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Philip L. Dubois
Chancellor

Statement from Chancellor Dubois: Remembering those we have lost

May 1, 2019

To the Students, Employees, Alumni, Families, and Supporters of UNC Charlotte:

Words cannot adequately express the heartbreak we feel over yesterday's tragic events, nor can they describe the selfless, overwhelming support you have provided. Even in the midst of UNC Charlotte's darkest day, our greatest strength--our ability to unify with one heart and a common purpose--shines clearly through.

In that spirit of unity, I would ask that you join me in turning our hearts and minds to the families of the two members of our community who lost their lives. Some of us knew these young men as our students, our classmates, our friends, our family, our sons. For all of us, they were fellow members of Niner Nation, and we will learn and forever remember their names and their legacy.

Riley Howell, of Waynesville, NC, was a 21-year-old Environmental Studies major who enrolled in UNC Charlotte in Fall 2018 as a transfer from Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College. Riley loved the outdoors, and Star Wars, and pizza; he played soccer and ran cross country in high school and was described by those close to him as upbeat and optimistic, and always with a smile on his face. Riley's family describes him as always putting others ahead of himself, and nothing exemplifies that more than his final, heroic actions in defense of his fellow students. We will not forget Riley.

Ellis "Reed" Parlier, of Midland, NC, was a 19-year-old who intended to pursue a Computer Science major after enrolling at UNC Charlotte in Fall of 2017. Reed loved video games and aspired to one day become a game developer. Reed was a graduate of the highly regarded Central Academy of Technology and Arts, where he studied in the Information Systems academy. He was generous with his time and talents, volunteering as a computer programming tutor for middle school students. Reed's professors describe him as independent and motivated. We will not forget Reed.

Our faculty have approved Degrees in Memoriam for both Riley and Reed, and I have reached out to each of their families. We will do everything we can to lift them up over the difficult days, weeks, and months ahead. Riley and Reed's fellow students have organized a candlelight vigil to be held this evening at 6:00 p.m. in Halton Arena. For those who are unable to come to campus, we will livestream the vigil on [our website](#).

We will use our time together at the vigil to honor the memory of Riley and Reed and to show support for their classmates who were injured in the attack. I have visited with the injured students and their families today, and many dedicated members of my staff have also spent time with them since they were admitted to the hospital. While these students have a difficult road ahead, all are expected to recover. Please keep these Niners in your hearts and minds, too, as they heal.

The days ahead will be difficult, but we will emerge from them. We will not emerge unchanged, but we will emerge united and stronger. I am grateful for you all.



Philip L. Dubois
Chancellor, UNC Charlotte

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