



as of April 1, 2019

Iowa State University, Greenlee School
Hamilton Hall, 613 Wallace Rd., Ames, IA 50010
515-294-4342
greenlee@iastate.edu

FACT SHEET

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Julie Roosa
First Amendment Specialist
515-294-0496
jroosa@iastate.edu

WHO: Simon Tam | First Amendment Days Keynote Speaker

- Born in San Diego, California
- Found and plays bass for The Slants, the first and only Asian American dance-rock band
- Named band after a racial slur used against Asians in order to reclaim the epithet
- Made 13 TEDx appearances as a speaker and performer
- Lead (and continues to lead) Continuing Learning Education (CLE) credit courses for attorneys on his Supreme Court Case, *Matal v. Tam*, a battle for First Amendment rights
- Honored with the First Amendment Award (2018) from the Hugh M. Hefner Foundation
 - An award that honors those who go above and beyond to support First Amendment rights
- Honored with the Mark T. Banner Award from the American Bar Association
- Honored with the Milestone Case of the Year (2016) from Managing IP Magazine for activism

WHAT: “A Name Worth Fighting For: How Naming My Band The Slants Got Me to the Supreme Court”

- Sued the Patent and Trademark Office for rejecting registration of band’s name because of the Lanham Act, which prohibits the registration of trademarks that are disparaging
- Won the lawsuit in the Supreme Court (*Matal v. Tam*)
- Created a non-profit (The Slants Foundation) to provide scholarships and mentorships to help Asian Pacific Islanders who are interested in art and activism
- Will talk about experience in court and perform a concert following keynote speech

WHEN & WHERE: April 9, 2019 | 8:15 p.m. – Sun Room, Memorial Union

- 17th annual First Amendment Days at Iowa State University running April 8-12
- Iowa State received an \$80,000 grant to create First Amendment Days
- First Amendment Days was created to educate and encourage students to learn about their First Amendment rights
- Students can share or listen to other people’s personal experiences that relate to the First Amendment

WHY: The First Amendment = No Content-Based Discrimination

- Content-based laws or regulations discriminate against speech based on the substance of what it communicates
- Content-based laws are presumed unconstitutional
- *Matal v. Tam* made a big impact on how the First Amendment is applied to trademark cases by expanding the freedom of speech rights for minorities
- *Rosenberger v. Rectors and Visitors of the University of Virginia* found: “When the government targets not subject matter but particular views taken by speakers on a subject, the violation of the First Amendment is all the more blatant. “

Learn more about Simon Tam and his band The Slants, visit his band’s website at www.theslants.com. Learn more about First Amendment Days at www.greenlee.iastate.edu/experience/first-amendment-days.