



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

COMMANDANT OF CADETS
USAF ACADEMY COLORADO

27 SEP 2010

Dear Family and Friends of USAFA,

On behalf of myself and the entire USAFA family, I would like to express our deep sadness over the untimely and tragic death of one of our cadets, C1C Marc E. Henning. I also realize that you may have questions concerning the safety and well-being of our valued Cadet Wing. Please allow me to address questions and highlight our unwavering commitment to you and those you care about. Several of you have asked about a subsequent cadet suicide attempt on the heels of Marc's unfortunate death. While many of our cadets and permanent party members have been deeply affected, I can assure you none has attempted suicide. The entire Academy team is committed to taking an active role in caring for our cadets and helping them through the grieving process.

The Traumatic Stress Response (TSR) Team was formed within hours to address backlash and provide support to those adversely affected by this tragedy. The TSR consists of mental health professionals, chaplains, and other base helping agencies and allows for up to four undocumented visits. The TSR and other members of our team continually exercise their commitment and concern to the overall well being of every cadet by maintaining an active presence in the dorms and other common areas and making themselves available during extended and weekend hours.

In addition to TSR support, we offer numerous preventative and holistic approaches to give cadets the tools they need to manage and overcome mental and physical stressors. We understand that cadets face multiple demands and challenges and occasionally experience distress; therefore, they receive training to educate them on the warning signs of distress and how to seek help for themselves or for their wingmen.

As a positive reinforcement tool, over 120 cadets have been trained as Personal Ethics and Education Representatives; you may have heard them referred to as PEERs. There are two cadets assigned to each cadet squadron in addition to the sports teams. These PEERs provide education, support, and referral service to their fellow cadets and are our eyes and ears within the Cadet Wing.

I would also like to make mention of the Peak Performance Center which consists of credentialed mental health professionals who provide a range of counseling and personal development services. USAFA and Cadet Wing leadership encourage the use of these services, and are dedicated to ensuring cadets have access by granting schedule exemptions or any other assistance that may need to be rendered. More intensive services are available when needed or requested. Chaplains, the Human Relations Training and Education Office, the Mental Health Clinic, and the entire Academy team offer support in their respective areas.

In closing, I'd like to thank all the parent groups for their support and well wishes during this very difficult time. Many of you attended Marc's funeral and supported many of our cadets who traveled to the memorial and funeral. I also extend my great appreciation to those of you who regularly contribute to the Rando Fund. Most importantly however, I will continue to support our most precious asset, your sons and daughters. I pledge my unwavering commitment to you and the cadet wing now and always, and I promise we will continue to support our cadets in every way possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard M. Clark".

RICHARD M. CLARK, Brig Gen, USAF
Commandant of Cadets