



Collecting and preserving the stories of April 16

Using electronic media, the April 16 Archive was created to collect, preserve, and present the stories and a digital record of the tragedy at Virginia Tech. The university's Center for Digital Discourse and Culture launched this project with assistance from George Mason University's Center for History and New Media. Numerous Virginia Tech students, faculty, and staff members have volunteered to help curate and maintain the archive, and they welcome contributions from members of the Virginia Tech community and others who wish to share their stories about the events of April 16. To access the archive, go to www.april16archive.org.

Choose one

While the images and emotions of April 16 are seared into our collective consciousness, our own lives, with all of the demands of the modern world, will cause the memories to fade, likely more quickly than we might think. Over time, we will struggle with remembering so many names and, unfortunately, the only name we will probably always remember will be the one that we should all do our best to forget.

For this reason, I ask all members of the Hokie Nation and others touched by our tragedy to choose one name, to select one of the 32 victims to remember. Study their pictures to remember their smiles. Take note of their passions, their accomplishments, and their dreams and wishes. Learn everything you can so that no matter how much time passes, at least a little memory of that person will remain with you. Perhaps, after many years, the name you have chosen will be all that is left, but it will be a name worthy of remembrance.

Let us all lift upon our shoulders the victims we have chosen and carry them with us so that they may, through us, live the lives that they should have. Every time we don the orange and maroon, let's think of them. Every time we meet up with fellow alumni, think of them. Every time we see "VT" or the HokieBird and every time we jump up and down as "Enter Sandman" plays while the football team takes the field, let them whisper in our ears, "Go Hokies." Let us carry them forward so that we can forget the one name we shouldn't remember and instead recall more than just a date.

Choose one.

— Michael Olsen M.S.'00, Alexandria, Va.