

Students gather to remember Sept. 11 victims

BY CATHERINE M. WALDROP
THE GAMECOCK

A remembrance ceremony was held Thursday night to honor the lives lost from the devastating Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

A small group of students gathered at Davis Field to partake in the ceremony. The remembrance was led by Jeremy Wolfe, a third-year Russian and math student. Wolfe is a representative for the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, which provided funding for the remembrance event.

The foundation is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization which was formed after Sept. 11. The foundation is dedicated to educating

Americans about the threat of terrorism to democracies worldwide.

Such distinguished speakers as Jay W. Ragley, the political director for the S.C. Republican Party, Chief John Jansen of the Columbia Fire Department, and Sheima Salam, former president of the Muslim Students Association, attended the event to give tribute to the Americans lost on Sept. 11, 2001, and also to express their thoughts and hopes for America's future.

Ragley spoke about his goal to get others interested in government.

"College students have the ability to make a difference,"



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he said.

He emphasized the importance of making each day count because for those people that died in the World Trade Center, that day began as an average day.

Chief Jansen, a native of New York City, talked about strong roots in the city and about being a 12th generation New Yorker. He spoke about the unity of the firefighters within the New York community and how some of the firefighters

who rushed to save people from the towers were not even on duty.

Salam a honors graduate from USC, spoke about her Muslim faith. She is a born-and-raised American from an Afghan-Lebanese background.

"The concept of the jihad is misrepresented by terrorists," she said.

Students attending the event signed a large banner commemorating Sept. 11. The banner will

take a tour of all the residence halls, where students are welcome to sign it. The banner will then be sent to its permanent home in New York City at the Ground Zero memorial.

Students at the event such as Callie Van Koughnett and Meghan Mueller, both first-year marine science students, said they were disappointed by the small crowd.

Van Koughnett volunteered on

the design work of the fliers and banner.

The event closed with "God Bless America" and the "National Anthem." Some of the students in the crowd cried as they sang the national anthem with one hand over their hearts. A candlelit moment of silence was held towards the end of the event.

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Remembrance

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The two years since the attack seemed to disappear as speakers surrendered to their emotions.

"My daddy, Gerard Rod Coppola," said Angela Coppola, 20, her voice cracking. "Your light still shines."

Brannon Burke, 13, and her 10-year-old sister Kyleen wore matching blue Engine Co. 21 sweatshirts with buttons bearing the face of fire Capt. William Burke Jr. - their beloved Uncle Billy, a second-generation firefighter.

"It's heartbreaking and it's heartwarming when you hear them say, 'My father, my mother, my aunt,'" said Betsy Parks

of Bayonne, N.J., whose brother Robert was killed. "What's amazing is the strength and resilience."

Some family members used their hands to scoop up dirt from the site as a keepsake, slipping it into bags and empty water bottles. For many, it may provide the only link to their lost relatives; authorities estimate the remains of as many as 1,000 victims may never be identified.

The crowd of thousands observed a moment of silence at 8:46 a.m., the time the first plane slammed into the north tower.

At sunset, two light beams pointing skyward were switched on, evoking the image of the twin towers.

Law School

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Charleston School of Law would be immune to state budget cuts, which could mean higher salaries for faculty members. Instead, the school will rely heavily on tuition dollars, and Gershon said the school hasn't had a problem attracting potential students.

"We're going to offer what we think is a really competitive price to get the best faculty," Gershon said. "In any law school, the highest percentage of the budget is going to go to the faculty."

According to Gershon, the Charleston law school will have an overall budget of about \$10 million.

Texas Wesleyan law school, also a private institution, is a lit-

tle larger than the Charleston school will be. It has a \$4.3 million operating budget and an overall budget of \$11 million.

Eli Poliakoff, a third-year law student and editor of the USC Law Review, said he isn't worried about the new school's opening.

"We wish them luck in Charleston," Poliakoff said, but added that USC law students are concentrating on what's happening in Columbia.

"People are optimistic at our law school and are excited about what's happening here," he said.

Gershon said the Charleston law school will benefit both institutions by opening up the possibility of cooperative work.

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Power

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As with any power outage, a great deal of safety concerns arise.

"Certainly, one of the biggest concerns would be students getting stuck in elevators," said Gene Luna, director of Housing Services at USC.

He also expressed concern about disabled students who can't

get in and out of buildings if they can't go up or down floors as well as students who need to refrigerate their medications and can't do so during a power failure.

Luna said his department has a comprehensive plan for how to react in the case of a power failure.

"When the power goes out, the first thing we do is make sure that generators and fire alarms are functioning, and then we assess what communication equipment

we still have available to us," he said. "We then use whatever communication equipment is still available to alert live-in staff and RAs to the details of the incident so they can help the students in any way possible."

Luna also said that during any power outage, security is a major concern, and so they bring in additional security.

The thing that seemed to bother students the most about the outage was that it interfered with

their preparations for the Gamecocks' football game against UVA.

"It really sucked because the football game was at 12:30 p.m., and since the power was out, and so my alarm didn't go off, and I almost missed the game," said first-year journalism student Zach Johnston, who lives in Bates House residence hall.

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