



To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing in response to your alert regarding allegations made about the Northwestern Academy. We believe that it is important to consider the following facts when evaluating this alert:

- 1) The allegations in question reference a facility (Northwestern Academy) that has been closed for nearly a decade;
- 2) Merakey no longer operates any juvenile justice facilities or children's residential facilities, because the company believes that children are better served in the communities in which they live; and
- 3) Merakey's zero tolerance policy for abuse of any kind, including sexual abuse, has led it to implement a comprehensive set of policies, background screening procedures, monitoring standards, and mandatory training for all staff to ensure the safety and well-being of those we serve. We are proud of the fact that, as a result of these ongoing efforts, our company earned accreditation in abuse-prevention practices from Praesidium, a national leader in abuse risk management long before these allegations came to light ([www.praesidiumaccreditation.com](http://www.praesidiumaccreditation.com)).

Our mission at Merakey is to improve the quality of life for all the children and adults we are privileged to serve every day, and as we have said publicly, these abuse allegations are appalling and intolerable. No one, especially a child, should ever suffer the horrors of sexual abuse, and our hearts and prayers go out to any person who has endured such treatment.

Under the circumstances, we believe that the alert does not provide a complete picture of all the facts and can be misleading to the public and stakeholders about the current state of Merakey's operations. We are providing this additional information to provide a more comprehensive picture for all stakeholders of Merakey's commitment to support the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond.