

## In This Issue #118

- CAPAC Leadership Members Meet with President Biden, Vice President Harris, and White House Staff to Discuss AAPI Priorities
- Senator Wicker Provides Update on the Investigation of the Department of Commerce
- APA Justice Calls for AAG Matthew G. Olsen to Release Report on Review of "China Initiative"
- *Science* Editorials: "Dismantle racism in science" and "Biden Doesn't Get It"
- Update on University of Tennessee Knoxville Professor Anming Hu

### CAPAC Leadership Members Meet with President Biden, Vice President Harris, and White House Staff to Discuss AAPI Priorities



On March 7, 2022, Members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) leadership met with President Biden, Vice President Harris, and senior White House officials to discuss policy priorities for the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.

The CAPAC Members in attendance were CAPAC Chair Rep. Judy Chu (CA-27), CAPAC First Vice-Chair Rep. Grace Meng (NY-06), CAPAC Second Vice-Chair Rep. Mark Takano (CA-41), and CAPAC Whip Rep. Ted Lieu (CA-33).

In addition to President Biden and Vice President Harris, the members of the Administration in

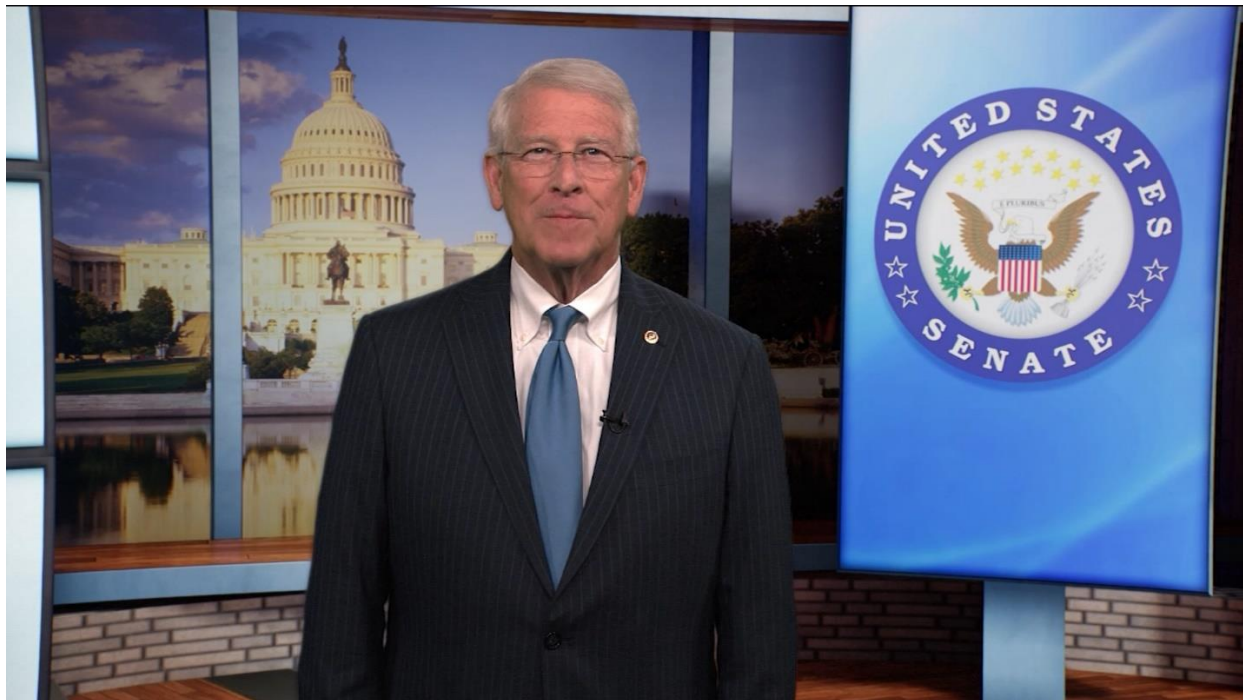
the meeting were Brian Deese, Director of the National Economic Council, Gautam Raghavan, Director of the Office of Presidential Personnel, Ambassador Susan Rice, Director of the Domestic Policy Council, Cedric Richmond, Senior Advisor to the President and Director of the Office of Public Engagement, Neera Tanden, White House Staff Secretary, Louisa Terrell, Director of the Office of Legislative Affairs, Shalanda Young, Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and Erika Moritsugu, Deputy Assistant to the President and AA & NH/PI Senior Liaison.

The statement issued by CAPAC Chair Rep. Chu following the meeting said in part:

“We had a productive conversation thanking President Biden for the steps his Administration has taken to address racial profiling of Chinese American researchers, like ending the China Initiative and issuing guidance from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) on federal grant applications. We in CAPAC look forward to working with the Department of Justice, OSTP, and agencies implementing their guidance to ensure that these steps will, through implementation, mitigate racial profiling of Asian Americans.”

Read the full CAPAC statement: <https://bit.ly/37fK0Gv>

## **Senator Wicker Provides Update on the Investigation of the Department of Commerce**



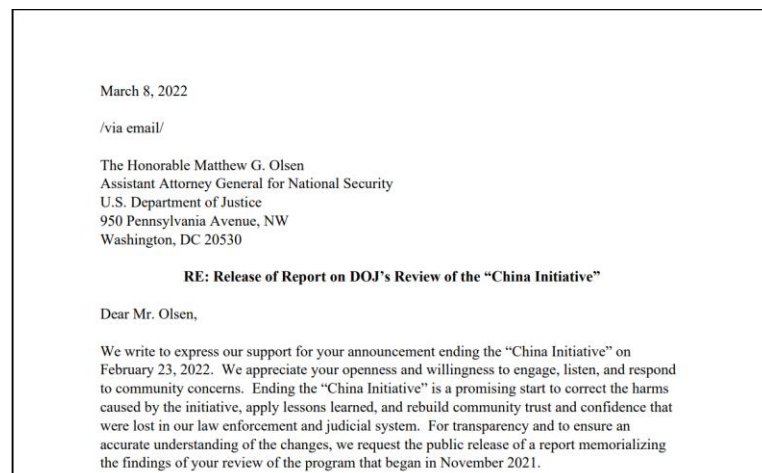
U.S. Senator Roger Wicker provided update on his continuing investigation of abuse and misconduct the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) in the APA Justice monthly meeting on March 7, 2022. Among the major points delivered by Senator Wicker are:

- "ITMS [The Investigations and Threat Management Service] has been and remains the subject of great concern... ITMS went rogue,"
- "My investigation has found more than enough evidence indicating ITMS acted outside the law on multiple occasions."
- "Sherry Chen ... was wrongfully targeted and had her life upended by charges stemming from ITMS... she is not alone"
- "... at least two of the whistleblowers who brought ITMS's conduct to our attention have suffered retaliation. Both lost their jobs in January of this year."
- "... the Commerce Department's Inspector General to be held accountable, given her failure to investigate on ITMS properly for over 4 years."
- "With your continuous advocacy, we will ensure that justice is served, and that our government stays accountable."

As ranking member of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, Senator Wicker oversees the Department of Commerce - its goals, personnel, and activities. What he has done with the investigation of DOC on its abuse and misconduct is one of the best examples of Congressional oversight. There should be no political boundaries in the pursuit of justice and keeping our government accountable. Senator Wicker also said, "I want to thank all of you for the role you've played in advocating for the victims. You have been a critical voice in this process."

Watch Senator Wicker's video: <https://bit.ly/3Kt3Gor> (2:53). For a transcript of his talk, a copy of the Senate Committee report, and a graphic on the 10-year ordeal of Sherry Chen, visit <https://bit.ly/3IU3luC>. A summary of the full monthly meeting is being prepared at this time.

## APA Justice Calls for AAG Matthew G. Olsen to Release Report on Review of "China Initiative"



On March 8, 2022, APA Justice sent a letter to Assistant Attorney General Matthew G. Olsen, calling for the release of a report on the Department of Justice's (DOJ's) review of the "China Initiative." In the letter, we express our support for his announcement ending the "China Initiative" on February 23, 2022, and our appreciation for his openness and willingness to engage, listen, and respond to community concerns. Ending the "China Initiative" is a promising start to correct the harms caused by the initiative, apply lessons learned, and rebuild community trust and confidence that were lost in our law enforcement and judicial system. For transparency and to ensure an accurate understanding of the changes, we request the public release of a report memorializing the findings of his review of the program that began in November 2021.

Release of a report on the findings of the review is critically important to ease the broad concerns that the end of "China Initiative" is just in name but does not reflect a change in fact and substance. It will supplement Mr. Olsen's speech for the communities to move forward. It is common for the government to produce a written report to memorialize an important review such as that done for the "China Initiative." It usually includes the defined scope, issues examined, process and methodology used, findings, recommended changes, decisions, and plans for implementation. Such a report would help to clarify, for example, the following questions:

1. What was the scope of the "China Initiative" review?
2. What is the new supervising role for the National Security Division?
3. Will DOJ-wide implicit bias training be restarted?
4. How thorough were existing prosecutions and investigations reviewed?
5. Did the review cover allegations of DOJ and FBI misconduct?

Harms and wounds inflicted during and prior to the "China Initiative" are deep and widespread in the Asian American and scientific communities, especially for academics of Chinese descent. It is imperative to start the process of healing and restore trust in the law enforcement and judicial system with transparency, accountability, and community engagement in moving forward. Read more about the APA Justice letter: <https://bit.ly/3hMIMpi>

## **Science Editorials: "Dismantle racism in science" and "Biden Doesn't Get It"**



Left: Dr. Alondra Nelson. Right: Dr. David Ho

In its March 4, 2022 issue, the *Science Magazine* published two editorials.

According to the first editorial titled "**Dismantle racism in science**," William Shockley Jr. of Stanford University was an American physicist who jointly won the 1956 Nobel Prize in Physics for his role in inventing the transistor. Modern computing and communications would have been unthinkable without Shockley's work. But the Nobel laureate was also a proponent of eugenics and firmly committed to the racial inferiority of Black people. Shockley was not just a physicist who held racist views. He was part of a wider academic system that then, and now, perpetuates racial inequality. The persistence of this biased ecosystem means that dismantling it will require unrelenting tenacity by all of academia.

Because there are fewer people of color in university leadership positions, there are fewer leaders who are cognizant of these impediments. As a result, the barriers for people of color in STEM are rarely addressed because leaders' priorities are elsewhere. To change the situation, the dominant culture needs to assume the burden of providing remedies. Anti-racism work is hard work, but unless actions move beyond simply tossing about diversity and equity buzzwords, people of color will remain underrepresented in STEM fields. And the United States will continue to miss out on the STEM talent and innovation that exist within communities of color. Read more about the "Dismantle racism in science" editorial: <https://bit.ly/3tEKuXs>

The second editorial titled "**Biden doesn't get it**" opined that after 4 years of bludgeoning by the Trump administration, hope resurged a year ago as a new White House promised to value science. But there have been missteps, the most recent taking place on the heels of another blunder that many saw coming. The scientific community was embarrassingly silent about Dr. Eric Lander's nomination. Not surprisingly, he is out of the White House because of the same behavioral issues of bullying and callous actions. And yet, in another tone deaf move, the administration just named Francis Collins, the recently retired director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), as Lander's interim replacement as science adviser while asking Alondra Nelson, the OSTP's deputy director for science and society and an experienced administrator and scholar, to temporarily direct OSTP. Apparently, Biden doesn't think Nelson is capable of doing both jobs. Editor-in-chief H. Holden Thorp disagrees and is not staying silent this time.

"The decision to keep Nelson out of this role reflects a chronic ill in America—inequity at the highest levels of leadership," Thorp said. Lander's vacated position and Nelson's presence at

OSTP already presented a clear opportunity to put someone in the combined role who represents the future of American science. Certainly, Francis Collins has been a major science policy figure in the US for many years. But the end of his tenure brought problems that weren't adequately resolved. He was unable to dismantle an outdated grant assessment process that reinforces a low funding rate for Black applicants. And NIH caved to political pressure around the China Initiative, which sought to satisfy the Trump administration's anti-Asian tendencies by sending letters to universities to disrupt legitimate scientific collaborations with China.

At some point, the scientific community must stand up against anti-Asian racism and injustice in the funding of Black scientists, among other discrimination in the scientific enterprise. That time has to be now, and what is needed is a new cadre of scientific leaders in Washington, DC, who can build a scientific agenda where inclusion of individuals who reflect the diverse makeup, talents, and interests of society is prioritized.

According to the editorial, Alondra Nelson is one of the visionary leaders in American science today. It's clear that Nelson has the expertise that is gravely needed for all of science. In conclusion, It's time for the scientific community to commit to a vision of the future where young scientists can get a fair share of funding, where equity for women and people of color is prioritized over protecting processes that reinforce injustices of the scientific enterprise, and where leaders in Washington, DC, represent the future, not the past.

**NOTE:** APA Justice nominated Dr. David Ho as a candidate to serve as the 17-th NIH Director last November. For the first time in more than two decades, there is no Asian American serving as cabinet secretary under the Biden administration. Read more about APA Justice nomination: <https://bit.ly/3J4leX4>

## Update on University of Tennessee Knoxville Professor Anming Hu

NEWS | 07 March 2022

### 'I lost two years of my life': US scientist falsely accused of hiding ties to China speaks out

Acquitted nanotechnology researcher Anming Hu returns to his lab after two years – and is still grappling with the aftershocks of his ordeal.



On March 7, 2022, *Nature* published a report titled "**I lost two years of my life,**" in which University of Tennessee Knoxville (UTK) Professor Anming Hu spoke out as he is still grappling with the aftershocks of his ordeal. According to the report, Hu walked into his laboratory at UTK on February 1 for the first time in about two years to find it stripped of research equipment. Gone were the delicate lasers, lenses and voltage metres — worth tens of thousands of dollars — that he and his students had used to conduct their studies. He spent much of his first few weeks back at work searching for his prized tools.

Hu, a Canadian citizen of Chinese descent, had been working in the U.S. for more than four years when the FBI first interviewed him in 2018, the year the "China Initiative" was launched. Almost two years later, in February 2020, he was indicted for wire fraud and for making false statements about his affiliation with a Chinese university on research grant applications submitted to NASA. "That is the day I lost everything. I worked hard for years, and it happened in a few minutes," he says.

That the university did not openly defend him during his case particularly stung, Hu says. "They cannot throw the professor under the bus. They should have taken their responsibility." After Hu's acquittal, faculty members at UTK campaigned for the university to rehire him. The university has not yet apologized to Hu.

In September 2021, Hu was acquitted on all counts after a mistrial was declared. "I lost two years of my life," he says. "Who is taking the consequences of that?"

Hu was under house arrest for more than a year while awaiting trial. During this time, he relied heavily on his church community to bring him groceries — and even take out his rubbish — because he was not allowed to go outside, he says. Although UTK had cut ties with Hu, some of his colleagues quietly tagged along with the church group to do the shopping or wave to him from the street. With his wife and two of his children in Canada, he felt isolated and missed his family. "It made me want to cry every night," Hu says.

Hu ultimately decided to return to UTK because he felt it would help to show that he wasn't guilty and that he didn't deserve to be penalized for the mistakes of others, he says. "I need to get back my reputation. I need to let other people see I didn't do anything wrong," he says. Hu hopes to use his position at the university to get the word out about how situations like his can arise — and to prevent it from happening to others. In addition to speaking to the media about his experiences, Hu plans to speak at events and to advocacy groups. He doesn't want others to suffer in the same way he has, he says.

Hu spoke briefly in the March 7 APA Justice monthly meeting. He thanked the participants for the support he received and called for the communities to support Professor Franklin Tao in his upcoming trial on March 21.

The "China Initiative" might have ended, but Hu says he will be looking out for changes in the way researchers of Chinese descent are treated, and whether law-enforcement agencies, including the FBI, are held accountable for their actions. "I would like to see that the DOJ respects academic freedom and encourages normal international collaboration and exchange," Hu says. "We should be alert that this does not mean that the prosecution goes underground."

Read more about the *Nature* report: <https://go.nature.com/377oinT>

## 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 © 2022 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](#)

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.](#)