Tragic Van Crash Remembered 10 Years Later

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Saturday, Sept. 26, marks 10 years since the van accident that killed eight Utah State University agriculture students and an instructor who were returning to campus after a field trip. Those who died in the accident are Steven Bair, 22; Dusty Fuhriman, 22; Justin Gunnell, 24; Justin Huggins, 22; Jonathan Jorgensen, 22; Curtis Madsen, 23; Ryan McEntire, 22; Bradley Wilcox, 26; and instructor Evan Parker, 45. Students Robbie Petersen and Jared Nelson survived the accident.

“We will never forget this tragic event and the loss that was experienced that day by so many,” said USU Executive Vice President and Provost Noelle Cockett, who was dean of the College of Agriculture at the time of the accident. “The College is a very close-knit community of students, and the tragedy was felt by all. Our hearts continue to go out to the families and friends who were affected by this accident. As we move forward, we are inspired by what those students stood for – honesty, integrity and hard work – and we let those traits be what we remember about these individuals.”

The College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences celebrated CAAS week Sept. 21-25. A moment of silence was observed at the college’s awards and honors banquet to honor those who died.

In 2008, a 7-foot by 20-foot black granite, bronze and steel memorial sculpture was made as a tribute to the victims of the accident. It is composed of nine panels that depict the agricultural interests of each person. The memorial stands on the plaza north of the Agricultural Sciences Building. Funds for the sculpture came from alumni, the Utah Farm Bureau, USU student government, USU Student Services, departments in the College of Agriculture, the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station and others.

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