

Friends and Colleagues,

As many of know, one of our residential halls, New Richmond, suffered from a tremendous explosion at 4:53pm on Wednesday, June 28.

I want to thank all of our first responders, the multiple police departments, firefighters, EMTs, and others who went and helped as best and as quickly as possible. In the immediate hours following the event, the cooperation and coordination of law enforcement agencies, University officials and other critical services was exceptional.

There has been one reported injury requiring hospitalization. Mr. Dakota Fields earned his bachelor's degree in business in 2014 from Murray State as well as his master's degree which he earned this past May. I know Dakota from his exceptional work as a student leader, residential advisor, and this last year as serving as residential hall director. Dakota recently accepted a position at Western Illinois University where he is going to assume greater responsibilities as a residential complex director overseeing several halls on their campus. We wish you a very speedy and complete recovery, Dakota.

We are blessed and fortunate that all students who are participating in the Governor's Scholars Program, the Commonwealth Honors Academy and the Adventures in Math and Science programs have all been accounted for and being assisted. All summer school students living on campus have also been accounted for and relocated to other residential buildings on campus.

I want to thank all of the Murray State faculty, staff and community members who acted quickly and offered their unconditional and unwavering support. This includes the vice presidents and campus leadership who acted quickly and professionally to ensure the safety of our campus and those on it. I also want to express my sincere appreciation for the numerous calls and messages from around the state, from our Governor, elected officials, fellow university presidents, and the numerous members of the Murray State family—our alumni, students and their families, our fans and other loyal supporters.

The incident at New Richmond is devastating in many ways as it makes us aware of the fragility of many things in our lives. At the same time, based on the response of many, the work of our team, the joining together to ensure safety and security demonstrates too the power of our Racer community.

Over the next days, weeks and months, we will learn more about what happened and also what will become of Richmond Hall. Regardless, we will remain, as always, strong as Racers.

Very Respectfully,



Bob Davies