October 29, 2018

October is usually a time of great happiness for many of us. It is beautiful to see the leaves change, the kids are now all safely busy with school work, and we also get lots of candy for Halloween. But today, October represents sadness and anger.

Two murders have happened in the last two years, both in October, and both on our Health Sciences Campus. Today is the anniversary of ChenWei Guo’s murder. Also, it has been one week since the murder of Lauren McCluskey. And we are saddened and outraged. Those who are connected closely to the victims suffer greatly; those of us who did not personally know either one of them, feel compassion for their families and their friends. Although we recognize that we do not fully grasp the depth and horror of their pain, we still offer our condolences and our thoughts and prayers. All of us grieve at the loss of two of our own. Their lives are meaningful, and they shall not be forgotten. In this time of mourning, however, it is also a time for action.

We need to honor their memory by working to prevent future acts of violence against our students. We can be a part of many groups in our lives—friend groups, church groups, sororities, fraternities, etc. We are all also a part of the University of Utah group. In a previous blog post, I wrote, “We, at the U, are a highly functional, unconditionally loving family. Please join us as we make this clear to everyone and make the systematic changes that prove that we value each individual for who they are, and not only for what they do for us.” I really believe that we are a family. Now is the time to show that we are inclusive. We can “mourn with those who mourn, and comfort those in need of comfort.” And we can act in our own individual ways to work towards prevention of these heinous acts.

May we find strength in each other, as we seek healing for the victims’ families and friends, and our community as a whole.

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