



Wednesday, September 12, 2001

## OU student body president speaks at memorial service

Oakland University Student Body President Derek Dickow made the following speech at Wednesday's memorial service:

Yesterday I sat watched and listened in disbelief. These tragic events seemed like a horror film that wouldn't and didn't end. This horrible act of terrorism took the lives of many thousands of innocent Americans. Planes were hijacked, buildings collapsed, businesses are left with nothing and a country and the world are awestruck at how this could ever happen.

Our country is the only one that guarantees its citizens freedom, which was violated. Like President Bush I anticipate any and all extreme measures taken to protect our freedom.

But in this time of tragedy we must remain united. Many of us have loved ones or family whose lives have forever been changed. It's hard to comprehend how something so graphic could ever have been conjured and implemented by a human being.

But these people are not human. They are far from it. They resorted to a cowardly act to get their message across, and therefore, they are even less than animals.

Here is my message today: Let's come together. Let us not point fingers or cast stones at our neighbors and ostracize those we think are responsible. Justice will be served. For every action there is a reaction. Support our President in his attempt to protect and defend our freedom.

Please continue your prayers, whether you are Jewish, Catholic, Muslim, or Atheist. Not only for the victims and their families, but for those who lost lives in their heroic attempt to save the innocent. Especially pray for those in the New York Police Department, New York Fire Department, Red Cross and all others who aided in saving lives while risking and possibly losing their own.

Situations like this truly put life into perspective. We question our motivation. We wonder if it's really worth it? Life -- is it all real, and what is it all about? Driving a Mercedes? Being a trendsetter? What's it worth? What's it for?

I'd like to propose five ways to stay grounded, not only as students or people, but also as a community.

First, remember life is a gift. You only get one. Make it all you can.

Second, learn to smile more and appreciate things we take for granted. Try to live with a deep sense of understanding that today is what it is all about, for no one knows what tomorrow will have in store.

Third, tell and show those you know and love how much you appreciate them as much as you can. You never know when will be the last time you see them.

Fourth, don't sweat the small stuff. Things will get better. Life is a roller coaster filled with good times and bad. Make the most of the good and just try harder when times are bad.

Fifth and most important, turn off the TV at home and the radio in the car. Find that zone where it's you and only you. Think of your life and how you can improve the lives of those around you.

The world has been around this long. . . .our life is but this long. . .

You decide how you'll leave your mark.

### SUMMARY

Derek Dickow, Oakland University student body president, made this speech at Wednesday's memorial service.

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