

## Meet the Panelists

### **Past and Present: Addressing Racism and Intolerance Against Asian Americans**

Saturday, May 8, 2021 (2:00 – 3:30pm ET / 11:00am – 12:30pm PT)

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**Erika L. Moritsugu:** The Honorable Erika Moritsugu has spent most of her career in the federal government and politics fighting for social justice and the empowerment of communities and individuals. She served as the Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the leadership of Secretary Julián Castro in the Obama Administration after being confirmed by the Senate in 2014.

Erika has diverse and deep experience on Capitol Hill and within governmental agencies. In addition to her appointment at HUD, Erika served as the General Counsel for Senator Tammy Duckworth (IL) for whom she provided legislative and political strategic counsel and managed the Senator’s AAPI outreach and judiciary, civil rights and economic policies. She was the Deputy Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau; Deputy Legislative Director for Senator Daniel Akaka (HI) focused on economic policy and health issues; and held several roles at the Senate Democratic Policy Committee under Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (NV), including Acting Staff Director and Policy Director and economic policy advisor. She previously worked at the White House Office of Presidential Personnel, the Prosecutor’s Office for the City and County of Honolulu, and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Criminal Division. Before recommitting to a career in public service, she practiced international trade, legislative, and immigration law at Hogan and Hartson and managed grassroots and coalition-building campaigns at The Wexler Group.

At the National Partnership for Women & Families, since 2019, Erika has served as its Vice President for the Economic Justice team, which is committed to advancing public policies to achieve economic stability and security for women of color and other marginalized communities. She was also appointed Vice President of a newly formed Congressional Relations team to lead an enterprise-wide advocacy strategy across the Partnership’s program areas, including economic justice and health justice. Prior to her work at the Partnership, Erika led the Government Relations, Advocacy and Community Engagement team at the Anti-Defamation League, a leading anti-hate organization founded in 1913 in response to an escalating climate of antisemitism and bigotry.

Erika has been active in the community, volunteering or leading organizations focused on voting rights, civil rights, community engagement, mentoring, and AAPI empowerment, including service as the Executive Director and then Advisory Board member of the AAA-Fund and a Member of the Board of the Pan-Pacific American Leaders and Mentor organization. While working for Senator Akaka who was the first Native Hawaiian to serve in the U.S. Senate, she drafted the *Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2012* and the *Medicaid Restoration for Citizens of Freely Associated States Act of 2011*, and supported the reintroduction of the *Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act of 2011* and the *Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act of 2011*.

Erika attended Brandeis University, the College of William and Mary, and George Washington Law School. Born in California and raised in Hawai’i, Erika lives on Capitol Hill with her husband, Brian, their two children Vianne Leilani and Chester Likeke, and their two cats.



**Haeyoung Yoon:** Haeyoung is the Senior Director of Policy at the National Domestic Workers Alliance. Over the course of her career, Haeyoung worked on low-wage and immigrant workers rights issues. Prior to National Domestic Workers Alliance, Haeyoung was Distinguished Taconic Fellow at Community Change, working on immigration issues. She also worked at the National Employment Law Project as the Director of Strategic Partnership and a Deputy Program Director. Haeyoung co-directed a program area that combines policy design, campaign support, advocacy, research, and strategic communication to expand economic opportunity and security for working people in our economy. She currently serves as a member of the Biden-Harris Administration's COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force.



**Ed Tepporn:** Ed joined the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation (AIISF) team as its Executive Director in November 2019. He has over 25 years of experience in the nonprofit sector. He previously served on staff at the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF) for nearly 16 years, most recently as APIAHF's Executive Vice President. Ed received a B.A. in Biology and Psychology from Washington University. He was also a Nelson Mandela Scholarship recipient in the M.S.W. program at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work. He is a certified professional leadership coach. In 2019, Ed was awarded a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Award for Health Equity, He is also currently a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Fellow.



**Sam Mihara:** Sam is a second-generation Japanese American (Nisei) born and raised in San Francisco. When World War II broke out, the United States government using armed military guards forced Sam, age 9, and his family to move to the Heart Mountain, Wyoming prison camp. Sam and his family lived in one room, 20 by 20 feet square in a barrack for three years. After the war ended, the family returned home to San Francisco. Sam attended Lick Wilmerding High School, U.C. Berkeley undergraduate and UCLA graduate schools, where he earned engineering degrees. He became a rocket scientist and joined the Boeing Company where he became an executive on space programs. Following retirement, Sam changed careers - he became a national speaker on the topic of mass imprisonment in the U.S. He has visited many federal prisons, including today's detention facilities for undocumented immigrants. Sam helped in

the education and preservation of the Heart Mountain historic prison site in Northwest Wyoming. Since 2014, he is a board member of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, the non-profit organization that oversees the National Historic Landmark site. The site today includes an award-winning museum / school with original camp structures.



**Esther Young Lim:** Esther is a 2nd generation Korean-American who created booklets on How to Report a Hate Crime in 9 different languages for the Los Angeles/Orange County, New York City, and San Francisco/Oakland regions. She works full-time in fashion apparel, but is an activist in her own right and fights for equality. Her sole purpose of creating books on how to report a hate crime was to provide equity and break the concept of having a language barrier just to gain knowledge of resources that were already out there. She believes there are different aspects in everyone's lives where we see inequity and even in a small way, we can do something about it.



**Kevin Tien:** Originally from Lafayette, Louisiana, Kevin started working in the corporate world after receiving his Master's degree in Statistical Analysis and Business Analytics from Louisiana State University. Early on, however, his passion for food and service led him to a career change which then placed him on a culinary path in 2009. After working with various restaurants in Louisiana, Texas, and Washington, D.C., Kevin had an opportunity to open Himitsu, a Japanese-inspired restaurant combining freshness, acidity and herbs, leaning heavily on Latin American and Southeast Asian flavor profiles. After three years, Kevin made the difficult decision to close Himitsu to focus on Hot Lola's (a spicy chicken restaurant opened in 2019 in Arlington, VA) & Moon Rabbit (a contemporary Vietnamese restaurant opened in 2020 in the heart of the Wharf in Washington, DC).

Kevin's resume includes working for chefs Aaron Silverman (Little Pearl, Pineapple and Pearl, Rose's Luxury/only worked at Pineapple and Pearl), David Chang (Momofuku CCDC), Jose Andres (Oyamel), and Tyson Cole (Uchi).

Since the opening of Himitsu in 2016, the restaurant and Kevin garnered national attention and accolades from all corners of the United States. Himitsu was named by Bon Appetit as one of the best new restaurants in the country in 2018, was Eater DC's editor's choice for restaurant of the year, and was featured in The Washington Post's Spring & Fall Dining Guides – 10 Best Restaurants 2017 and 2018. Also, Kevin was a James Beard Finalist for Rising Star Chef of the Year 2018, a James Beard Semi-Finalist for Rising Star Chef of the Year 2017, Food & Wine Magazine's Best New Chefs List 2018, Washingtonian Magazine's and Washington Business Journal's 40 under 40, and a semifinalist in 2017 for Eater's Young Guns Awards. Kevin also competed against other contestants in the fierce season 2 of Iron Chef Gauntlet.

Kevin is co-founder of "Chefs Stopping AAPI Hate," a collective of AAPI and ally chefs using the power of food and their love of cooking to raise awareness and funds for AAPI organizations fighting racism and intolerance.



**Juliet Bui:** Juliet is a Public Health Advisor in the Office of Minority Health (OMH) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where she oversees the behavioral health and justice policy portfolios, serves as project director for the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care (National CLAS Standards) and serves as the funding opportunity coordinator. She also is currently supporting Departmental efforts related to the COVID-19 and racial equity executive orders. Prior to joining OMH, she was a Public Health Analyst in the Office of Behavioral Health Equity at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, where she focused on efforts and strategies to address behavioral health disparities. She also has served as a Policy Advisor on Health at the White House

Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI), where she managed projects and focused on policy issues including behavioral health, the Affordable Care Act, and AAPI health disparities.



**Erin Aoyama (moderator):** Erin is a doctoral candidate in American Studies at Brown University, where she works in the fields of comparative ethnic studies, Asian American studies, movement history, and public humanities. Currently, she serves as the Community Research and Outreach Fellow for Minidoka National Historic Site in Idaho.