

A message in the wake of the Connecticut tragedy

*December 16, 2012*

To the Oakland University community

Friday was a difficult day for the entire nation. The school shootings in Connecticut have left us reeling with grief. Twenty innocent school children, as well as at least six teachers and administrators, lost their lives at the hand of a very disturbed individual. There are no words to adequately describe the horror of Friday's events.

It is almost impossible to assimilate the grief and despair we feel over the loss of so many innocent people. The fact that most of the victims were children is especially cruel. The senselessness of this tragedy challenges our collective ability to fully comprehend it. The best we can do is band together in our grief and comfort each other.

In the wake of this tragedy, I've been asked by many whether Oakland University is prepared to deal with a similar situation. While it is my fervent hope that this situation never presents itself to us, I can assure you that we have taken all reasonable measures to respond to a tragedy of this proportion.

The university's crisis management team holds periodic meetings and simulated exercises to assess our readiness to respond to a crisis of this magnitude.

We live in a world where tragedy can happen suddenly and without warning. The best we can do is to try to be prepared for the worst scenario possible, and respond to it quickly and decisively.

On behalf of the entire university community, I plan to send a note to Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy expressing our sorrow and pledging our support as they begin the healing process. I know you will join me in sending our prayers and thoughts to all who have been affected by this monumental tragedy.

Sincerely,

Gary