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Forum Announced: "A Dialogue Between Academic/APA Communities With The FBI"



During the APA Justice monthly meeting on May 6, 2024, **Nabila Mansoor**, President, Texas Multicultural Advocacy Coalition (TMAC), and Dr. **Kenneth M. Evans**, Scholar in Science and Technology Policy, Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, announced that TMAC and the Baker Institute and Office of Innovation at Rice University will co-host a joint forum with APA Justice on "A Dialogue Between Academic/AAPI Communities with The FBI."

WHAT: A Dialogue Between Academic/AAPI Communities with The FBI

WHEN: June 6, 2024, 4:00 - 6:00 pm Central Time

WHERE: In-person, Rice University, Houston, Texas; virtual Zoom webinar information to be announced

HOSTS: Texas Multicultural Advocacy Coalition (TMAC); Baker Institute for Public Policy and Office of Innovation at Rice University; APA Justice

SPEAKERS:

- **Neal Lane**, Senior Fellow, Baker Institute; Former Director, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

- **Gordon Quan**, Managing Partner & Co-Founder, Quan Law Group
- **David Donatti**, Senior Staff Attorney, ACLU of Texas
- **Gisela Perez Kusakawa**, Executive Director, Asian American Scholar Forum
- **Jill Murphy**, Deputy Assistant Director for Counterintelligence, FBI Headquarters
- **Douglas Williams, Jr.**, Special Agent in Charge, FBI Houston
- **Georgette "GiGi" Pickering**, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, FBI Houston
- **Kelly Choi**, Supervisory Special Agent, FBI Houston

More information about the forum will be announced when they become available.

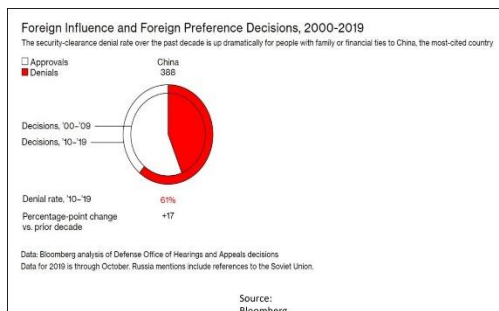
The Impact of U.S.-China Tensions on Asian Americans in Government



A morning session at the Committee 100 conference on April 19, 2024, explored the nuanced potential barriers to career advancement that spin from the tensions with China, the complexities of obtaining security clearances, and the uncomfortable scrutiny regarding loyalty that Asian Americans endure due to concerns over foreign influence.

Congressman **Andy Kim**, a Korean American, was not able to participate in the session due to a vote in the House of Representatives. A clip of [his interview with MSNBC](#) in 2021 was played to open the session. Congressman Kim revealed that when he worked at the State Department, he had a top secret security clearance and worked in Iraq and Afghanistan, but he was told one day that he was banned from working on issues related to the Korean Peninsula although he did not apply to work on such issues. It left him with the feeling that his own country didn't trust him for some reason because of his last name and because of his heritage although he was born in the United States. He was banned from working on these issues because of concerns about his loyalty and xenophobia. It was deeply hurtful. It took him some time to be able to talk about the episode because part of him wanted to just keep his head down and keep working and show through his hard work that this is wrong. He eventually came to realize that he cannot just assume that these issues of racism will just get better. We have to stand up and speak out on behalf of the victims and many others who are frightened, he said.

Congressman Kim delivered brief remarks at the evening gala: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qP3RIXrHlCA> (2:03). He is married to a Chinese American, and they have two young boys. He also served as a United States National Security Council official under the Obama Administration. Congressman Kim has represented New Jersey's 3rd congressional district since 2019 and is running for the U.S. Senate in 2024.



- (1) GUIDELINE A: Allegiance to the United States
- (2) GUIDELINE B: Foreign Influence
- (3) GUIDELINE C: Foreign Preference
- (4) GUIDELINE D: Sexual Behavior
- (5) GUIDELINE E: Personal Conduct
- (6) GUIDELINE F: Financial Considerations
- (7) GUIDELINE G: Alcohol Consumption
- (8) GUIDELINE H: Drug Involvement and Substance Misuse
- (9) GUIDELINE I: Psychological Conditions
- (10) GUIDELINE J: Criminal Conduct
- (11) GUIDELINE K: Handling Protected Information
- (12) GUIDELINE L: Outside Activities
- (13) GUIDELINE M: Use of Information Technology

Dr. **Jiashen You**, Chair of the Asian American Government Executive Network (AAGEN), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-partisan organization whose mission is to promote, expand, and support Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander leadership in Government, followed with a [3-slide presentation](#). Starting with a report published by the Partnership for Public Service, Dr. You quoted a report released by the Partnership for Public Service on trends over 25 years of the Senior Executive Service (SES), the highest level for civil career servants in the federal government. He then shared that the "bamboo ceiling" still exists for Asian Americans to make the leap to an SES, despite the community seeing rapid growth in its share in recent years. He ended the presentation by highlighting the security denial rates for people with family or financial ties to China [link to Bloomberg article <https://bit.ly/4b7jWZW>]. In addition, Dr. You recounted his personal experience hearing about Dr. **Wen Ho Lee's** case being widely

reported during his semester in college and living in America. Despite being capable of receiving clearance in the past, the impact of the "perpetual foreigner" notion deterred him from applying to many senior-level jobs that require top-secret clearance, leading to an even narrower window of opportunities. This is not an uncommon experience for first-generation Asian American government employees.

Carol Lam, Former U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of California, presented a [primer on security clearance](#) and remarked that federal policy sets out the aggravating and mitigating factors to be considered in denying or granting security clearance. However, those factors take on more or less weight depending on political relationships between the United States and the country of concern, rendering the final decision somewhat subjective. Ms. Lam noted the importance of keeping the nation's attention on potential unfair biases in security clearance decisions in order to prevent those biases from becoming entrenched. Ms. Lam did note one positive development in the form of Secretary of State Blinken's decision in March 2023 to lift many State Department assignment restrictions based on employees' country of origin or familial or financial relationships in that country.

Chuck Rosenberg, Former U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, remarked that all nations in the world spy on each other, including China and the United States, with the possible exception of the "five eyes" nations of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The session was moderated by **Paula Madison**, Chair and CEO, 88 Madison Media Inc. and a member of the Committee of 100.

Graduate Assistants United Rally Against Florida SB 846

The image is a composite graphic. On the left, the Graduate Assistants United logo is displayed with the tagline 'YOUR UNION. YOUR VOICE.' Below the logo is a large blue graphic with white text that reads: 'GAU REPRESENTS OVER 4400 GRADUATE EMPLOYEES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA'. On the right side of the graphic is a newspaper clipping. The clipping has a headline that reads 'Rallying against the 'Countries of Concern' bill'. The text in the clipping discusses the bill's impact on graduate assistants and mentions a rally held at the University of Florida.

Graduate Assistants United (GAU) has been a labor union at the University of Florida (UF) since 1972. It represents 4,400 graduate assistants and research assistants at UF. It was a major organizer of the rally against Florida Senate Bill (SB) 846, which is also called the "Countries of Concern" bill, in Gainesville, Florida, on March 26, 2024.

Eva Garcia Ferres, Co-President of GAU, published a report on the rally in the April/May edition of the *Gainesville Iguana*. According to her report, SB 846 does not specifically prohibit the admission of applicants, but it does create a very important and hostile roadblock for prospective graduate assistants, postdocs, and faculty members. The bill requires an extra screening conducted by a Research Integrity Office. The screening is supposed to verify all attendance, employment, publications, and contributions listed in the application prior to any interview or offer of a position to the applicant.

The first problem is logistical. Many graduate applications are due early to late December, and many interviews are offered and conducted around early spring. There are over 4,000 graduate assistants at University of Florida, approximately half of graduate assistants are international students, and of the international student population a substantial portion come from China and Iran. This means that for every application cycle, the Research Integrity Office would need to thoroughly vet and make risk assessments for all applicants within a very limited timeline. The capacity and ability of the Research Integrity Office to do so is questioned.

The second point of concern is the lack of transparency regarding the Research Integrity Office and the guidelines they are to use to make the risk assessments. Neither the bill itself nor the Board of Governors' guidelines provide a definition of risk or a way to measure risk. It thus must fall upon the University and the Research Integrity Office to create the standard and apply it. The offices have not responded to these inquiries.

In addition, there are draconian consequences for those who "fail" the screening (i.e., those who are deemed a risk, whatever that may be) because they will be reported to the FBI and any other law enforcement agency as determined by the Board of Governors.

The Board of Governors' guidelines reserve the right to make decisions about applicants and collaborations with entities from the seven countries based on their "value." The report asks, "How is value determined? What makes the Board of Governors or the Research Integrity Office better suited for determining the value of international applicants and collaborations than the experts in the field?"

"We know that applicants are being denied admission offers, that faculty cannot hire their top applicants, and that researchers cannot collaborate with prominent scholars in the field purely because of nationality," the report said.

If departments and faculty cannot hire their top applicants, then research and teaching will suffer. If the University will not accept visiting professors and scholars from "countries of concern," then the University will miss on key expertise, new perspectives, and important scholarly connections. Learning and innovation are the pillars of academia. They are pursued in collaboration and cannot flourish in echo chambers and monoculture settings. They lead to the destruction of academic freedom.

Decisions on who to hire, what to teach, and what to research have always been made by experts in the field, but this is no longer the case in Florida, the GAU report concludes.

Read the *Gainesville Iguana* report: <https://bit.ly/3ULrHze>

A lawsuit against Florida SB 846 was filed with the Southern District Court of Florida on March 25, 2024: [Yin v. Diaz \(1:24-cv-21129\)](#)

AASF: Video Competition to Honor Asian American Scientists

A blue banner for the AASF Video Competition. At the top left, it says "Youth Ambassador for Science". At the top right, there are links for "Rules" and "Submit", and social media icons for YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. The main title is "Video Competition* to Honor Asian American Scientists" in white text. Below the title, it says "Contest Period: May 1 to June 7, 2024". On the right side, there is a logo for "ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH" in orange and white. Below the title and contest period, there is a paragraph of text: "Scientists of Asian-American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) descent have contributed numerous technological innovations and scientific breakthroughs that influence your daily life. Yet, the general public often finds it difficult to name any of these accomplished individuals. AAPI Month presents a valuable opportunity to explore and commend the accomplishments of AAPI scientists." At the bottom, there is another paragraph: "The 'Youth Ambassador for Science' competition invites high schoolers to create and share short videos highlighting these scientists, for a chance to win a \$1,000 VISA gift card. Multiple prizes available. See the official rules at <https://aasforum.org/video-competition/official-rules> for full details."

WHAT: Video Competition to Honor Asian American Scientists

WHEN: Contest Period: 12:00:01 am Eastern Time (ET) on May 1 through 11:59:59 pm ET on June 7, 2024 ET.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE: Legal residents of the 50 US states or DC who are age 14 - 18 who participate with their parent or guardian's consent

OFFICIAL RULES: <https://bit.ly/4bnrPKN>

PRIZES: Each prize is a \$1,000 Visa gift card. 40 prizes available across various categories. Prizes will be awarded to the parent/guardian of each winner, not the entrant.

DESCRIPTION: Celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month by showcasing the achievements of prominent Asian American scientists. High schoolers are invited to create and share short videos highlighting these scientists, competing for a chance to win a \$1,000 visa gift card. Multiple prizes available.

HOW TO ENTER: <https://bit.ly/3UtbrS5>

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar

The screenshot displays a Google Calendar interface for 'APA Justice Public Events'. The main calendar view is for May 2024, showing a grid of dates. A yellow highlight is on May 7. A detailed agenda for Tuesday, May 7, is shown on the right, listing events from Monday, May 13 to Thursday, June 6. The events listed are:

- Monday, May 13**: 9:00am 2024 APAICS Legislative Leadership Summit
- Tuesday, May 14**: Serica Initiative: 7th Annual Women's Gala dinner; 9:00am 2024 APAICS Legislative Leadership Summit; 6:00pm APAICS: 30th Annual Awards Gala
- Wednesday, May 22**: 5:00pm Heritage, Culture, and Community: The Future of America's Chinatowns
- Sunday, June 2**: 9:00pm Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall meeting
- Monday, June 3**: 1:55pm APA Justice Monthly Meeting
- Thursday, June 6**: 5:00pm A Dialogue Between Academic/AAPI Communities with The FBI

Events shown in time zone: Eastern Time - Detroit

Upcoming Events:

- 2024/05/13-14 2024 APAICS Legislative Leadership Summit
- 2024/05/14 2024 APAICS: 30th Annual Awards Gala
- 2024/05/14 Serica Initiative: 7th Annual Women's Gala Dinner
- 2024/05/22 Heritage, Culture, and Community: The Future of America's Chinatowns
- 2024/06/02 Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall Meeting
- 2024/06/03 APA Justice Monthly Meeting
- 2024/06/06 A Dialogue Between Academic/AAPI Communities with The FBI

Visit <https://bit.ly/45KGyga> for event details.

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