Press Release: [NAEH Media Group Announces The Coming Public Protest Against The Florida SB264/HB 1355 On April 19, 2023](#). On April 19, 2023, a public protest is set to take place in Tallahassee against the Florida SB 264/HB 1355, a bill that has caused widespread concern and outrage among Floridians.¶¶ The bill targets Chinese residents in the state, singling them out for exclusion and depriving them of their property rights. Representatives of Floridian chambers and business organizations, as well as Florida residents from all walks of life, are expected to participate in the protest.¶¶ The event is likely to be a significant demonstration of opposition to the bill and a powerful statement against discrimination and xenophobia.

3. CALDA Plans of Legal Action.

Clay Zhu, Founder of Chinese American Legal Defense Alliance (CALDA), spoke during the Roundtable on its single role to sue the Government for its systemic discrimination against Chinese Americans. CALDA is currently working on two issues.¶¶ The first is the alien land bills that have been discussed in Texas, Florida, and South Carolina. A legal team is being assembled. A lawsuit will be filled as soon the bills are passed, seeking permanent injunctions against these bills.¶¶ The second is related to the “Chinese Initiative,” specifically a class action lawsuit on behalf of the Chinese American scientists affected by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as reported by the *Science Magazine*. A survey questionnaire has been to the affected

professors to get a better understanding of the possible plaintiffs, claims, and damages.¶ CALDA has also started a lawsuit in Washington DC based on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which is expected to provide behind-the-scene information from the Department of Justice and in need of media attention and legal actions.

4. Asian American Journalists Association Media Institute.

According to the [Asian American Journalists Association \(AAJA\)](#), the media needs more diverse sources and stories. AAJA Media Institute coaches underrepresented voices to tell their stories and share their expertise with the media. Since the inaugural workshop in 2014, AAJA Media Institute alumni have gone on to appear on local and national television, including C-SPAN, MSNBC and NBC's Today Show. They have published op-eds. They have been featured as thought leaders and expert sources in major news publications.

Chinese Students Still Denied Visas Under Trump Immigration Order



Chinese citizens wait to submit their visa applications at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. (Photo ... [+] AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES)

According to a report by *Forbes* on April 11, 2023, U.S. consular officers are still denying visas for Chinese graduate students based on the Chinese university they attended. The Biden administration has continued the denials under a proclamation issued by **Donald Trump** in May 2020. Research and experience have shown the proclamation is costly to the United States and those affected by the student visa denials.

The proclamation has upended the lives of **Tian Su** and her longtime partner **John Murray**. Tian is a fifth-year Ph.D. student focusing on artificial intelligence in transportation. She had been in America since 2018. After not returning to the country for several years, Tian decided to visit family in China and renew her visa. She left the United States on March 2, 2023. Shortly after, the U.S. embassy in Beijing denied her visa back to the United States. She cannot return to complete her Ph.D.

The stated reason for the denial was [presidential proclamation 10043](#) (PP10043) on the "Suspension of Entry as Nonimmigrants of Certain Students and Researchers from the People's Republic of China." The proclamation does not apply to undergraduate students.

The proclamation denies a visa to someone who studied at a particular university whether or not any negative information exists about the individual. To put the proclamation in perspective: If another country had a similar policy, it might deny visas to Americans who studied at U.S. universities that “support” a strategy or actions the foreign government finds objectionable or that received funding from the U.S. Department of Defense. More than 900 U.S. universities received DOD funding in 2006, according to a 2007 report, but U.S. students attending those universities rarely have a connection to the U.S. military.

In 2021, U.S. consular officers refused 1,964 visas for Chinese nationals due to the presidential proclamation, according to the State Department. Statistics are not yet available for FY 2022 or FY 2023, but any number would underestimate the proclamation’s impact since students and researchers who expect to be refused a visa would be unlikely to apply in the first place.

A university official said the Trump administration hoped to punish Chinese institutions, even though it is clear the primary impact is on individual students and researchers. The official said one scholar denied a visa under the policy earned a Ph.D. from a U.S. university and returned to China to teach, but was denied a visa back to the United States because his master’s degree was from the Harbin Institute of Technology. That school is listed as “very high risk/top secret” on the [Australia-based China Defense Universities Tracker](#), a source the U.S. government has used to deny visas.

John Murray believes Tian may have been refused a visa to return to America because she attended Beihang University, which, it appears, is also on the list of schools the State Department uses to ban students and researchers under the proclamation.

On June 27, 2022, a lawsuit [Baryshnikov v. Mayorkas](#) (2:22-cv-02140) was filed in the District Court of the Central District of Illinois. Led by a professor of Mathematics and Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a group of students affected by the PP10043 ban, the lawsuit challenges the U.S. Government’s continuing efforts to ban the entry of Chinese nationals who seek to study at U.S. universities.

On March 20, 2023, the Committee of Concerned Scientist (CCS) wrote [a letter to President Joe Biden](#), expressing concerns about Chinese American researchers being profiled, harassed, and interrogated without just cause at the border. It included the case of **Hong Qi**, a visiting scholar of mathematical sciences at Louisiana State University and lecturer at Queen Mary University, London. She was denied re-entry to the U.S. and separated from her 6-year old son in Louisiana.

Read more about PP10043 at <https://bit.ly/41s9Luu>

NYT Opinion: America, China and a Crisis of Trust



According to an opinion by **Thomas Friedman** of the *New York Times* on April 14, 2023, relations between the United States and China have soured so badly, so quickly, and have so reduced our points of contact that we're now like two giant gorillas looking at each other through a pinhole. Nothing good will come from this.

The smallest misstep by either side could ignite a U.S.-China war that would make Ukraine look like a neighborhood dust-up.

That's one of the many reasons Thomas Friedman found it helpful to be back in Beijing and to be able to observe China again through a larger aperture than a pinhole. Attending the China Development Forum — Beijing's very useful annual gathering of local and global business leaders, senior Chinese officials, retired diplomats and a few local and Western journalists — reminded him of some powerful old truths and exposed him to some eye-popping new realities about what's really eating away at U.S.-China relations.

The new, new thing Thomas Friedman found has a lot to do with the increasingly important role that trust, and its absence, plays in international relations, now that so many goods and services that the United States and China sell to one another are digital, and therefore dual use — meaning they can be both a weapon and a tool. Just when trust has become more important than ever between the U.S. and China, it also has become scarcer than ever.

There's something of a competition today between Democrats and Republicans over who can speak most harshly about China. Truth be told, both countries have so demonized the other of late that it is easy to forget how much we have in common as people. Thomas Friedman cannot think of any major nation after the United States with more of a Protestant work ethic and naturally capitalist population than China.

China has built formidable weight and strength since opening to the world in the 1970s, and even since Covid hit in 2019. China's Communist Party government has a stronger grip than ever on its society, thanks to its police state surveillance and digital tracking systems: Facial recognition cameras are everywhere. The party crushes any challenge to its rule or to President **Xi Jinping**. These days, it is extremely difficult for a visiting columnist to get anyone — a senior official or a Starbucks barista — to speak on the record. It was not that way a decade ago.

That said, one should have no illusions: The Communist Party's hold is also a product of all the hard work and savings of the Chinese people, which have enabled the party and the state to

build world-class infrastructure and public goods that make life for China's middle and lower classes steadily better.

Beijing and Shanghai, in particular, have become very livable cities, with the air pollution largely erased and lots of new, walkable green spaces. Shanghai had recently built 55 new parks, bringing its total to 406, and had plans for nearly 600 more.

Some 900 cities and towns in China are now served by high-speed rail, which makes travel to even remote communities incredibly cheap, easy and comfortable. In the last 23 years America has built exactly one sort-of-high-speed rail line, the Acela, serving 15 stops between Washington, D.C., and Boston. Think about that: 900 to 15.

Thomas Friedman did not argue that high-speed trains are better than freedom, but to explain that China's stability is a product of both an increasingly pervasive police state and a government that has steadily raised standards of living. It's a regime that takes both absolute control and relentless nation-building seriously.

For an American to fly from New York's Kennedy Airport into Beijing Capital International Airport today is to fly from an overcrowded bus terminal to a Disney-like Tomorrowland. It makes Thomas Friedman weep for all the time we have wasted these past eight years talking about a faux nation builder named **Donald Trump**.

What exactly are America and China fighting about?

A lot of people hesitated when Thomas Friedman asked. Indeed, many would answer with some version of "I'm not sure, I just know that it's THEIR fault."

He is pretty sure he would get the same answer in Washington.

The best part of Thomas Friedman's trip was uncovering the real answer to that question and why it stumps so many people. It's because the real answer is so much deeper and more complex than just the usual one-word response — "Taiwan" — or the usual three-word response — "autocracy versus democracy."

In modern times, China, like America, has never had to deal with a true economic and military peer with which it was also totally intertwined through trade and investment.

This is a byproduct of our new technological ecosystem in which more and more devices and services that we both use and trade are driven by microchips and software, and connected through data centers in the cloud and high-speed internet. When so many more products or services became digitized and connected, so many more things became "dual use." That is, technologies that can easily be converted from civilian tools to military weapons, or vice versa.

So today, the country or countries that can make the fastest, most powerful and most energy efficient microchips can make the biggest A.I. computers and dominate in economics and military affairs.

Thomas Friedman has no problem saying that he would like to live in a world where the Chinese people are thriving, alongside all others. He does not buy the argument that we are destined for

war. He believes that we are doomed to compete with each other, doomed to cooperate with each other and doomed to find some way to balance the two. Otherwise we are both going to have a very bad 21st century.

China's Communist Party is now convinced that America wants to bring it down, which some U.S. politicians are actually no longer shy about suggesting. So, Beijing is ready to crawl into bed with Putin, a war criminal, if that is what it takes to keep the Americans at bay.

Americans are now worried that Communist China, which got rich by taking advantage of a global market shaped by American rules, will use its newfound market power to unilaterally change those rules entirely to its advantage. So we've decided to focus our waning strength vis-à-vis Beijing on ensuring the Chinese will always be a decade behind us on microchips.

If it is not the goal of U.S. foreign policy to topple the Communist regime in China, the United States needs to make that crystal clear, because Thomas Friedman found a lot more people than ever before in Beijing think otherwise.

The notion that China can economically collapse and America still thrive is utter fantasy. And the notion that the Europeans will always be with us in such an endeavor, given the size of China's market, may also be fanciful.

As for China, it will never realize its full potential — in a hyper-connected, digitized, deep, dual-use, semiconductor-powered world — unless it understands that establishing and maintaining trust is now the single most important competitive advantage any country or company can have. And Beijing is failing in that endeavor.

Read more about the *New York Times* opinion: <https://bit.ly/3UX2Oii>

Activities and News for the Communities

1. Nomination Hearing of Julie Su as Secretary of Labor



On April 20, 2023, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee held a hearing on the nomination of **Julie Su** as the next Secretary of Labor. If confirmed, Julie Su will be the first Asian American to serve in the Cabinet at the secretary level. The Senate committee is expected to vote next week on whether to advance Su's confirmation to a vote in the full Senate.

The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus issued [a statement](#) endorsing Acting Secretary Su for the position of Labor Secretary and sent a letter to President Biden urging her nomination, The Asian American Scholar Forum sent [a letter of support](#) to the Senate Committee.

2. Managing United States–China University Relations and Risks



According to an article by *Science* on April 20, 2023, the intensifying geopolitical rivalry between the United States and China is clouding the outlook for cross-border academic exchange and collaboration in science and technology. Technological competition is a principal focus of this rivalry, and pressures are building in both countries to erect higher barriers to academic research collaborations and to restrict the flow of students and scholars between the two countries. A major challenge for US universities is how to manage these pressures while preserving open scientific research, open intellectual exchange, and the free flow of ideas and people. New federal regulations designed to strengthen research security on US university campuses are now being introduced. Yet federal policies, no matter how well crafted, cannot be a substitute for actions by universities themselves. The article shares an approach developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to make clear the lines that should not be crossed and the principles that should govern academic relations with China. Read the *Science* article: <https://bit.ly/3UXqXWn>

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