Office of International Services

#YouAreWelcomeHere

Delo Blough, Director
Background

• 2014 Lindt Café Siege in Australia
• Mon Haron Monis held a café hostage for 17 hours
• Monis and 2 hostages were killed
• Afterward, the Muslim community felt unsafe
• #I'llridewithyou campaign was born
2016 United States

• Election November 8\(^{th}\)

• Morning of November 9\(^{th}\): Prescheduled meeting between Study Group International and James Madison University to discuss recruitment of international students

• #YouAreWelcomeHere was born
Videos

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KZ45tA0UwA
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STquUuDQq4
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06BP7N_Gqzk
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jkdfoBliDY
#YouAreWelcomeHere
Current State of #YouAreWelcomeHere

• Over 250 institutions participated in Social Media Campaign

• Scholarships were started in 2019; 66 institutions currently participating
Is #YouAreWelcomeHere still needed?

- Anti-Asian rhetoric (i.e., “China virus,” and “Kung Flu”)
- Anti-Asian hate crimes increased 149% in 2020 (overall hate crimes dropped 7%)*
- Stop AAPI Hate research group documented more than 3,795 hate incidents from the end of March 2020 to the end of February 2021
  (Reported incidents were verbal harassment (68.1%); shunning — i.e., the deliberate avoidance of Asian Americans — (20.5%); physical assault (11.1%); civil rights violations including workplace discrimination, refusal of service and being barred from transportation (8.5%); and online harassment (6.8%) of the total incidents.)
- Pitt Alumni, working on OPT: “We (he and his wife) kept hearing the news on TV, mostly bad, and worries about masks wearing in public and a rising wave of Asian hate around that time. Our friends and neighbors are all nice and treated us well. It was just when the previous president started calling the virus “China virus” when we literally felt unsafe. Our families worried about us too and asked us to check in with them every day. I never had to do this, but I felt I have been “keeping my head down” for the past year.”

*Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism, California State University, San Bernardino
Other Factors Affecting Students

• New enrollments declined by over 12% between Fall 2015 and Fall 2019 (and then COVID hit)

• Lawsuits and other threats to OPT rules

• Openness of other countries
Pitt and #YouAreWelcomeHere

• Included in email signature lines and on websites

• Challenge to do more:
  – Create video/s and post online
  – Consider #YouAreWelcomeHere scholarships
  – Suggestions?
QUESTIONS?

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