



CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

September 10, 2009

Dear CAU Parent or Guardian:

In an effort to keep the parents and guardians of our students apprised of the administration's continuing commitment to ensure student safety, we write to inform you of measures currently under way to increase the security of the Clark Atlanta University campus.

As you know, in the early morning hours of Thursday, September 3, 2009, a tragic incident took place on a public street that runs through our campus. Ms. Jasmine Lynn, a Spelman College sophomore, and a Clark Atlanta University student were victims of a random act of violence. An altercation involving two groups of individuals resulted in a shooting that tragically took the life of Ms. Lynn, who was struck by a stray bullet. Our student sustained a bullet wound to the wrist during the incident, and was transported to a local hospital where he was treated and released within a few hours.

The entire Clark Atlanta University family mourns the tragic loss of Ms. Lynn. Her senseless and untimely death has cut short the promising future of a young woman that CAU considers one of its own; her death is most certainly a tragedy for Spelman and the entire Atlanta University Center community. We also send our thoughts to the family of the CAU student wounded in the incident.

These events have understandably caused you concern about the safety and security of your child, which is why I am writing to inform you that we share your concern, and that the health, safety and well-being of our students are always a top priority for Clark Atlanta University.

First, we want you to know that we have been proactive in increasing security at CAU. Prior to this incident, we had been actively engaging in several measures to increase the safety of our campus and our students. These measures included providing escorts and educating students about how to be safe in the dynamic, urban environment in which the University is located. Additionally, several months ago, CAU along with the Robert W. Woodruff Library, began the legal process of the closing James P. Brawley Drive to automobile traffic in order to better control access and to gain further control over our campus borders. Over the past several months, Atlanta University Center presidents have held joint meetings with our own police leadership as well as the Atlanta Police Department to bring about greater collaborative efforts. These meetings will continue and indeed will intensify.

In addition to several ongoing measures, we are aggressively and immediately implementing many others. The following measures are currently being taken to increase the safety of our campus and students:

- We are increasing our police presence to assure greater safety of students, while we learn more about the incident. Police presence will increase in residential areas from evening to sunrise.
- Through our counseling center, religious life program, and health services center, we are providing counseling services to our students.

- Effective immediately and in conjunction with the Atlanta Police Department, we have closed off James P. Brawley Drive at Martin Luther King Jr., Drive, as well as several ancillary roads. These closings will be in effect for an extended period of time.
- ID checks of all students, faculty and staff will commence immediately.
- We will intensify room checks and sweeps of all student residential facilities and parking lots.
- We will continue with and intensify our usual dispersal procedures in the evening. We will clear our streets after 11:00 p.m.
- The “No visitation” rule will remain in force.

We have also been working on several other measures to increase campus safety. For example, we have been building a system to capture all cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses in the CAU community for emergency notification. The system was tested two weeks ago and should be operational soon.

We will continue to share with our students that another part of our safety efforts will have to include the students themselves. We remind students that they are here for personal transformation and preparation for success. Therefore, we strongly encourage our students to choose their friends and associates carefully, utilize our escort services, to not walk alone off campus or on campus, and to know where emergency call boxes are located.

We will continue to remind students that if they see inappropriate behavior, too many people that they do not know, or anything out of the ordinary, to please notify campus police, residence hall personnel or Atlanta police immediately.

I want to assure you once again that every effort is being made to ensure the safety of all members of the CAU family and this will continue to be an ongoing focus of our administration. Criminal activity on this campus will not be tolerated. Anyone who is engaged in activities that disrupt or endanger the life or health of our students, faculty or staff will absolutely not be tolerated. We continue to be committed to providing a safe environment, in which our students live, learn and thrive.

Sincerely,

Carlton E. Brown
Carlton E. Brown
President