

Thank you, Lieutenant Cox, and thank you all for being here today. This is an important event.

As we gather here today, we would do well to remember a pair of anniversaries with particular significance. It was a century ago this year that the First World War began in Europe, and it's been 50 years since significant U.S. combat operations began in Vietnam.

Those conflicts affected our University just as they affected every place around the country. When the United States entered the First World War in 1917, in fact, more than 600 of our students, faculty, and staff enlisted in the military – an even more impressive number when you recall that we were a small agricultural college at the time.

That commitment to our nation's armed services has remained with us up to the present day, when we have roughly 400 veterans enrolled in our student body, and more than 200 members of our faculty and staff who have served their country.

We do everything we can providing them with the support they need, from the OASIS Center – an on-campus facility devoted exclusively to our veterans – to programs like the entrepreneurial “boot camp” that helps returning vets start and grow their own businesses.

I say this often, but it's a sentiment that bears repeating: I pass by this memorial every day. And every day, I'm reminded of the more than 200 UConn students and alumni who gave what Abraham Lincoln called “the last full measure of devotion” to our nation.

It's for their sacrifice – on the fields of France, in the mountains of Afghanistan, and countless places in between – that we pause and remember today. And we commit ourselves once more to making this University a place where their courage and example will always be honored and valued.

Thank you.