

## Thoughts about Northern Illinois University

David L. Eisler, President  
February 21, 2008 Memorial Ceremony

Last spring we stood on the campus quad among the white posts, each representing a student who had died in the tragedy at Virginia Tech.

10 months later we again find ourselves gathered – this time on a cold and wintry, but beautifully sunlit Michigan day to reflect on another tragic event, this time at Northern Illinois University.

These are times when we ask why, but the reason behind senseless acts is elusive.

The events that students Northern Illinois University endured remind us that there is evil in our world. It is unthinkable that one person would set out to kill others on a college campus – a place committed to bettering and enlightening people.

Yet while we are reminded that evil exists, we must also remember that we live in world where people work to help and comfort others, and to make society a better place for our students, our families, and our children.

Your presence here today reflects a basic human need to provide compassion and understanding toward each other.

We gather here not as a campus, but as a community. In doing so, we project our love and support for those who have been affected by this terrible event.

We gather together because we need to do so, knowing that while much of the world will focus on the evil, we will focus on the good.

And in doing so, we remind ourselves that we are here for each other.

Together we can and we will make the world a better place.