

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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ASIAN AMERICANS HOLD RECOGNITION AND ADVOCACY EVENTS IN HOUSTON

HOUSTON--Asian Americans Salute Frontline Heroes (AASFH) is a coalition of organizations and individuals that came together to raise funds to purchase meals from struggling Asian restaurants in the Greater Houston area to give to frontline heroes in healthcare, first responders and various essential personnel. AASFH also has as its mission, to bring awareness of and advocacy against anti-Asian hate incidents which are on the rise since the pandemic began.

In keeping with this latter mission, AASFH will honor two Midland, Texas heroes, Zach Owen and Bernie Ramirez, who intervened in a violent anti-Asian stabbing of the Cung Family, a Burmese father and his two young sons. They will travel to Houston to receive the Lily and Vincent Chin Advocacy Award* on Monday, June 22 at 10:30 am CST at the Chinese Community Center. Despite injuries to his leg and hand, Zach Owen, with the help of Bernie Ramirez, disarmed and subdued the attacker until the police arrived. Labeled a "hate crime", the suspect said he thought the family was Chinese and spreading the coronavirus.

The award is named after Vincent Chin, a young Chinese man who was brutally beaten to death because he was mistaken for being Japanese by two White auto workers in Detroit in the early 80's when Japan threatened the US auto industry. Lily Chin, Vincent's mother, was a strong and tireless advocate against her son's brutal murder and the lenient punishment and fines his attackers were given. The ceremony will be video streamed and can be viewed online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opm1Lbx9pdc>. For more information go to: <https://ccchouston.org/advocacy-award/>.

Later that same evening at 7:00 pm CST, AASFH and UCA will host a panel discussion virtually via Zoom discussing the 38th anniversary of the brutal killing of Vincent Chin and the recent killing of George Floyd. Both deaths created and sustained a major movement to oppose racial hate and discrimination. "From Vincent Chin to George Floyd" will feature as moderator, Gordon Quan, attorney and former Houston City Council member, and six panelists. They are Helen Zia, award-winning journalist and community activist, who has covered Asian American communities and social and political movements for many years, including as a founder in the movement for justice for Vincent Chin; Zach Owen, recipient of the Lily and Vincent Chin Advocacy Award* for risking his life to save a Burmese family in a recent hate crime committed in Midland, Texas in March; Reagan Hognojos, a friend of the Cung family; Mark Toubin, an attorney and Regional Director for the ADL Southwest Regional Office; Cherry Steinwender, co-director and co-founder of The Center for the Healing of Racism, and Annie Tan, cousin of the late Vincent Chin, a special education teacher and story teller in New York Chinatown and advocate for public education, unions, tenants and Asian American rights. Zoom link will be provided upon registration at: <https://form.jotform.com/201684865046057>.

* The AASFH has been authorized by the Estate of the Chin family to use the name "Lily and Vincent Chin Advocacy Award" for this special recognition of two Frontline Heroes on June 22, 2020.