

Dear Carolina Community:

It is with profound sadness that I write to you this morning about the tragic loss of three young people from our community. As most of you likely have heard, last night there was a shooting at a condominium complex near campus that took their lives all too soon. Sadly, Deah Barakat, a student in the School of Dentistry, and his wife, Yusor Abu-Salha, who had planned to begin her dental studies at Carolina next fall, were killed, along with Yusor's sister, Razan Abu-Salha, an undergraduate at North Carolina State University.

This is a tremendous loss to the Carolina and N.C. State campuses, and my thoughts and prayers are with the families, fellow students, faculty and friends of these three very promising students. Deah and Yusor, who both were from Raleigh and graduated recently from N.C. State, had just been married and were preparing for careers that had so much potential to help others. Razan, a sophomore from Raleigh, was majoring in environmental design in architecture at N.C. State.

The Chapel Hill Police Department have charged an individual, and the University is cooperating fully with police in the investigation. Police have reassured the community that there is no ongoing threat in connection with this tragedy. In addition, Chapel Hill police said their preliminary investigation indicates that the crime was motivated by an ongoing neighbor dispute over parking, but continues to investigate and exhaust every lead to determine if this was hate-motivated. Please know that our highest priority is the safety and security of students, faculty, staff and visitors on Carolina's campus and in the surrounding community. I would like to thank the Chapel Hill Police Department and first responders for their hard work on this investigation.

Such an act of violence goes against the very fiber of our community and society. It also creates a sense of vulnerability for all of us, especially members of the Muslim community. I am in touch with the Muslim community and students and will continue to be in conversation with them. While the Chapel Hill police continue to gather facts, Carolina has and will remain focused on supporting all members of our community. Plans are underway for a community vigil this evening and details will be shared this afternoon.

Dean Jane Weintraub has gathered the students, faculty and staff in the School of Dentistry so they can come together during this tragedy. The University is offering on-site support and counseling for them. The greater Carolina community also has resources to help us with our grief. We encourage students to call Counseling and Psychological Services (919-966-3658), and faculty and staff to contact our Employee Assistance Program (877-314-5841), if you would like support.

My gratitude goes to all of you for your understanding and kindness as our community draws strength from one another at this very difficult time.

Sincerely,

Carol L. Folt, Chancellor