

ACTIVE INVESTIGATION

Stanford University Department of Public Safety

COMMUNITY BULLETIN



NON-EMERGENCY PHONE LINE: 650-329-2413

POLICE@STANFORD.EDU

CASE NUMBER: 19-206-00250
INCIDENT: Reported Hate Crime
DATE REPORTED: July 12, 2019
LOCATION: 549 Lasuen Mall, Stanford (Columbae House)

DETAILS:

On the evening of July 12, 2019 at 11:21 pm., an individual called 911 to report that another individual had seen a noose tied to a bush near where she lived on campus. The location where the noose was located was determined to be in a bush on the front lawn of the Columbae House. In speaking with the person who saw the noose, who was residing at the Storey House, she was confident the noose had not been present in the bush on the morning of July 12 and that it had been tied to the bush sometime between 8:30am and 11:15pm on July 12. Further, she believed the noose was meant to intimidate and threaten her and other students of color who were residing at the Storey House, the majority of whom are African American. Since being reported, the Stanford Department of Public Safety (DPS) has been actively investigating this matter.

In addition to interviewing persons living at the Storey House who saw the noose, DPS interviewed individuals residing in the houses in the vicinity of the bush's location that evening and into the morning of July 13. Some witnesses reported that the noose had been present in the bush for at least 2 weeks, which was 1 week prior to when residents who reported the noose moved into the Storey House. These witnesses said the rope that they had observed in the bush looked like the noose that was being shown by the media. Some of these witnesses stated that they had wondered about the purpose of the rope when they moved into their summer housing residence and had even discussed it. They concluded it was most likely used by prior residents to hang ornaments or objects. They had been advised when they moved in not to remove or alter structures at the house or surrounding the house, so they left the rope in the bush. Subsequently, persons responsible for providing landscaping services in the area have stated that the rope had been hanging in the bush for months prior to July 12, 2019.

Given that witnesses provided statements indicating that a noose (or rope) had been in the bush for varying amounts of time, DPS has been attempting to gather information that would clarify when the noose that was observed on July 12 was placed in the tree and whether it was the same or a different configuration from the rope / noose that other witnesses described seeing. DPS is requesting the assistance of anyone who might have information about the noose that was observed on July 12 and who placed it there.

The Department of Public Safety can be reached by calling 650-329-2413 (24/7) or via email at police@stanford.edu. The Department of Public Safety appreciates the cooperation of the Stanford Daily and those that have already offering their assistance.

The following details and photographs are intended to assist with gathering additional information about this incident.

The bush in which the noose was located is in the south end of the front lawn of the Columbae House. The bush is approximately 7-8 feet high. The bush has multiple stems coming from its base. Various stems of the bush have been tied together near the center of the bush using pieces of a green hose. The rope that was used to create the noose is made of nylon and is approximately 1/4" in diameter. The entire length of the rope (if the knots were untied) is approximately 56 inches. The rope was tied to one stem (more commonly referred to as a limb) at a height approximately 3' - 3'6" off the ground.

The picture on the left was provided by the person who saw the noose on July 12. The picture to the right is an enlarged view of the noose that has been digitally enhanced to show the configuration of the knot.



Photo taken by a witness Date: July 12, 2019



Enlarged view

The screenshot below, taken from Google Maps using the street view feature, shows the bush from the intersection of Mayfield Ave looking towards Columbae House. Although difficult to see, when the picture is enlarged, it appears there is a rope hanging from the bush in the same general area of the bush as where the noose was observed in the bush on July 12.



Google Maps

Dated: April 2019

Investigators located a photo of the Columbae House published in the Stanford Daily on March 13, 2019. An enlarged view of the photograph shows the same bush (circled in red in Photo A below) with an item

resembling a rope with a loop attached to it (see red arrow in Photo B). Investigators are trying to determine information about the rope in this photograph.

PHOTO A



Photo taken March 13, 2019

Courtesy of the Stanford Daily

PHOTO B



Enlarged View

Anyone with information about the rope and noose seen in any of these pictures is asked to contact the Stanford Department of Public Safety. The Department of Public Safety can be reached by calling 650-329-2413 (24/7) or via email at police@stanford.edu.