



ALASKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION PO BOX 81084, FAIRBANKS, AK 99708 WWW.AKLA.ORG

AKLA stands with Asian American and Pacific Islander (AA/PI) and Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Communities of Alaska

The Alaska Library Association stands with library workers, patrons, and the communities we serve, who are discriminated against and are subject to violence based on their race or ethnicity. We do this in support of our colleagues in the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA "[Statement Against Anti-Asian Violence](#)") and the Black Caucus of The American Library Association (BCALA "[Statement Condemning Increased Violence and Racism Towards Black Americans and People of Color](#)").

To this day, many Alaskans are living with trauma resulting from America's legacy of cultural erasure and racism. In particular, Alaska Natives have suffered and continue to suffer. Despite brave and tireless advocacy by individuals and organizations, institutional racism and systems of oppression remain to this day, resisting growing efforts to tear them down.

Many Asian American and Pacific Islander, Black, Indigenous and other People of Color make Alaska their home today. The city of Anchorage boasts the three most ethno-racially diverse neighborhoods in the country¹. AA/PI and BIPOC people represent ~42% of Alaska's total population and are integral to our libraries and the communities we serve ([U.S. Census Quick Facts Alaska](#)). As of 2019, 7.9 percent of Alaskans reported Asian or Pacific Islander descent and Alaska Economic Trends (2014) reported that, "people of Asian and Pacific Islander descent form the fastest-growing racial group in Alaska, expanding by 60 percent between 2000 and 2010 — a gain of more than 17,000 people."

Libraries, at their core value, are communities where all are welcome. At the Alaska Library Association, we stand for diversity, equity, inclusion, and open access to information. The pervasive and institutionalized racism in our society today denies these principles and promotes oppression. We must actively work together to end such racism and discrimination.

While library staff and community members often consider libraries as neutral ground, there is no neutrality in the face of oppression. Using power and structure to limit others is contrary to our principles and mission. We can no longer stand by, or wait for change. Now is the time to work together, to ally with our communities. Libraries can facilitate this change by providing safe spaces, by helping educate, and by supporting those who feel voiceless by looking critically at our collections, programs and policies.

Approved by Executive Council, May 20, 2021

Select Resources

[African Americans in Alaska: Black Lives Matter by Lisa Alexia](#): This post emphasizes the history of Black and African Americans in Alaska, with links to a variety of resources. Despite

¹ Early, W. (2017, May 30) [Is Anchorage America's most diverse city? Depends on who you ask](#). *Alaska Public Media*.

persistent lack of diversity in publishing, good regional books by and about Blacks and African Americans in Alaska do exist.

[Asian Pacific American Cultures](#): Google Arts & Culture is also launching a hub dedicated to Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences alongside more than 48 partners.

[Filipinos in Alaska](#) (Forum@360): Filipinos were part of waves of foreign-born laborers coming for the salmon canning industry and mining booms in the early 20th century. Prominent Filipino-Alaskans Loy Maturan, Dante Reyes, and Raffy Castanos share their stories and experiences in this video feature hosted by Jeremy Hsieh of KTOO.

[Anti-Racism Resources](#) (UAA/APU Consortium Library): This guide provides resources that discuss combating racism and oppression in the United States with an emphasis on Alaska.

[Allies for Change](#): The Allies for Change group provides support to the Alaska Black Caucus in the fight to end racism. This partnership with the Alaska Black Caucus helps to proactively dismantle the racist structures that have held many Blacks back in the areas of justice, education, health, and economics. We take direction from the Alaska Black Caucus, and we take actions, complete tasks, and do work that supports the Alaska Black Caucus. We distribute that work among this group.