

## REFLECTIONS AND SUPPORT FOR UVALDE

May 26, 2022

Good Afternoon Friends and Colleagues,

Just one week ago we were gathered together to celebrate the accomplishments of our remarkable class of 2022 and to welcome members of the classes of 2021 and 2020 as they too walked across the commencement stage. So much can happen in a week. I don't even have the words to adequately express the profound sadness, despair, and anger over the mass shooting and the unfathomable loss of 19 children and two of their teachers.

Schools are meant to be safe places. Places where learning, engagement, hope, and community take root and take hold and where our children flourish and grow. Teachers make that happen – they are on the front lines with their students and they give of themselves without hesitation. Teachers change lives and entire futures because of their work.

At the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas these expectations were tragically upended – families devastated and everyone in that small, close community impacted. Across the country this impact is felt and worries and fear magnified.

At MassArt we are fortunate to offer resources on campus and beyond that can provide support and assistance, those resources are listed below. Additionally, our friends and colleagues in the Art Education Department are reaching out directly to MassArt students who are working in schools now, working towards their licenses, gaining practice time and honing their incredible skills to enter this most important field of teaching. We ask much of our teachers and we are obliged to take action on what we can and should be doing to keep our schools, classrooms, and communities safe.

In a different context, Robert F. Kennedy, lamenting the loss of life and possibility, once said, "Which of them might have written a great symphony? Which of them might have cured cancer? Which of them might have played a World Series or given us the gift of laughter from a stage or helped build a bridge or a university? Which one of them would have taught a child to read?" I can't help but think about those words this week. And I would add that all of the Robb Elementary children and teachers brought joy and vitality to their families and to their community. That joy is lost forever, too.

Let us all keep the children and teachers from Robb Elementary School and their families close to our hearts and then let us take action to do all that we can to support our teachers, our schools, and all of our children. Attached is a powerful piece written by Beth Balliro, Chair of the Art Education Department, that speaks to the precious and impactful time that the fourth grade represents and how we can honor that time and find a way to make a difference by "rolling-up-our-sleeves" and finding ways to work with our public schools to help the students and teachers not unlike those in Uvalde.

Please remember that our students can seek support from Counseling and Wellness and faculty and staff can avail themselves of support from the EAP available through Human Resources.

---

**STUDENTS:**

Counseling & Wellness: [counseling@massart.edu](mailto:counseling@massart.edu) or call 617.879.7760

[My Student Support Program \(MySSP\)](#), the online app offering free 24/7 mental health support service

**FACULTY AND STAFF:**

[Mass4You](#) Employee Assistance Program online, or call 1.844.263.1982

With gratitude,



Mary K. Grant, PhD

President

Massachusetts College of Art and Design

---

*MassArt is a public, independent institution that prepares artists, designers, and educators from diverse backgrounds to shape communities, economies, and cultures for the common good.*