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February 28, 2017

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APALA Responds to Tragic Shooting in Olathe, Kansas

Washington, DC – The Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA) is deeply saddened and disturbed by the shooting of two South Asian men in Olathe, Kansas, which left one man dead. Our hearts go out to families of Alok Madasani and Srinivas Kuchibhotla and the communities impacted by the hateful rhetoric and violence that led to this tragic incident.

“We are deeply saddened by the loss that our brothers and sisters in Olathe face today,” stated Johanna Puno Hester, APALA National President and Assistant Director of the United Domestic Workers, AFSCME Local 3930. “Our nation is becoming less and less safe, at the hands of people who turn xenophobia and hate into the kind of violence that threatens our very existence. When will our bodies be safe from violence? When will brown and black bodies be able to live free?”

Witnesses reported that the shooter believed these men were Middle Eastern, yelling racial slurs before opening fire on Madasani and Kuchibhotla. The FBI is currently investigating the case but has not yet classified this incident a hate crime.

Monica Thammarath, APALA 1st Vice President and Senior Liaison at the National Education Association, added: “The Trump effect is real; white supremacy is endangering our families and friends. We’re seeing more incidents of hate against communities of South Asian – or those perceived to be – descent. It’s clear that more than ever we need to resist, organize, and fight back against any and all attempts that puts our lives at risk.”

“The news of the Kansas shooting was heartbreaking to hear,” commented Maf Misbah Uddin, APALA National Executive Board Member and President and Founder of the Alliance of South Asian American Labor (ASAAL). “We demand justice for Alok and Srinivas, and we are calling on our broader Asian American and Pacific Islander community and our allies to stand together against the rising trend of hate violence and growing anti-immigrant, anti-Black/Brown, and anti-Muslim sentiment we are facing today under the Trump administration.”

To read more, please check out the latest report by South Asian Americans Leading Together called “[Power, Pain, Potential](#),” which details over two hundred occurrences of hate violence and xenophobic rhetoric during the 2016 elections alone. To help with the families affected, please donate here:

- [GoFundMe page](#) in memoriam of Srinivas
- [GoFundMe page](#) for Alok/Srinivas to benefit their families
- [GoFundMe page](#) for Ian Grillot

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The **Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance** (APALA), AFL-CIO was founded in 1992 as the first and only national organization for Asian Pacific American union members to advance worker, immigrant and civil rights. For more information, visit www.apalanet.org and follow [@APALANational](https://twitter.com/APALANational)