



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kimberly Ortega (213) 361-6435

Building a Community Through Solidarity, An Artist's Approach to Knitting Our Communities Back Together

A collaged fabric tapestry representing Solidarity in the face of rising anti-Asian hate violence will be unveiled by Board of Supervisor Hilda Solis at the Rowland Heights Library on May 19 at 9 a.m. A core component of the LA County Commission on Human Relations' [LA vs Hate](#), a countywide anti-hate program, is using art to strengthen feelings of safety, inclusion and healing in the face of the historic rise in hate acts and crimes.

"The act of stitching cultural fabrics suggests our commonalities as well as celebrating the rich and vibrant diversities in the County," stated Supervisor Solis at the unveiling of the tapestry.

"Commemorating Asian American Heritage Month, LA vs Hate will be unveiling this fabric tapestry in the shape of Los Angeles County, and called *Solidarity* as part of the effort to build awareness of both the Asian American and other immigrant communities' experience in Los Angeles county," stated Robin Toma, Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations. *Solidarity* will be unveiled in the recently renovated LA County Library in Rowland Heights; a neighborhood that is known for its strong Chinese-American immigrant population.

"We are excited to have Rowland Heights Library adorned with such a beautiful and distinctive tapestry to showcase the cultural diversity within Los Angeles County," said LA County Library Director Skye Patrick.

"Inclusion and equity are vital to building healthy, resilient communities and, as a health plan that serves one out of every four people in Los Angeles County, L.A. Care is committed to advancing health equity," said James Kyle, MD, L.A. Care Chief of Equity and Quality Medical Director. "We are proud to sponsor this LA vs Hate art installation, which was created with the help of diverse communities and illustrates that we are stronger together."

In September, 2019, Los Angeles County, California, embarked on LA vs Hate, an innovative project to address the increase in hate violence and bias-motivated bullying by providing an easy way to report and get help, for targeted county residents. Besides using art as a way to spearhead discussions on reporting hate violence, and expressing solidarity, LA vs Hate also provides a network of trusted community agencies to assist victims of hate. A variety of school-based LA vs Hate programs help address the ongoing targeting of Asian American and Pacific Islander and other historically targeted communities of color.

This piece was commissioned by LA vs Hate to a local Filipinx interdisciplinary artist and researcher Diane Williams. Williams used amalgamated fabrics with cultural significance, melding layers of translucent materials and embroidery. The hand embroidered outlines of national flowers from multiple cultures signify

--more--

2-2-2

the diverse cultural backgrounds of Los Angeles County and the nation. For centuries, flowers have been symbols of unity, love, hope, camaraderie and healing.

“As a BIPOC artist and cultural worker, it is important that the voice of my community is reflected in my work, states Ms. Williams. “I created SOLIDARITY to uplift and produce a space of belonging, reflection and interconnection. In these contentious times we’re living in, it’s increasingly harder for the marginalized and the most vulnerable in our communities to feel empowered, respected and protected. Programs like LA vs Hate play an integral part in preserving the dignity of those who are victims and intended targets of hate as well as raising awareness of the growing violence in our communities. I’m honored to be a part of this program that fosters health and resilience for the people of Los Angeles County.”

The tapestry hangs on a custom wooden structure, similar to a free-standing traditional Navajo loom to signify how the diverse cultural backgrounds in Los Angeles county are all woven into what makes the County strong. “The gesture of obtaining an amalgamation of materials from different sources provides connections with the histories and narratives of various communities,” stated Williams of her work. “These materials not only represent personal histories and stories but also carry collective memories of kinship --

Diane Williams is a Filipinx interdisciplinary artist and researcher based in Los Angeles, CA. Her work has been featured in select publications and radio interviews including Artforum, Hyperallergic, Los Angeles Magazine, LA Weekly, Artillery, Eastsider LA and KPFK. Williams exhibited in several solo and group shows at the Armory Center for the Arts, 18th Street Art Center, Walter Maciel Gallery, Museum of Art and History, Children’s Museum of the Arts New York, Berkeley Art Center, San Francisco Arts Commission Galleries and Grafiska Sällskapet Stockholm, Sweden, and has held fellowships at the National Immigration Law Center and Azusa Pacific University. Williams holds degrees from USC and CSULB in Fine Arts.

L.A. vs Hate provides three components: a marketing campaign to provide awareness of the dangers of hate and importance of reporting it; a network of agencies to provide assistance and prevention strategies to prevent hate and third, the ability to report acts of hate and bullying by calling 211-LA. At 211-LA, two case managers help residents who report bias and discrimination to access needed resources for healing from such experiences. Reports of hate are submitted to 211 and connect these residents with local and culturally attuned organizations that can support them in the aftermath of hate including counseling and legal services. More information on LA vs Hate can be obtained at lavshate.org.

###