



Office of the Chancellor

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Philip L. Dubois
Chancellor

Statement from Chancellor Dubois

January 30, 2020

Dear UNC Charlotte Community:

On January 7, 2020, I shared the [Niner Nation Remembrance Commission's report](#) with you and invited feedback on the Commission's recommendations. I want to once again express my most sincere gratitude to the Commission for undertaking the important task of developing recommendations in three areas: how to memorialize Reed Parlier and Riley Howell, how best to remember the tragedy that occurred on April 30, and to determine the future utilization of Kennedy 236, the classroom where the shootings took place, as well as the adjacent classroom. The Commission led a robust process to engage those most impacted by the tragic events of April 30, as well as to gather feedback from all of Niner Nation. I thank all of you who engaged in the process, whether it was completing the online survey, attending a listening session, or submitting feedback via email. The collective feedback from Niner Nation informed the Commission's work, allowing them to come to thoughtful and meaningful recommendations.

After careful consideration, I have accepted the Commission's recommendations regarding a memorial to honor Reed and Riley, how the campus will remember April 30, and the future use of the two classrooms in the Kennedy Building.

RECOMMENDATION FOR A PERMANENT MEMORIAL

The Commission recommended the creation of a significant, focal memorial and commemorative space in Belk Plaza, between the front of Kennedy and the recently completed ellipse and fountain. The concept and objectives for the memorial will be to:

- Remember Reed Parlier and Riley Howell by name.
- Acknowledge those wounded, both physically and psychologically.
- Evoke the unity, strength, and resilience of the UNC Charlotte community.
- Create a commemorative space that is interactive and/or occupiable.
- Combine landscape, architecture, and art to provide a place of pause in the center of campus.
- Be appropriate to scale of the site and existing landscaping, hardscaping, and architecture of the surrounding campus and integrate the memorial into Belk Plaza.

I have accepted the main tenets of the Commission's recommendations regarding a multi-stage selection process. To manage this process, I have appointed two groups that together will form one large committee. Brook Muller, Dean of Arts + Architecture, will serve as chair of the consolidated committee. The first of the two groups is the formal design jury, as recommended by the Commission. This will be a group of architectural and public art professionals which will formally make the recommendation to the

Chancellor on the selection of an architectural and artistic team to develop the memorial and ultimately the choice of a final design. The second of the two groups is an advisory group of faculty, staff, students, and alumni who will not vote in the selection process but will participate significantly in the discussions with the jury about the memorial proposals, providing their insights and perspectives. The members of the design jury and advisory group are as follows:

MEMORIAL JURY

- **Brook Muller, Chair** - Dean of the College of Arts + Architecture at UNC Charlotte
- **John Boyer** - First President and CEO of the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art
- **Harvey Gantt** - Former mayor of Charlotte and co-director of the architectural team that designed UNC Charlotte's Center City building
- **Carla Hanzal** - Vice President of Public Art for the Charlotte Arts & Science Council; member of the Niner Nation Remembrance Commission
- **Jonell Logan** - Executive Director of the League of Creative Interventionists
- **Emily Makas** - Associate Professor of Architectural and Urban History at UNC Charlotte and Interim Associate Director of the School of Architecture
- **Tahlya Mock** - Second-year student at UNC Charlotte majoring in architecture
- **Charles Thomas** - Director of the Knight Foundation of Charlotte
- **Emily Zimmern** - Former President and CEO of the Levine Museum of the New South; chair of the Niner Nation Remembrance Commission

MEMORIAL ADVISORY GROUP

- **Kim Bradley** - Chief of Staff to UNC Charlotte Chancellor Philip L. Dubois.
- **Frenchie Brown** - Senior Vice President and Anti-Money Laundering Channel Engagement Manager at Bank of America; UNC Charlotte Alumni Board
- **Peter Franz** - Campus Landscape Architect, UNC Charlotte Facilities Management
- **Rick Gundacker** - Lieutenant, UNC Charlotte Police Department; first officer to respond on April 30
- **Kathryn Horne** - UNC Charlotte's Director of Planning, Design, and Construction
- **Janet Levy** - Professor Emerita, UNC Charlotte's Department of Anthropology
- **Meg Morgan** - Professor Emerita, UNC Charlotte's Department of English
- **Tahliah Sampson** - Press secretary, Student Government Association

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REMEMBRANCE

The Commission recommends that April 30 be remembered by instituting a number of remembrance activities and events, including the mounting of a series of exhibits, the creation of

a Day of Remembrance, support for named scholarships, conducting oral histories, continued efforts to collect and preserve archival documents, and support for other organic remembrance efforts. Its recommendations generally address the next three years.

Series of Exhibits

The Commission recommended a series of exhibits be mounted as remembrance of the events of April 30. To coincide with the first anniversary on April 30, 2020, a temporary exhibit highlighting memorial items and other documentation collected and preserved by University Archives will be held in Atkins Library and will remain on display until the larger exhibit is installed in 2021. For the second anniversary in 2021, a larger, curated temporary exhibit will be displayed in the galleries in the Popp-Martin Student Union. The Commission also recommended a permanent online component that will be hosted on the Atkins Special Collections website.

Day of Remembrance

The Commission noted that it is important to acknowledge and remember Reed Parlier, Riley Howell, and all those directly and indirectly affected by the events of April 30 and to celebrate Niner spirit and resilience. The Commission proposed continuing the practice of a day of remembrance for at least the next three years when students who were on campus on April 30, 2019 will still be enrolled. Thereafter, a process will be put in place to reevaluate what is most appropriate for the campus community in the following years. This day will be held on April 30 or a floating date (e.g. last Tuesday of April), and the specific events will be flexible to accommodate the changing needs of the campus community over time.

Named Scholarships

The Commission supported the establishment of additional named scholarships in honor of Reed Parlier and Riley Howell. There are already named scholarships for both Reed and Riley.

Oral Histories and Archival Documentation

The Commission recommended conducting a series of oral history interviews to document this event through the eyes of our campus and community members. The Commission also recommended continued efforts to collect and preserve the records and memorabilia associated with April 30 and campus recovery efforts. These efforts have already been initiated by the University.

Other Remembrances

The Commission recommended that the University remain supportive of other future initiatives that may arise on campus or in the greater Charlotte community to honor Reed Parlier, Riley Howell, and others affected by this tragedy

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE USE OF KENNEDY 236

The Commission recommended that Kennedy 236, as well as adjoining Kennedy 234, not be used as classrooms in the future; the space should be reconfigured and repurposed. The Commission further recommended that a contemplative space be created in the Kennedy building, and that it include a documentary plaque acknowledging the events of April 30, 2019.

The University will manage the process for repurposing and reconfiguring Kennedy 236 and 234. The University will immediately begin work on designing the contemplative space and plaque.

APRIL 30, 2020 DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

As a reminder, we are planning on-campus and community events for the first anniversary that will unite the University and Charlotte community together to honor and remember the lives lost and all those impacted on that tragic day in our history.

There are no classes scheduled on April 30, 2020. The Division of Student Affairs is leading a planning process for on-campus activities that will allow faculty, staff, and students to come together and support each other. A student-led team plans to offer several options to our campus community to reflect and remember the lives affected on April 30. In addition, the University will host a Remembrance Concert for the campus and broader Charlotte community at 7:30 p.m. in the Belk Theater at the Blumenthal Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets are limited and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. The cost to attend is \$25 for the public and \$10 for UNC Charlotte students, plus taxes and facility fees. Tickets are now available on the [Blumenthal website](#), and all proceeds will benefit the April 30 Remembrance Fund, which supports the recommendations outlined by the work of the Remembrance Commission.

As I have said before, April 30, 2019 will not define us. Instead, Niner Nation will be defined by the strength of our collective response. It is my great hope that the actions we're taking to remember and honor the victims will serve as a meaningful and lasting reminder of the strength, compassion and enduring spirit within our UNC Charlotte community.

Sincerely,



Philip L. Dubois
Chancellor

