

University Police Department
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A STATE ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT
CHIEF

AGENCY

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
J D Withrow,

COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION

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Tuesday, September 1, 2015

USF Police Identify Person Accused of Making Anonymous Threats on Social Media

The University of South Florida Police Department has identified the person whom community members reported may have made vague and nonspecific anonymous threats on the social media site Yik Yak on Sunday night. On Monday evening investigators spoke to 18-year-old Antonio Romel Taylor, who lives near USF but is not a student at the university. USFPD committed significant resources to this investigation, and with the cooperative assistance of Yik Yak staff, pinpointed Taylor as the person responsible for the posting. During conversations with the officers, Taylor admitted he was engaged in making political statements on the social media site. In the exchange, he provided a sarcastic response when he was accused by another user of planning a shooting. Detectives determined that Taylor was not making a serious threat and did not have a violent act planned. Based on the outcome of the investigation it has been determined that no charges will be brought against Taylor.

Please remember that social media postings are public and any threat of violence made on these sites is subject to all state and federal laws. Threats made against the University of South Florida will be taken seriously, investigated by the USFPD and prosecuted if warranted.

Monday, August 31, 2015

University of South Florida Police Department Community Notification

On August 30, 2015 at approximately 10:00 pm, the University of South Florida Police Department was notified of an anonymous posting on the social media site "Yik Yak", which incorporated a vague and nonspecific threat to USF. The posting has since been removed. However, Yik Yak has been contacted and we are working with them to gather additional information. The USF Police Department is actively investigating any available information at this time.

While no direct threat to USF had been received, we are taking the situation seriously. As we continue to investigate this situation, we are taking necessary precautions, such as allocating additional officers and increasing the visibility of police throughout campus, to protect the USF community. We will update information and/or keep you apprised of any significant changes in the investigation.

Anyone with information regarding the posting is encouraged to contact the University of South Florida Police Department at (813) 974-2628.

The USF community is encouraged to remember the following safety tips:

- Be vigilant and keenly aware of the environment around you.
- Notify the police if anyone or anything looks out of place.
- Report suspicious activity immediately by calling 9-1-1.
- USF students can use the USF SAFE Team safety escort service when on campus (974-SAFE).