



Office of the Chancellor

9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001
t/ 704.687.5700 f/ 704.687.1700 www.uncc.edu

May 1, 2019
Student Vigil
Chancellor's Remarks

Thank you all for being here, for organizing our gathering this evening, and for being the compassionate and caring Niner Nation that you are. I am proud to be your chancellor.

Let me acknowledge the presence of Congresswoman Adams, Governor Cooper, Mayor Lyles, Chancellor Jim Woodward, and the dozens of state and local elected officials and community leaders who are present today. Thank you for being here.

Yesterday's violence and the loss of Riley and Reed cuts to our core as a University community. We are heartsick to believe that anyone would act with such complete disregard for human life, and we hope beyond hope for the full recovery of Drew, Sean, Emily, and Rami. I can tell you that I was able to visit with Drew, Emily, and Rami in the hospital today, surrounded by their family and friends. They are doing OK, as is Sean I am told who did not require hospitalization.

The students we lost—Riley and Reed—and those who were injured, are all so young, like many of you, with dreams and aspirations and a purpose in life. As parents ourselves, Lisa and I grieve for this senseless loss of young life and share in the anguish of their parents, their families, and you, their friends. We can't bring them back, but with your help we will find a way to remember their presence here as 49ers.

These next days, weeks, and months will test our collective strength. But, as I said yesterday, we have no course but to hold each other up, to work through this together, and to reaffirm our 49er purpose. UNC Charlotte cannot – and will not – be defined by this tragedy; we must be defined by how we respond to it. Our focus will be on those we lost, those who were hurt, and the countless others who were spared by the quick actions of our police officers. As the facts emerge about what actually happened in Kennedy 236, we may learn of additional acts of heroism by Riley and perhaps others that saved other lives.

With that, let's stay Charlotte Strong. The days ahead will be difficult, but we will emerge from them. We will not emerge unchanged, but we will emerge united and stronger. Thank you all.