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Civil Rights Groups Respond to Students for Fair Admissions' Decision to Sue Yale University

Today, Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA), an organization founded by conservative activist Ed Blum, filed a lawsuit challenging Yale University's holistic, race-conscious admissions policies, seeking to revive a case that was voluntarily dismissed by the U.S. Department of Justice earlier this month. SFFA was founded by Ed Blum in his campaign to reverse longstanding Supreme Court law that, for over four decades, has permitted the limited consideration of race in college and university admissions to promote the robust diversity that is so crucial in today's higher education.

As organizations that represent clients of a wide range of ethnic and racial backgrounds, who directly understand the benefits of racial diversity for everyone, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), Asian Americans Advancing Justice-AAJC (Advancing Justice-AAJC), Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles (AAJC-Los Angeles), and the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law issued the following statements:

"Today's lawsuit is another attempt to dismantle policies and practices that promote racial equity and provide equal educational opportunity for qualified students of color. Through a holistic admissions process that considers race among a plethora of other factors, colleges and universities are able to evaluate student applicants by considering all the value they can bring to their educational institutions," said **Janai Nelson, LDF's Associate Director-Counsel**. "At a moment in our nation's history when Americans are reckoning with the vestiges of entrenched racial inequalities, today's suit attempts to reverse, rather than press forward, important efforts to secure the constitutional promise of equality."

"The lawsuit today comes as no surprise but is still disappointing that this group is so focused on dismantling policies that benefit many Asian Americans and allied communities of color. The Department of Justice investigation did not have merit from the very beginning, and this lawsuit has no merit now. Statistics prove that Asian Americans overwhelmingly support affirmative action and understand that race-conscious admissions are necessary for educational equity and diversity in higher education," said **Niyati Shah, Advancing Justice – AAJC's director of litigation**.

"Race-conscious admissions programs are a vital and legal tool for promoting racial equity and dismantling historic and systemic barriers to higher education for people of color. This lawsuit by SFFA is nothing more than an attempt to oppose programs like this when they cannot rely on the government to push their agenda for them. Race-conscious admissions support the educational participation of young people of color and the student bodies including them. The programs have measurable beneficial impact on the communities from which students of color are coming from. Race-conscious admissions programs are legal, and the events of the last few years make clear why these sorts of programs continue to be

needed,” said **Charles Evans, attorney with Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles.**

“Contrary to SFFA’s false assertions, race-conscious admissions policies advance educational opportunity and promote racial diversity. That is good for all students, good for universities, and good for the nation as a whole,” said **Damon Hewitt, acting president and executive director of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.** “America’s communities of color are filled with highly talented individuals who deserve a meaningful shot at being accepted into our nation’s higher education institutions. It is important that students from communities of color feel supported in their educational aspirations, and that they see the doors of opportunity opened instead of being used as pawns in a game where certain actors are trying to suppress and divide them.”

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Follow LDF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

***Asian Americans Advancing Justice** is a national affiliation of five leading organizations advocating for the civil and human rights of Asian Americans and other underserved communities to promote a fair and equitable society for all. The affiliation’s members are: Advancing Justice | AAJC (Washington, D.C.), Advancing Justice - Los Angeles, Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus (San Francisco), Advancing Justice - Atlanta, and Advancing Justice - Chicago.*

The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, was formed in 1963 at the request of President John F. Kennedy to involve the private bar in providing legal services to address racial discrimination. Now in its 57th year, the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law is continuing its quest to “Move America Toward Justice.” The principal mission of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law is to secure, through the rule of law, equal justice for all, particularly in the areas of criminal justice, fair housing and community development, economic justice, educational opportunities.