

August 25, 2014

Dear USC community,

As we begin another academic year, the safety of USC students, faculty, and staff on our campuses remains a top priority for me, as well as my leadership team. Every member of the USC community has a stake in fostering a safe environment for learning, teaching, and research.

Safety is a shared responsibility. All of us must be fully committed to ensuring that our campuses and residential areas are secure and crime-free. For its part, the university carefully assesses its safety and security measures and evaluates their effectiveness on an ongoing basis. We strongly encourage everyone in our community to take full advantage of the university's many resources. To this end, we have made safety education **mandatory** for all incoming undergraduate students, as well as all new international students, whether undergraduate or graduate. We will continue safety education throughout the year in various venues, and we urge our students to use the USC shuttle buses and Campus Cruisers, the university's free car escorts.

As you may have heard, we recently introduced a number of additional security measures for our campus and surrounding neighborhoods. We reached out to many of you, including members of our student groups, and the thoughtful discussions that followed were extremely productive. These enhancements respond to the well-considered input we received:

- We enhanced the deployment of neighborhood security ambassadors and extended coverage year-round.
- We increased dedicated nighttime USC Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) foot-beats and bicycle patrols in the University Park neighborhood.
- We are upgrading the video analytics used in monitoring the university's extensive Closed-Circuit TV (CCTV) video cameras in the neighborhood surrounding the campus and increasing the number of personnel monitoring the cameras around the clock.
- We expanded the service area of Campus Cruiser to the full USC patrol and response area, and are reducing wait times to no more than 15 minutes.
- We are expediting the planned implementation of a free, mobile safety app focused on the USC campus community to allow students, faculty, or staff to immediately contact DPS.

These new measures follow a number of important enhancements implemented in the past two years by USC and LAPD, which included:

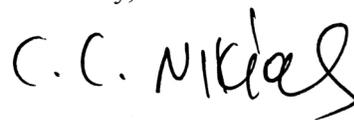
- LAPD added 30 police officers to the Southwest Division, which includes USC.
- LAPD added a detective dedicated to the area, and the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office added a neighborhood prosecutor.
- LAPD Southwest Division adopted Predictive Policing, a computerized system for predicting and preventing potential negative trends.
- The USC DPS increased patrols by vehicle, bicycle, and on foot.
- USC expanded its Campus Cruiser car escort service.
- USC increased the number of its neighborhood security ambassadors.
- USC added nearly 60 security cameras in two years and expanded its public safety patrol area significantly. USC now deploys more than 190 video or license plate recognition cameras.

These specific initiatives reflect our continued efforts to ensure a safe environment for our community. As a major research university—located in one of the most populated and dynamic cities in the country—USC offers tremendous opportunities to experience the city and take advantage of the benefits of an urban environment. These opportunities enrich our students' growth, and significantly contribute to their educations in meaningful ways. However, we must also be aware of the challenges posed by such an environment.

This past summer, we all received a stark reminder of this point. We mourned the loss of Xinran Ji, a graduate student at our Viterbi School of Engineering, whose life was tragically cut short. Our hearts have gone out to the family and friends of this young man, who had touched so many with his exceptional intellect and creativity, as well as his warm personality and positive outlook. We extend our deepest condolences to Xinran's family and friends, and will continue to offer our support and comfort.

Moving forward—and with our students' well-being in mind—I must emphasize that the responsibility for personal safety rests with each one of us. We must all take responsibility for our own safety by utilizing the resources available and making smart choices. We should also be mindful of the safety of those around us, and encourage friends and colleagues to make smart choices as well. Working together, we will continue to keep our university community safe, and to build an environment in which our scholarly and creative work can flourish.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. L. Nikias". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

C. L. Max Nikias  
President