



JOSH ARMSTRONG

Jacob A. Lutz III

As a native of Blacksburg, an alumnus of Virginia Tech, and rector of the board of visitors, I want to express both my horror and shock at the events of yesterday and my appreciation for the outpouring of support from people around the world and for the many prayers that have been lifted on our behalf.

We gather this afternoon to mourn and pay homage to those innocent lives lost in this insensible tragedy. We gather as a family, as a community saddened beyond belief. We also recognize that we are part of a larger community—a national community dedicated to the teaching of our young people, performing critical research, and educating all of us.

Education is a critical component of a free and open society. Unfortunately, history teaches us that the horror that befell Virginia Tech yesterday has occurred and could occur at any institution. Our educational system is a national treasure, one that we must preserve and keep safe for our children and for the children of generations to come.

As President Bush noted yesterday, our sanctuary has been violated. We feel violated and are filled with sadness and grief. Yet, in our hearts, we know we must, somehow, move forward, as painful as those steps are. From somewhere in the human spirit, we can and will find the strength and courage to continue.

While it may seem an impossible task, we must move forward and begin the healing process. □



JOHN MCCORMICK