

Statement from the Coalition for Anti-Racism and Equity, Inc. (CARE)
on Affirmative Action

July 4, 2023

As a grassroots organization dedicated to promoting racial justice in education, CARE decries the [Supreme Court's decision](#) to end affirmative action in the Harvard and the University of North Carolina cases. Race conscious admissions policies have been vital in addressing historical and systemic educational inequalities, promoting diversity, and fostering inclusive learning environments, which benefit students of all races and backgrounds.

As Justice Jackson eloquently noted in her minority dissent, "Ignoring race will not equalize a society that is racially unequal...the majority's judgment is without any basis in law, history, logic or justice." The majority ignored documented legislative history in adopting a colorblind interpretation of the 14th Amendment and failed to recognize the enduring, intergenerational impact of structural racism.

While Asian Americans were cited in the case as being negatively affected by race-conscious admissions, studies have shown AAPI in fact [benefit](#) from affirmative action programs. It is also important to dispel the narrative that the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community as a whole supports the Court's decision. Recent [surveys](#) have shown that about ~70% of the AAPI community supports affirmative action programs.

Historically, the AAPI community has been unfairly characterized as a "[model minority](#)" for political purposes. These myths rely on statistical generalizations and overlook the history of and diversity within the Asian American community. It ignores socioeconomic disparities and challenges faced by individuals within different Asian subgroups. AAPI individuals across all economic and educational backgrounds continue to face discrimination and bias in a society dominated by White advantage. By focusing on Asian Americans in this case, the conservative court majority deflects attention from the disproportionate advantages that programs like [legacy admissions](#) afford White students, thereby perpetuating inequality.

While it is disheartening to witness progress stymied while inequality persists, we must not allow this decision to be a permanent setback. This moment represents an opportunity for dialogue, reflection, and concerted action. We call on educational institutions, policymakers, and stakeholders to recognize the importance of diversity, inclusion, and representation in education. It is crucial for colleges and universities to double down on their efforts and take more proactive steps towards achieving racial equity. We must work collectively to develop comprehensive strategies that promote racial equity, dismantle barriers to access, and create inclusive environments for students from underrepresented backgrounds, not just at college but throughout their entire education.

CARE recently introduced [An Act to Promote Racially Inclusive Curriculum in Schools \(S. 288/H.542\) in the Massachusetts Legislature](#). This legislation will ensure that K-12 education includes the teaching of accurate history, including the contributions, writings and social and civil circumstances of historically marginalized or

under-represented communities. Had the Supreme Court majority justices enjoyed such an education, they would not have come to the historically fallacious conclusions embodied in their opinions. Different racial and ethnic groups have been and are being disadvantaged while others are advantaged throughout our history and affirmative action is needed to overcome these inequities. We are [not a colorblind society](#) yet, despite what the majority of SCOTUS members believe, and they would know this if they had been taught accurate history. The CARE legislation is even more urgently needed in the aftermath of the SCOTUS decision.

As our world becomes increasingly interconnected, colleges and universities must recognize the significance of cultivating diverse environments that reflect the realities of our diverse society. [Decades of research shows that by supporting diversity](#), colleges can better equip students to navigate the complexities of a multicultural world, fostering collaboration, communication, innovation, and a deeper understanding of global issues. Embracing diversity in education is not only a matter of social justice but also a strategic imperative for the future success and competitiveness of our workforce.

CARE will continue to advocate for comprehensive and transformative change, promoting educational systems that uplift all marginalized communities. We invite individuals, organizations, and institutions to join us in this ongoing fight for a fair and just education system that recognizes and addresses the historical and current injustices faced by marginalized communities. Together, we can shape a future where every student, regardless of their background, has equal opportunities to thrive and contribute to a more equitable society.

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