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UNH Media Relations

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Message To Faculty, Students And Staff At The University Of New Hampshire April 17, 2006

University of New Hampshire Interim President J. Bonnie Newman has ordered the UNH flag to be flown at half staff for one week at the Durham and Manchester campuses, in memory of the students and faculty killed at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University yesterday.

"Our hearts go out to all those affected by this senseless tragedy at Virginia Tech," said Interim President Newman. "At times like these, we come to more fully appreciate the importance of community - faculty, students, staff, neighbors and others -- who support and sustain us in our difficult moments. While we know it will take a long time, we hope the Virginia Tech community will heal. In the meantime, they are in our thoughts and prayers."

Newman added, "All of us in higher education need to pay particular attention to the information that comes from this horrific tragedy so that we may incorporate that information into our prevention and preparedness strategies."

Today, the University's long-standing Crisis Response Team is meeting to assess how students and other community members are coping with the news of the Virginia Tech tragedy, and to review our own protocols to ensure we can respond appropriately. The team is comprised of staff from student affairs, UNH Police, the Counseling Center, UNH Health Services, and communications.

As a public university with numerous points of entry to both the Durham and Manchester campuses, it is impossible to provide absolute protection, but the University does pay careful attention to safety and security. The UNH police force has been a strong campus presence for more than three decades, and are fully certified police officers. UNH Police are graduates of the New Hampshire Police Academy and have protocols to handle such tragic events.

Because of the immediacy of the Virginia Tech tragedy, we are including an executive summary of our workplace violence protocol below, which is only part of the University's extensive and confidential emergency operations plan, followed by campus resources for safety programs and personal coping strategies.

UNH Executive Summary on Workplace Violence Reporting

Workplace violence may take many forms and may include use of deadly weapons. Advance warning of the violence is highly unlikely. Contact the UNH Police Department at 911 in the event of any incident of workplace violence.

A. Shooting Reporting Protocol:

1. If you witness any armed individual on campus at any time, immediately contact UNH Police at 911.
2. If the shooter is outside the building:
 - Turn off all the lights and close and lock all windows and doors. Close all window blinds and curtains.
 - If you can do so safely, get all individuals on the floor and out of the line of fire.

- Move to a core area of the building if safe to do so and remain there until an "all clear" instruction is given by an authorized known voice.
3. If the shooter is inside the building:
 - If it is possible to flee the area safely and avoid danger, do so.
 - Contact 911 with your location if possible.
 - If flight is impossible, lock all doors and secure yourself in your space.
 - Close all window blinds and curtains.
 - Get down on the floor or under a desk and remain silent.
 - Get individuals on the floor and out of the line of fire.
 - Wait for the "all clear" instruction.
 4. If the shooter comes into your class or office:
 - There is no one procedure the authorities can recommend in this situation.
 - Attempt to get the word out to other staff if possible. Call 911 if possible.
 - If possible, evacuate the area and/or activate alarms.
 - Do not challenge. If flight is impossible, attempt to negotiate with the individual.
 - Put distance between yourself and the offender.
 - If possible, keep an escape route behind you.
 - Demonstrate an interest in solving the problem.
 - Observe, listen, and take notes if appropriate.

B. Suspicious individual reporting protocol

1. Report a suspicious looking individual or activity to UNH Police at 911. Give your location, name and reason for calling. Be ready to supply a physical description of the individual: age, weight, hair color and length, clothing, facial hair and any other distinguishing features. If the individual is in a vehicle, attempt to get the vehicle make, model and color as well as the license plate number, if possible.
2. If you suspect the person is armed or see a weapon, call 911 immediately and report the situation.
3. Do not approach a suspect individual yourself. Contact UNH Police as quickly as possible while monitoring the location of the person if feasible.

Campus Resources:

University Police <http://www.unh.edu/upd/> offer excellent programs in campus safety strategies. Call Deputy Police Chief Paul Dean at 862-1427 if your hall or department is interested.

UNH Counseling Center <http://www.unhcc.unh.edu/> 862-2090

Campus Chaplains Association <http://www.unh.edu/vpsas/chaplains.html>

Reverend Mary Westfall
Community Church of Durham, UCC
868-1230

The Reverend Michael Bradley
St. George's Episcopal Church
868-2785

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church
Fr. Constantine Newman
436-2733

Rev. Andrew W. Cryans
St. Thomas More Church
(603) 868-2666

Temple Israel
Rabbi Lawrence Karol
742-3976

Rabbi David Mark
436-5301

Pastor Larry Brickner-Wood
United Campus Ministry
862-1165