

Dear Campus Community,

It hardly seems possible that this week marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 9-11 terrorist attacks. We must continue to remember and honor those lost in 2001, the first responders who braved unimaginable danger and members of the military who continue to protect the freedoms that make us American.

In listening to podcasts recently, I have heard some interesting discussions as others reflect on this 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. During one of these programs, someone recounted the bravery of Todd Beamer, the young father who attempted to lead an effort to regain control from the hijackers of United Airlines Flight 93. The courage Todd Beamer showed that day is indescribable. He had to know that the actions he would take could cost him his own life, but that they could potentially save the nation.

News reports indicate Todd Beamer's last audible words were, "Are you guys ready? Let's roll."

***As we reflect on the courage of so many that day, I ask us all to consider if we're ready.***

Are we ready to live as a more civil society?

Are we ready to take on climate change?

Are we ready to come together to end the COVID-19 pandemic?

Are we ready to embrace our roles in helping to improve the lives of the citizens of South Carolina through education, public scholarship and community service?

While many of our students may have been too young to understand the magnitude of the attacks, we all have an opportunity to teach and learn from history. I'm grateful to the faculty members who have created [remembrance events](#) this week. The Library is sharing a special collection and [webinar](#) designed to facilitate dialogue on campus. These events lead up to our annual [Constitution Day](#), which this year, will focus on the tradeoffs between liberty and security in this post 9-11 era.

On Friday, I'll participate in a Memorial Tree Planting in our own Rotary International Peace Park. We will dedicate a new tree that will forever be a part of our campus and a site for future 9-11 observances. We invite you to join us at 11:00 a.m.

No matter how you choose to observe the day, I encourage you to reflect on our courage and resiliency as a nation—as a campus community. We must continue to value the contributions of those serving in the military. I am particularly pleased to know that USC Upstate is ranked among the highest in the state for service to veterans. It's just one more reason to love this university and to be inspired by our collective dedication to transforming lives for the better.

Warm regards,



Bennie L. Harris

Chancellor

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*Up is where we live.*