

**Subject:** An Update from Chancellor Wrighton

**Date:** Tuesday, November 18, 2014 at 5:02:09 PM Central Standard Time

**From:** On Behalf of Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton

**To:** Davis, Shannon



Dear Washington University Community,

I wanted to send a brief note to keep you up-to-date on our planning in anticipation of the grand jury decision in police officer Darren Wilson's case. According to the St. Louis county prosecutor, the decision is expected by the end of the month. I know that anxiety may have been heightened yesterday by Missouri Governor Jay Nixon's announcement regarding the Missouri National Guard.

Please know that the governor's action was procedural and not entirely unexpected. It was a necessary step to allow the National Guard to support St. Louis law enforcement organizations, if required. The governor already had indicated that the National Guard likely would be placed on stand-by as a precaution in case the additional support is needed.

At this point, we have experienced very little in the way of protest activity on or near our campuses, and all has been peaceful. However, none of us can predict what might transpire over the coming days and weeks, so we have taken every precaution to be well prepared.

The Washington University Police Department (WUPD) and School of Medicine Protective Services continue to be in close contact with law enforcement organizations throughout the region. Our working relationships with surrounding jurisdictions are strong and those open lines of communication have been very helpful in assessing the situation and supporting development of our own plans.

Our Emergency Response plans are up-to-date and thoroughly vetted. We have solid procedures and infrastructure in place. If it might become necessary, we are prepared to activate 24-hour, 7-day-a-week Emergency Operations Centers to manage any necessary response across all of our university functions. We will keep our university community informed of developments through regular updates via text message, email message, social media, and/or website channels, depending on the urgency of our communications. Please be assured that we will be in contact with you about any activities that impact security or operations on our campuses.

This is a stressful time, I know. We continue to encourage our faculty, staff and students to reach out to available resources if you need support. For students, Student Health Services on both the Danforth and School of Medicine campuses are prepared to help. Faculty and staff can access our Employee Assistance Program. You can find contact information here: [voices.wustl.edu/resources](http://voices.wustl.edu/resources).

On a positive note, today, Governor Nixon shared publicly the makeup of the 16-member Ferguson Commission that will consider long-term, sustainable solutions to the societal issues underlying events since the shooting of Michael Brown. I am very proud that several of the commission members have strong Washington University ties. Rose Windmiller, our assistant vice chancellor for government and community relations, will be joined on the commission by Brittany Packnett, a 2006 Ervin Scholar/Arts & Sciences alumna, who now is executive director for Teach for America in St. Louis; Bethany Johnson-Javois, a 2002 master of social work graduate and distinguished alumna of the Brown School, who now is CEO of the St. Louis Integrated Health Network; and Gabe Gore, a member of our Brown School National Council and partner in the Dowd Bennett law firm.

As always, we continue to hope for a peaceful resolution to the tension we've experienced since August. At the same time, we are taking this situation very seriously. We will keep in touch as events unfold.

Sincerely,

Mark S. Wrighton  
Chancellor