



Passing of Karen Smith

January 9, 2013

To the UT Southwestern Community:

Earlier this morning you received notice of the tragic news that last evening our campus was touched directly by gun violence when a member of our community, Karen Smith, was killed in the “staff” garage. While the investigation is ongoing under the aegis of the Dallas Police, all available information suggests strongly that Karen was a victim of the scourge of domestic violence. The police now have the suspected perpetrator in custody.

Karen joined UT Southwestern 2 ½ years ago and has worked in the McDermott Administration (“B”) Building in the office of the Executive Vice President for Health System Affairs as an Executive Assistant. She was a highly valued colleague who took great pride in being part of the UTSW community. She leaves behind four children among her grieving family.

I want to commend Chief Thomas Bickers and the other members of our Police force who, working with the Dallas Police, acted so promptly and effectively to secure the safety of the campus as they do every day. I want to assure every member of this community that we are absolutely committed to doing everything we can to ensure a safe environment for all who visit, work, or study at UT Southwestern.

I take this sad moment as an opportunity also to reach out to anyone who may have reason to fear domestic violence – or reason to think that a co-worker may be a potential victim – and remind you that help is available through the Employee Assistance Program. Please do not hesitate to seek the help of those who stand ready to aid and support you.

Finally, I am sure I speak for everyone on this campus in expressing our condolences to all those grieving the loss of our colleague Karen Smith – her family, friends and co-workers. While funeral arrangements have not yet been settled, I hope all will keep Karen and her family in their thoughts and prayers. Please take a moment to realize how precious all of those who surround you here at UT Southwestern are and how fortunate we are to have each other as colleagues.

Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.
President, UT Southwestern