



Open letter to the campus community from Dr. Gary L. Rhodes

April 17, 2007

Dear Reynolds Family:

Please join me in extending our deepest condolences and prayers to the victims of the tragic events at Virginia Tech and in offering our heartfelt support to the Virginia Tech community as it deals with this profound loss.

There has been a great outpouring of concern from the college today. Please know that the college will provide several opportunities to remember and honor the victims of this tragic incident. Dr. Thomas Hollins, associate vice president for student affairs, and his staff are available to assist students, faculty, and staff if counseling is needed. Contact any of these individuals for services: Altrice Smith, (DTC) 523-5358, alsmith@jsr.vccs.edu; Sarah Shutt, (DTC) 523-5537, sshutt@jsr.vccs.edu; Meg Foster, (PRC) 523-5917, mbfoster@jsr.vccs.edu; Robin Beale, (PRC) 523-5067, rbeale@jsr.vccs.edu; Nicole Raffaele (WC) 523-5400, nraffaele@jsr.vccs.edu. If there is a need between the hours of 5 p.m. and 6 p.m., please call 523-5298 or 523-5299.

On Thursday, April 19, we will hold three candlelight vigils—9 a.m. (Western Campus Community Room), 2 p.m. (Downtown Campus Auditorium), and 5:30 p.m. (Parham Road Campus, Georgiadis Hall Room 101-The Gallery). We have dedicated Monday, April 23, as our **College Day of Remembrance**, during which we will remember the Virginia Tech victims, as well as other victims of random acts of violence. Dr. Hollins will provide details under separate cover.

There have been several inquiries over the past 24 hours as to what Reynolds would do if such a situation were to occur on one of our campuses. Although we cannot predict random acts of violence on a campus or anywhere else, we pay very close attention to campus security. All JSRCC employees are considered key components of campus security and receive periodic training in their individual roles as specified in our Emergency Preparedness Plan. Our police officers are sworn officers of the Commonwealth of Virginia and have full arrest powers as authorized by state statute. Each officer has completed training mandated by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) and is empowered by state law to carry firearms, conduct criminal investigations, make arrests, testify in court, and all other duties expected of a law enforcement official. Our Police Department has a positive working relationship with law enforcement agencies in each local jurisdiction and with the state police. Furthermore, our officers actively participate in regional preparedness activities.

In terms of communicating important information to faculty, staff, and students, we utilize our external web site, our intranet, blackboard, email, flat-screen monitors that are located on each campus, and the external media. Additionally, we have adopted crisis management and crisis communications plans and procedures to respond to campus emergencies.

Dr. Hollins and police chief Garth Wheeler will announce additional opportunities to discuss issues related to campus safety and security at a later date.

Again, please remember the victims and family members impacted by this tragedy and plan to join us at one of the vigils on Thursday, April 19.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Rhodes, Ed.D.
President