

# In This Issue #160

- 2023/01/09 APA Justice Monthly Meeting
- House Select Committee on Strategic Competition between U.S. and China
- Joyce Xi on Trauma of Racial Profiling and Secret Surveillance
- Department of Commerce Letter on Sherry Chen's Accomplishments and More
- Asian American and Academic Community News and Activities

## 2023/01/09 APA Justice Monthly Meeting



During the first APA Justice monthly meeting of 2023, Rep. Judy Chu, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, reviewed the accomplishments of 2022 which was highlighted by the end of the "China Initiative" and Sherry Chen's historic settlement after 10 years of fighting for justice.

"Despite all of these wins, we know the work continues to ensure that we are engaging with our partners, the Administration across federal agencies, and my colleagues at Congress; to ensure that our communities are not facing anti-Asian discrimination and racial profiling. To that end, CAPAC will continue to prioritize calling out blatantly xenophobic anti-China rhetoric and pushing back on policies that unfairly target Chinese American communities, which we unfortunately are expecting to see much more in the year ahead," Rep. Chu said.

"Back in 2015, we were hearing reports of racial bias and profiling of Asian Americans, often specifically Chinese American scientists, researchers, and engineers, I put out a call for the community to mobilize and to organize around this issue. I am proud to see the result of that call for community support is the APA Justice Task Force. There has never been a more important time for you to be in existence," Rep. Chu remarked at the opening the meeting.

Watch Rep. Chu's New Year Greetings and Review of 2022 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLxSG7jNbco> (video 8:59)

A summary for the meeting is being prepared and will be posted after a chance to review by the speakers. Read past monthly meeting summaries here: <https://bit.ly/3kxkqxP>.

## House Select Committee on Strategic Competition between U.S. and China

On January 10, 2023, the U.S. House of Representatives established the Select Committee on Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party by passing House Resolution 11 by a vote of 365-65. The Select Committee shall be composed of not more than 16 Members, Delegates, or the Resident Commissioner appointed by the Speaker, not more than 7 of whom shall be appointed after consultation with the Minority Leader.

Rep. Judy Chu, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, released [the following statement](#)

“As a caucus, CAPAC remains neutral regarding the creation of the Select Committee. We strongly support strengthening our economy and protecting our national security, and we have always recognized that there are legitimate concerns with the actions of the government of the People’s Republic of China.

“However, because of the known risks of xenophobic rhetoric intensifying anti-Asian hate here in the United States—and my belief that the work of this Select Committee can be done by existing committees in the House — I voted against H.Res. 11.

“We cannot forget that rhetoric used around economic competition with Asian countries has resulted in the verbal and physical harassment and even murder of Asian Americans here at home. Since March 2020 and former President Trump’s sustained references to the coronavirus as the ‘China virus,’ over 11,500 hate crimes and incidents against Asian Americans have been reported.

“As the House of Representatives embarks on the formation of this committee, CAPAC reminds all members that this committee should not be used as an open invitation to engage and traffic in blatantly xenophobic anti-China rhetoric that we know historically results in physical violence and emotional harm against Asian Americans across the country. Further, this committee cannot be used to promote policies that result in the racial profiling of our communities, but rather it must be directly focused on specific concerns related to the government of the People’s Republic of China.

“Throughout the 118th Congress, CAPAC will remain vigilant in overseeing the committee’s work, hearings, and rhetoric. What we say and how we say it matters. And we know how dangerous the consequences can be if we don’t get this right.”

On January 10, 2023, 22 House progressives led by Rep. Pramila Jayapal issued a [statement expressing opposition to the Select Committee](#). “This also should not be a committee about winning a ‘new Cold War’ as the Chair-Designate of the Committee has previously stated.

America can and must work towards our economic and strategic competitiveness goals without ‘a new Cold War’ and without the repression, discrimination, hate, fear, degeneration of our political institutions, and violations of civil rights that such a ‘Cold War’ may entail," the statement said, "We are deeply concerned about the direction of this Select Committee and we urge the Chair-Designate and our Leadership to ensure that strong Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) and pro-diplomacy voices are clearly reflected in the membership when it is constituted."

## **Joyce Xi on Trauma of Racial Profiling and Secret Surveillance**

On December 6, 2022, Joyce Xi, daughter of Temple University Professor Xiaoxing Xi, published an opinion titled "The China Initiative: How Chinese Academics Like Xiaoxing Xi Were Falsely Charged as Spies" at *TeenVogue*.

"I have seen firsthand the harms the US government’s national security fears can cause...In the absence of any accountability or vigilance to prevent the continuation of these harms, I fear things will get worse," Xi opined.

"Everything felt completely surreal and absurd. Nothing prepares you for the day your dad is accused of being a spy. And that accusation could not be further from the truth. My dad is a nerdy scientist who teaches college students and conducts basic physics research. He never shared any secret technology with contacts in China. Still, FBI agents searched our home and rummaged through our belongings. They even tried to take my sister’s computer — she was 12 at the time. Then the news cameras showed up, trying to film inside our home through the windows," Xi continued. "As it turned out, the US government was the one doing the spying. We found out later that the FBI, using tools designed to pursue foreign agents, had secretly surveilled my dad’s communications and used his emails about unrelated academic research to try to portray him as a criminal. My family went from living a normal, low-key life to facing the weight of our own government coming after us."

"The US government has faced few, if any, consequences for upending people’s lives. Families are left to deal with the lingering fear, trauma, and legal costs on their own. When I send a text or email, I still wonder if I’m being watched. Simple things like recorded Zoom meetings bring up fears of surveillance. I worry the FBI could come after me at any time for some made up reason or if I do any little thing wrong. It might seem irrational, but this is the resulting trauma of surveillance," Xi said. "In times of crisis and fear in this country, we have repeatedly seen people and communities scapegoated in the name of national security... As tensions between the US and China continue to escalate, we cannot repeat the same mistakes."

"There is a major human cost to casting suspicion on entire communities based on ethnicity and national origin. And it is wrong. That’s why my family brought a civil rights lawsuit against the government. It’s been seven years since that day in May when the FBI arrested my father. We are now waiting on the court of appeals to decide whether or not our claims can proceed. We hope the court ensures that we can hold the government accountable for its abuses of power. But whatever happens, we deserve answers. We deserve justice. And we all deserve better," Xi

concluded.

Read more about Joyce Xi's *TeenVogue* article here: <https://bit.ly/3ZuZqpp>

## Department of Commerce Letter on Sherry Chen's Accomplishments and More



During the January 9 APA Justice monthly meeting, **Sherry Chen 陈霞芬** shared the letter of appreciation for her accomplishments from the Department of Commerce (DOC). As a hydrologist at the Ohio River Forecast Center from 2007 to 2022, Sherry "demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the Ohio River Basin and an exceptional knowledge of the Ohio River. She developed, implemented, and calibrated HEC-RAS (an advanced hydraulic computer model) along the entire length of the main stem Ohio River. Her work represented the largest implementation of HEC-RAS ever attempted." Sherry supported additional new forecast points where the model is required and contributed significant proficiency in daily operational forecasting. She received multiple Special Act Awards, including in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011. Sherry received the Larry Johnson Award from the National Weather Alliance for the development and implementation into operations of a new hydraulic model used to produce lifesaving river forecasts for the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers during 2011 record flooding.

Read more about the letter at [http://bit.ly/APAJ\\_Sherry\\_Chen](http://bit.ly/APAJ_Sherry_Chen)

During the monthly meeting, Sherry talked about her 10-year fight for justice and the historic settlement with DOC, including a meeting with DOC official Benjamin Friedman in December. A summary of the monthly meeting is being prepared at this time.

On January 9, 2023, *AsAmNews* reported on an event titled "Celebrate New Year with Sherry Chen" on January 7, 2023, in which Sherry spoke about her case. The event was hosted by Ohio Chinese American Association and Asian American Coalition of Ohio. At the event, Chen spoke about how the accusations derailed her career and tarnished her reputations. She

thanked all of the people who supported her during her fight for justice. She believes her historic settlement is a “victory for me, also for Asian American cause and the rule of law.” Sherry told *AsAmNews* that she is personally “doing well after 10 years of nightmare.” She retired a few days ago and has been keeping herself busy giving presentations and workshops throughout the country.

Read more about the *AsAmNews* report at <https://bit.ly/3k9XZ7i>. A photo album from the January 7 celebration is posted at <https://bit.ly/3XjEur4>, along with a photo album from the Justice for Sherry Chen Congressional Reception held on December 13, 2022 at <https://bit.ly/3VWDyry>

## Asian American and Academic Community News and Activities

**Purdue University Northwest Chancellor Thomas Keon Under Fire.** On January 6, 2023, **Frank Wu** 吴华扬, President of Queen's College of the City University of New York published an op-ed on "[A Responsibility to Speak Out](#)," explaining why the expression of racial prejudice by Purdue University Northwest (PNW) **Chancellor Thomas L. Keon** was so disturbing. Words lead to sticks and stones, because rhetoric instigates violence... Although it is easy enough for those who inflict the trauma to dismiss it as trivial, these situations are not symmetrical since one community ends up being the butt of the joke again and again and again," Wu opined. On January 11, 2023, NBC News published "[Purdue's 1st Asian American president takes office weeks after school official mocks Asian languages onstage](#)." **Mung Chiang** 蒋濛, a professor of engineering, began his historic role last week, overseeing the university in addition to other campuses, including Purdue University Northwest (PNW). Chiang's tenure comes shortly after Keon mocked Asian languages during a winter commencement. Despite growing pressures to step down, Keon, who issued an apology, remains in the role. Given Chiang's new role, some have called on him to address Keon's actions. A post published by the nonprofit [Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund](#) said such action from Chiang could send a strong message. A [change.org petition](#) calling for Keon to step down has received more than 9,200 signatures.

**The White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.** On Tuesday, January 17, 2023, the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI), senior federal officials, and community leaders will convene a virtual event for the release of the Biden-Harris Administration's first-ever *National Strategy to Advance Equity, Justice, and Opportunity for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA and NHPI) Communities*. The strategy, which includes WHIAANHPI's inaugural report and comprehensive action plans submitted by 32 agencies, represents a historic first for the federal government as it works to address barriers impacting AA and NHPIs. Register for the event at <https://bit.ly/3W7CZey>

**National Academies Report on Confucius Institutes at US Institutions of Higher Education.** On January 10, 2023, the National Academies released the first report out of the "[Confucius Institutes at U.S. Institutions of Higher Education](#)" study. According to the report, more than 100 U.S. institutions of higher education hosted Confucius Institutes (CIs), Chinese

government-funded language and culture centers, on campus during the late 2000s and 2010s. While CIs provided a source of funding and other resources that enabled U.S. colleges and universities to build capacity, offer supplemental programming, and engage with the local community, CIs presented an added, legitimate source of risk to host institutions with respect to academic freedom, freedom of expression, and national security.

By 2017, deteriorating U.S.-China relations led some U.S. colleges and universities to reconsider the value of having a CI on campus. Sustained interest by Congress and political pressure led numerous U.S.-based CIs to close, especially following the passage of the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, which contained a provision that ultimately barred institutions receiving Department of Defense (DOD) critical language flagship funding in Chinese from hosting a CI. While this provision allowed for a waiver process - and several affected colleges and universities applied for waivers in 2018 and 2019 - DOD did not issue any waivers. Today, seven CIs remain on U.S. university and college campuses. At the request of DOD, Confucius Institutes at U.S. Institutions of Higher Education presents a set of findings and recommendations for waiver criteria to potentially permit the continued presence of CIs on U.S. university campuses that also receive DOD funding.

According to the report, "[t]he committee is not aware of any evidence at the unclassified level that CIs were ever associated with espionage or intellectual property theft. While incidents affecting academic freedom, freedom of expression, and shared governance did take place, the most egregious of these happened at CIs outside of the United States."

Read the report at <https://bit.ly/3jW3LJo>

## Subscribe to The APA Justice Newsletter

Complete this simple form at <https://bit.ly/2FJunJM> to subscribe. Please share it with those who wish to be informed and join the fight. View past newsletters here: [https://bit.ly/APAJ\\_Newsletters](https://bit.ly/APAJ_Newsletters).

*Copyright © 2023 APA Justice, All rights reserved.*

You are receiving this email because you opted in or have expressed interest.

**Our mailing address is:**

APA Justice  
P.O. Box 257  
McLean, VA 22101-0257

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

We do not share, sell, rent or trade any of your information with third parties unless you provide explicit consent. [Read our Privacy Policy here](#).