



## Love Letter to our Hmong and Lao Communities

We recognize and apologize for what you're going through right now. We are living in uncertain times within multiple pandemics and the reality of what needs to be centered the most right now, which are the uprisings in the name of justice for George Floyd and other countless Black lives lost to state-sanctioned violence and white supremacy.

Recently, a Lao American community member publicly made inflammatory and degrading anti-Hmong statements on their Facebook page; specifically targeting Kellie Chauvin, the former wife of fired and disgraced Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who murdered George Floyd. The Facebook post was shared more than 1,000 times and surfaced hundreds of generated heated comments between Hmong and Lao community members and re-opened the wounds of ethnic tensions.

As the Lao diaspora, we acknowledge the historical trauma from our elders, the plight of various ethnic groups during the Secret War, and the ongoing ethnic tensions between Lao and Hmong people and many other 50+ ethnic minorities and indigenous people in Laos and Southeast Asia. This stems from centuries of deeply ingrained supremacy and dominance of indigenous lands in the country and region, which have carried over through the occupation of Chinese and Japanese imperialism, the decades-long rule of French colonialism, and now as settlers in America.

Lao, Hmong, Mien, Khmu, Tai Dam, Lue, and other ethnic groups from Laos have fought in the same wars on the same side, survived the same labor camps, lived through refugee camps, and resettled as new Americans together in the same neighborhoods as neighbors in the same struggle.

We will not tolerate divisiveness, ignorance, hate, and violence against one another; especially during a time when we need to come together with grace, love, and solidarity for our Black communities. We share this while remembering what's most important right now in our current movement for our shared liberation. Healing is needed and necessary between our Hmong and Lao communities. We must have these difficult conversations with one another in a safe and welcoming space, so we can be in relationship with each other.

As Lao community organizations, we respect the right to free speech, but in our shared vision for intercultural harmony, we expressly reject any approach that incites aggressive hostility and hate within our Black Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. Those with a known and repeated history of engaging in such discourse are banned by the majority of Lao community leaders. We ask that community members not participate in sharing such harmful messages, check in with mutual friends to call them in for compassionate accountability, and take time to self-educate and reflect on how divisive actions have burned bridges and impacted our communities.

For community members interested in the long-standing history of positive and inclusive intercultural harmony and solidarity between the Hmong and Lao that go back to the 1800s to present day, please feel free to reach out to us for free resources available in a variety of formats.

We all have heavy lifting and work to do with one another and welcome our Hmong community members to be on that journey with us so future generations don't have to carry intergenerational and historical trauma any longer.

With Love and Solidarity,

Laotian American National Alliance (LANA) – [lanausa.org](http://lanausa.org)  
The SEAD Project – [www.theseadproject.org](http://www.theseadproject.org)  
Little Laos on the Prairie – [littlelaosontheprairie.org](http://littlelaosontheprairie.org)  
Laos in the House – [www.laosinthehouse.com](http://www.laosinthehouse.com)  
Teada Productions – [www.teada.org](http://www.teada.org)

Lao American Writers Summit and LAWS+ – [www.laowriters.org](http://www.laowriters.org)  
Funny Asian Women Collective – [www.fawkollective.com](http://www.fawkollective.com)  
Refugegenius Lab Collective – [www.saymoukdatherefugenius.com](http://www.saymoukdatherefugenius.com)  
Laos Angeles – [www.laosangeles.org](http://www.laosangeles.org)  
Asian Pacific Film Collective  
Siengkane Lao MN