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 story from the OneWorld Collection: Joanne Kwong of Pearl River Mart.

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.
Thank you Joanne, Pearl River Mart, 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
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.”