



Robert M. Franklin
President

September 14, 2009

Dear Morehouse Parents and Friends:

In an effort to keep the parents and guardians of our students, as well as other College friends, apprised of our continuing commitment to student safety, I write to inform you of measures currently under way to increase the security of the Morehouse campus and the Atlanta University Center (AUC) community.

I am grateful for the many messages and offers of support that parents have provided in the past several days. Dr. William Bynum, vice president of Student Services, is in the process of developing a formal Morehouse College Parents Program in order to facilitate greater communication between parents and the school. Please feel free to contact him directly at (404) 653-7858 or via email at wbynum@morehouse.edu if you have recommendations.

On Thursday, September 3, 2009, a tragic incident took place on a public street that runs through the Clark Atlanta University campus. Spelman College sophomore Jasmine Lynn was fatally wounded by a stray bullet. A Clark Atlanta University student also sustained minor injuries. These students were the victims of a random act of violence that has shaken the collective peace of mind of the entire AUC community. The identity of the perpetrators of this terrible deed remains unknown.

Along with my staff, I spent most of the subsequent days walking the campus and community and visiting with Morehouse students to emphasize our commitment to their safety. We placed a message regarding this incident on our website and began a series of meetings with the other AUC presidents, city officials, our respective security chiefs, faith community leaders, and others.

On Sunday, September 6, we devoted our evening worship to the memory of Ms. Lynn and raised an impressive offering to present to her family. The following Tuesday, we joined the Spelman community for an official prayer vigil and memorial service in Sisters Chapel.

These events have understandably caused heightened concern over the safety and security of students here. I'd like to emphatically state that we share your concern and have worked vigorously since this incident to ensure the safety and well-being of all our students. Indeed, this is our highest priority.

Let me review the actions of we have taken.

- Since 2007, we have convened several town hall meetings at which public safety policies and student safety habits were reviewed, and student concerns were freely expressed. Police zone commanders have attended these meetings and provided their contact information to students.
- We have increased on-campus lighting; increased foot patrols on the perimeter of the Morehouse campus; installed additional emergency call boxes and additional surveillance cameras in academic buildings; and implemented an emergency notification system for the entire Morehouse community.
- The AUC presidents have held joint meetings with police leadership, as well as the Atlanta Police Department, aimed at strengthening our collaborative relationships. These meetings will continue and will intensify.
- Our normal residential hall visitation policies will remain in force.

In addition to these ongoing measures, we are aggressively and immediately implementing several other safety measures:

- Our police officers have completed an inventory of potential problem areas in and around the campus community that will be addressed in conjunction with the Atlanta Police Department and the mayor's office. Some of these 'hot spots' would benefit from increased lighting, video surveillance and regular patrols.
- Complementing our efforts of patrolling the campus perimeter, the Atlanta Police presence will increase in residential areas surrounding campus from evening to sunrise.
- We are providing counseling services to students through our Counseling Resource Center. The Center and the Employee Assistance Program are available for faculty and staff. I am pleased to note that some students have taken advantage of those services.
- Effective immediately and in conjunction with the city, the public street (James P. Brawley Drive at Martin Luther King Jr. Drive) that runs through the CAU campus and past Woodruff Library has been closed, along with several ancillary roads. I expect these closings to be in effect for an extended period of time.
- Monitoring and patrols in and around all student residential facilities and parking lots will be increased. We have begun random ID checks to ensure that people on our campuses belong there.
- Curfews will be enforced and we will clear our streets after 11:00 p.m.

We have always shared with our students that an important part of our safety efforts involves their awareness. During orientation and in residential hall sessions, we emphasize that they are here for personal development and preparation for success. Therefore, we strongly encourage them to choose their friends and associates carefully,

use our security escort services, refrain from walking alone off campus and to know where emergency call boxes are located throughout the Atlanta University Center.

We will continue to remind students that if they see inappropriate behavior, strangers on campus, or anything out of the ordinary, to notify Campus Police, residence hall personnel or Atlanta police immediately. We must not allow the 'anti snitch' message to destroy our campus culture of decorum and respect while compromising our learning environment.

I assure you once again that every effort is being made to ensure the safety of all members of the Morehouse family. This will continue to be an ongoing priority of the College. There will be zero tolerance for those who engage in criminal activities or any other activities that disrupt or endanger the life or health of our students, faculty and staff. We continue to be committed to providing a safe environment, in which our students live, learn and thrive.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert M. Franklin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

Robert M. Franklin '75