April 24, 2020

Dear MOCA Friend,

The Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) stands against racism in the classroom, in the museum, on the streets, in all places.

The disease of racism is deadly to the spirit and makeup of America. Unfortunately, racism and xenophobia are not new to the U.S.; these negative forces have existed for generations. MOCA knows that the history of racism against Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, and those mistaken for these groups are largely missing in history textbooks. These omissions are unacceptable. MOCA works tirelessly to share these painful episodes, document the occurrences, and celebrate resilience and perseverance.

At this time, MOCA joins alongside AAPI organizations to document all reported acts of discrimination against Asian American Pacific Islanders related to the outbreak of COVID-19.
To counter the hate that has surfaced, MOCA is also documenting the proactive steps and incredible acts of generosity and support exhibited by the Chinese in America and the Chinese diaspora who are raising money, procuring, or donating PPE, and making efforts to reinforce the importance of one world.

ANNOUNCING MOCA’s ONEWORLD COVID-19 SPECIAL COLLECTION

Today, MOCA announces its effort to establish the MOCA OneWorld COVID-19 Special Collection ("OneWorld Collection"). The OneWorld Collection will feature acquisitions of a wide range of artifacts, including but not limited to photographs, letters, articles, journals, messages, notes, certificates, medical records, videos, and oral histories of Chinese Americans during this time. This collection will not only feature stories of community efforts but also highlight experiences of individuals and families during these unprecedented times.

We invite you to send a write up and photos to oneworld@mocanyc.org, with the subject line Submission for MOCA OneWorld COVID-19 Special Collection. Tell us how you, your association, or your community group organized to help the current crisis. Share a story that is one you believe should be recorded and documented. Please provide your contact information or that of your organization’s or community's, including full name, email address, phone number, and mailing address.

We are eager to share our first two stories from the OneWorld Collection: Joanne Kwong of Pearl River Mart and Martin Lau of Tencent.

Pearl River Mart Uses Sourcing Capability to Give Back
As a family-owned business in New York City's Chinatown since 1971, Joanne Kwong had to temporarily close Pearl River Mart's three stores, including the MOCA Shop by Pearl River at the Museum. Shortly after, Joanne and her parents-in-law Mr. and Mrs. Chen joined many Asian American community members to tap into their contacts, source masks, and other PPE. Early in the outbreak in NYC, Pearl River Mart made a substantial donation of KN95s to Elmhurst Hospital and then a second donation to Charles B. Wang Community Health Center. Pearl River Mart was supported by fellow NYC small businesses such as Nom Wah, Fat Witch Bakery, and BLACKBARN Shop. Joanne and Pearl River Mart are currently in the process of procuring a larger shipment of 30,000 KN95s.

Martin Lau and Tencent Partner with New England Patriots to Quickly Source and Supply PPE
In a similar spirit, Martin Lau, President of Tencent, organized a 12-member Tencent team to ensure a seamless handoff of PPE to the New England Patriots football team on its brief layover in Shenzhen. Assisted by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker and CEO of the New England
Patriots Robert Kraft, Martin and Tencent provided 1.2 million N95s for delivery to Boston and New York City. When the New England Patriots were restricted to a quarantine waiver of three hours in Shenzhen, Tencent’s crew made sure that all the respirator masks would be ready at the airport, securely passed through customs, and safely guarded prior to the plane’s arrival. Martin, a graduate of University of Michigan and Stanford University, also announced Tencent’s US$100 million Global Anti-Pandemic Fund to support international efforts against COVID-19, which would initially focus on the sourcing and donation of medical supplies for hospitals and front-line healthcare workers.

Thank you Joanne, Pearl River Mart, Martin, Tencent, and all those involved in reminding us that we are OneWorld.

Look for more extraordinary stories from the MOCA OneWorld COVID-19 Special Collection. Submit your stories and photographs to oneworld@mocanyc.org.

Stay healthy, stay strong,

Nancy Yao Maasbach
President

Yue Ma
Director of Collections and Research Center

A Note on the Acquisition Process:
As MOCA is temporarily closed, we humbly ask that you keep any physical artifacts in your possession until they can be safely added to the OneWorld COVID-19 Special Collection. Currently, we will be delighted to receive digital copies of the artifacts. We will follow up to coordinate shipment and provide an official Deed of Gift form as part of the formal acquisition process. For both your digital submissions (e.g. photographs, videos, articles, messages, and notes) and physical submissions (e.g. letters, newspapers, magazines, certificates, and medical records) to the MOCA OneWorld COVID-19 Special Collection, you agree to release all rights, including copyrights of the materials to the Museum of Chinese in America.

From the MOCA COVID-19 Special Collection

Joanne Kwong and Pearl River Mart Give Back
Sons of Joanne Holding Packages of Brownies from Fat Witch Bakery

Package of KN95s with Drawing and Note for Elmhurst Hospital

Donation of KN95s and Brownies at Charles B. Wang Community Health Center with Councilmember Carlina Rivera

Donation of KN95s and Brownies at Elmhurst Hospital to Dr. Olivia Ghaw

Photo Credits: Courtesy of Joanne Kwong and Mr. & Mrs. Chen of Pearl River Mart

Excerpts from Joanne Kwong's Email Submission:

“We went to Charles B. Wang Community Health Center and Elmhurst Hospital, with the help of Councilmember Carlina Rivera (she is the woman in the green jacket at Charles B Wang). The other woman with me is Vivian Chen of Foremost Groups in NJ and former COO of LuckyRice. My friend and downstairs neighbor Dr. Olivia Ghaw is the doctor's outfit at Elmhurst.”
“We also found that small businesses wanted to help and perhaps had extra PPE that they had purchased or collected and wanted to donate. Our friends at Fat Witch Bakery in Chelsea Market (best brownies in NYC and Japan!) also wanted to donate brownies! All of these owners were eager to help but did not have the time or energy to figure out the donation process so they were grateful when we just picked things up from them and took care of bringing items to the hospital and clinic.”

Excerpts from Pearl River Mart’s Masks for Docs and Nurses Campaign on GoFundMe:

“In response to the frightening shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) at area hospitals, we worked our network of contacts to source the N95 and KN95 medical-grade face masks everyone is looking for. N95s are still extremely difficult to reliably source, but KN95s (the Chinese equivalent) have recently been approved by the FDA and are more widely available, especially to those familiar with the process of importing from China."

“We have partnered with our dear friend F&T Group, a longtime NYC real estate business with deep ties to the Asian American community, to bring in a much larger shipment of 30,000 KN95s that is set to arrive mid-April. Due to demand, pricing for KN95s has been fluctuating wildly. Including shipping and fees, we expect to pay about $2.50/mask for this incoming shipment, so will need to raise approximately $75,000-80,000.”

Martin Lau and Tencent Partner with New England Patriots

Patriots Plane Unpacks in Boston, Massachusetts  Patriots Trunk Begins Trip to NY with Masks

Photo Credits: Courtesy of New England Patriots
Excerpts from Martin Lau's WeChat Submission:

“Our team worked with Kraft family to get the landing permit for the Patriot plane (which was a very complicated process) and also helped them to get the supplies, ensure quality and get it loaded within a short period of time...Just want to say it’s a humbling experience for our team to learn as we went through the process, and also an energetic experience to get something to the US that would save lives...Thank you for all of your encouragement and hope everyone stay healthy and safe in this process.”

“Unsung hero: the Shenzhen govt and Shenzhen Airport senior executive having meeting to make sure that the entire process was flawlessly executed. This made me fell that in the face of crisis, the power of people helping each other transcending borders.”

Excerpts from “A Patriotic Mission: Team plane completes humanitarian flight to China” by patriots.com writer Erik Scalavino:

“Chinese officials granted the request, but for this plan to work with maximum efficiency, the Patriots needed people on the ground in Shenzhen who could make sure all the respirator masks would be waiting at the airport, having been securely passed through customs and safely guarded prior to the plane’s arrival.

Nolan and the Patriots eventually found enthusiastic partners from technology giant Tencent, which provided its own 12-member team to complement the dozen Team 125 crew members. Nolan lauded the leaders of Tencent, who had no prior relationship with the Patriots, for their teamwork, generosity, and commitment to the cause.

‘Both their CEO [Pony Ma] and president [Martin Lau] are great humanitarians. They’re passionate about the medical industry. There are relationships between Tencent, Jiahui International Hospital in Shanghai, and Mass General that made the link easy and they were just
ready to help and do the right thing.”