WMEA Statement – March 23, 2021

The recent mass shooting in Atlanta, GA, and the nearly 3800 reported hate incidents against the Asian American Pacific Islander community in the past year bring up myriad mixed emotions from shock and fear, to anger and grief, and certainly a deep and profound sadness. These times of tragedy offer the opportunity to reflect not only on the senseless loss of life but upon the reality that not all persons in our communities feel safe. We acknowledge that for members of our AAPI community, such incidents instill a fear that extends beyond general worries of safety, but to a deeper and a more personal level of possible threat and violence. For any who might be feeling as such, we see you, we care for you, and we support you.

Our role as music educators is to provide a community where all feel safe and valued and where all have a voice. Hate has no place in this setting; rather, we aim to value, promote, and celebrate diverse musical cultures. WMEA is committed to anti-racism, and we are actively pursuing reforms to promote racial justice and equity in all areas of our activities; including student events, professional development opportunities, publications, and our leadership structure. We encourage all members to do the same in their own context and invite your unique feedback, perspective, experience, advice, and guidance as we move toward a more equitable and just learning environment through music.

Please be mindful of students and colleagues in your community (and certainly throughout the state of Washington) who might be feeling less safe today than they did at the start of the pandemic. For all of the ways that our WMEA members build community, offer acceptance and support for all people, and model compassion and the best of our shared humanity – thank you.