

# THE EXPONENT

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WEST LAFAYETTE, IN 47996-2506

Jan. 23, 2014

Carol Shelby, Senior Director, Environmental Health and Public Safety  
Purdue University  
Via email

Dear Ms. Shelby:

At about 12:45 p.m. on Jan. 21, Exponent chief photographer Michael Takeda was stopped inside the Electrical Engineering Building near the skywalk between the EE and Materials and Electrical Engineering building.

Takeda, who was holding Nikon cameras in both hands, identified himself as a photographer for The Purdue Exponent. We understand the heightened sense of alert following the shooting in the Electrical Engineering Building and have no problem that he was stopped, even though that area had not been blocked off by police at the time.

We are, however, registering a formal complaint about the treatment Takeda received by police on Purdue University property.

Our concerns include:

- Takeda was thrown to the ground on top of his camera equipment even after identifying himself as a working media member.
- He was detained for more than two hours by the Purdue University Police Department and no one from the police department attempted to contact publisher Pat Kuhnle, editor-in-chief Saran Mishra or news adviser Carl Abernathy to confirm that Takeda was on assignment for The Purdue Exponent.
- Takeda's cameras were seized in possible violation of the federal Privacy Protection Act. (<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/2000aa>) An officer at the scene took Takeda's cameras and told him they needed "to check them for evidence."
- Purdue police officers made threatening and abusive comments to Takeda both at the Electrical Engineering Building and outside the Purdue police station. At the EE Building, Takeda recalls saying, "Sir, I'm just out taking photos for The Exponent." The officer who pushed him down said The Exponent's already been a "pain in the ass." The officer continued, "Don't sir me, people are getting killed." At the Purdue police station, the officer who took him in said: "You fucking Exponent people are idiots. One of your reporters is an idiot who has already given us trouble. You're lucky you didn't get double-tapped in the chest. I hope you get charged then

thrown out of school. And you know what you'll be doing next year? Working at McDonald's."

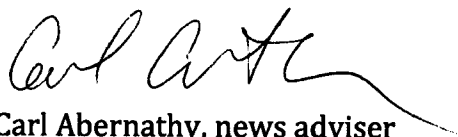
- Though Takeda was detained for more than two hours and questioned by Lt. Fred Davis, he was never asked a question that suggested he was stopped for any reason other than being a photographer on the scene.
- When Takeda was released by Purdue police, he asked for his cameras because he had an assignment later in the evening. Davis told him he didn't know where the cameras were and that he would call Takeda about them.
- Eventually, Capt. Eric Chin did return the camera equipment, but not until it was in police possession for three hours.

From our point of view, this is not the first time our photographers have been subject to harassment from Purdue Police Officers. In fact, in November 2010, Exponent photographer Michael Carney filed a complaint against Officer Jeff Hegg for harassing him at a voting station in Stewart Center. The Exponent never received a response to that complaint.

Furthermore, Chief John Cox agreed to meet with media members on a quarterly basis after the November 2010 incident. In 2011, Cox met with the Exponent staff alongside Fire Chief Kevin Ply and former Purdue spokesman Chris Sigurdson one time. The quarterly meetings never occurred after that.

We expect a formal investigation into why Takeda was detained, why his camera equipment was confiscated and whether Purdue officials – police or otherwise – viewed, tampered, copied or otherwise accessed files on the camera equipment. We also expect an investigation into the abusive comments made by police officers at the scene, en route and at police headquarters. And we expect to receive a report upon the conclusion of that investigation.

Sincerely,



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cc: John Cox, Chief, Purdue University Police Department