



VILLAGE OF SCARSDALE

Open Letter to Chinese and Chinese American Members of the Scarsdale Community

March 13, 2020

On Tuesday, March 10, the Village Board hosted a presentation on the topic of COVID-19. As conceived, the presentation was planned to help combat misinformation circulating in the Scarsdale community about COVID-19.

As we are now painfully aware, the information session went far afield, straying from its intended public education messaging and into divisiveness – precisely the sort of questionable information that I sought to combat in scheduling the event. Chinese and Chinese American members of the Scarsdale community were understandably offended by the presentation’s content, which failed on many levels to comport with Scarsdale standards.

The Village of Scarsdale deeply regrets having unintentionally provided the forum for such corrosive content to be publicly disseminated. I personally feel a deep sense of accountability for letting our Chinese and Chinese American residents down. That will not happen again. I am particularly troubled by the potential for children to be impacted in connection with the presentation. I stand ready to work with Scarsdale Schools to convey a clear message that stresses inclusiveness and values diversity.

In Scarsdale, cultural commonalities and differences are both valued assets. We support a respectful, multicultural environment and strongly reject bias towards any group of people. We recognize our moral and ethical responsibility to value all persons, to firmly oppose discriminatory behaviors and practices, and to embrace the inherent value that all individuals bring to this special place we all call home: Scarsdale.

We live together, work together, and play together. We are one, but with many treasured facets.

The Village is committed to working collaboratively with our Chinese and Chinese American residents to make amends. To that end, I have requested that the Village’s Council on Human Relations, comprised of resident volunteers with skills in the areas of conflict resolution, cultural sensitivity, and community relations, take the matter under consideration and engage members of Scarsdale’s Chinese and Chinese American community in a constructive process targeting full understanding of the issue, as well as creation of a report of findings and supporting recommendations. Our goal is to support restoration of public trust amongst our valued Chinese and Chinese American residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marc Samwick', is written over a white background.

Marc Samwick
Mayor