

HARVARD COLLEGE



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May 22, 2009

Dear Harvard College Community,

I write to update you on developments following Monday's tragic shooting at Kirkland House and about preliminary steps that we will be taking to address some of the issues that the ongoing investigation has raised.

The Middlesex County District Attorney made clear this morning (May 22) that drugs were at the center of the events that brought Justin Cosby together with his assailants on Monday.

It appears that the parties involved gained access to Kirkland House with the help of Harvard students.

The district attorney and police have assured us that this violent encounter was an isolated incident, and that there is no reason to fear a continued threat to the security of our students.

Nonetheless, there are important lessons to learn from this sad episode. I intend to work with student leaders and others to address the nature and risks of illicit drug use on campus, to underscore the importance of safety and security practices for the entire College community, and to examine the adequacy of existing policies relating to student life.

The safety and security of our students, staff, and faculty are fundamental University priorities. Despite the recent decrease in overall crime on campus, we must never be complacent. We have taken a number of steps over the past two years to improve security across the University, but as an urban campus we must work continuously to maintain a safe and secure environment.

We also want to make sure that our residential-life staff have the tools they need to help students take full advantage of their Harvard education and deepen their sense of responsibility to the Harvard community.

Finally, I know many students and parents may have questions or thoughts they want to share, and I welcome those inquiries. Please feel free to contact my office at hcdean@fas.harvard.edu.

Sincerely yours,

Evelynn Hammonds