



*A Message to the Columbia Community  
from Vice President for Public Safety  
James F. McShane*

Friday, October 2, 2015

Yesterday's tragic events at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon is another sad reminder that we must always be prepared for the possibility of violence on our campus or in our community.

I am writing to let you know that the safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff is our top priority. I would also like to share with you some of the things that the Department of Public Safety is doing to safeguard our campus, in order to help allay any concerns that you may have on the issue of safety here.

First of all, uniformed Public Safety personnel are stationed at fixed locations throughout the Morningside area and on the uptown Medical Center campus. These include guard booths at the main gates on 116<sup>th</sup> Street at both Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, which are staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These posts are supplemented by foot, bicycle and motorized patrols that provide a highly visible presence in the areas around both campuses.

All of our undergraduate residences are staffed by Public Safety personnel or trained student aides who control access to these buildings on a 24 hour basis. All students and visitors are screened.

We also operate two 24-hour emergency operations centers. On the Morningside and Manhattanville campuses, we can be reached in an emergency by dialing 212-854-5555 on any phone. For routine business, you can reach us by calling 212-854-2797. At the Medical Center, the emergency response number is 212-305-7979.

There is also an extensive system of video cameras that we use to investigate crimes. In addition, emergency call boxes, that connect directly to our 24 hour operations centers, are installed in strategic locations across both campuses and surrounding areas.

Last year we upgraded our text messaging system which can be used to transmit emergency messages to portable devices such as cell phones. If you are not already registered for this service, you can do so through our website at the following link:

<http://publicsafety.columbia.edu/content/emergency-notifications>

Finally, we have a staff of highly trained investigators who work hand in hand with the N.Y.P.D. to investigate matters that relate to the Columbia campuses

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We also employ a number of Crime Prevention Initiatives that not everyone may be aware of. For example, we operate a Morningside Heights shuttle service that provides scheduled service through the Morningside campus area during the evening hours, between 6:00 P.M. and 4:00 A.M. in the morning. This service ranges as far south as 106<sup>th</sup> Street and as far north as 135<sup>th</sup> Street. For more information about this shuttle, please visit the Transportation website at:

<http://transportation.columbia.edu/evening-schedule>

We also offer an escort service where trained students will accompany you on foot to your door any time from 7:00 P.M. until 3:00 A.M. This service is available between 108<sup>th</sup> Street and 122<sup>nd</sup> Street. At the Medical Center, escorts are available between W. 165<sup>th</sup> Street and W. 181<sup>st</sup> Street. For this service, call 212-854-SAFE on the Morningside Campus and 212-305-8100 on the Medical Center Campus.

Operation "Safe Haven" provides more than 100 storefront locations across both campuses where people who may feel threatened can take refuge. The merchants will call Public Safety and/or the N.Y.P.D. who will respond immediately. Look for the "Red Lion" sticker in the window of the store.

Finally, in the Emergency Protocols section of the Public Safety website, you can find important information about our procedures for responding to an active shooter incident. Please see:

<http://publicsafety.columbia.edu/content/emergency-protocols>

My team and I are here to keep you safe and sound. We look forward to working together with all of you, not only to keep our environment as safe as it is, but also to make our students, faculty and staff - and their families - feel safe.

I encourage anyone with a concern to contact Public Safety at 212-854-2797, day or night. For more information about safety concerns, please also see our Annual Security Report online at:

[http://publicsafety.columbia.edu/files\\_publicsafety/imce\\_shared/SecurityReport.pdf](http://publicsafety.columbia.edu/files_publicsafety/imce_shared/SecurityReport.pdf)