

Memorial Service Remarks
Oakland Center Gold Rooms

September 12, 2001

Thank you all for gathering today to reflect on the senseless and tragic events that were thrust upon us yesterday. Like you, and like the rest of the citizens of this country and the good, well-meaning people across the world, I was shocked and deeply saddened as yesterday's events unfolded.

It was all so very hard to comprehend and to believe that so many of our fellow human beings were dying and suffering as we went about our normal business on a bright, sunshiny day in Michigan.

While all of us have been emotionally scarred by this tragedy, we must remember that some among us have been directly affected, losing loved ones, family and friends to these horrible acts. I offer my deepest condolences and prayers to those of our university family who have lost loved ones to death or whose loved ones have suffered injury.

At this time, I would ask that we share a moment of silence in honor of those who lost their lives or suffered injury, to thank those fellow citizens who are even now risking their lives in rescue attempts, and to pray for this country and our leaders to have strength in this time of tragedy.

(MINUTE OF SILENCE)

It is important for us, as a community of learners, to share our thoughts and feelings with each other today and in the days to come. We may have no answers, but the very act of talking and listening can help us to begin to heal our deep wounds.

I think it is also important that we, as educated and civilized human beings, in one of the most advanced countries on this earth, keep uppermost in our minds and hearts that thoughts and acts of reprisal against innocent countrymen serve no constructive purpose. I hope that our university can set an example of civilized behavior in this regard.

As a president of a major university, I ask that we all try to learn from this, as difficult a task as that may be. I ask that you treat your fellow students and co-workers with respect. And, I ask that you try over the course of your lives to make this world a better place. We need all our efforts to make this happen.

And now, our Student Congress President, Derek Dickow, has some thoughts to share with you.