

Student faces assault charges

Police say a 22-year-old man is charged with ethnic intimidation after an incident Wednesday.

By Casey McDermott
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A Penn State student faces charges after he swung a knife at another student he had taunted for speaking Spanish, the State College Police Department said.

Robert Skinner, 22, is charged with one count of felony aggravated assault, one count each of a misdemeanor simple assault and ethnic intimidation and one count of a summary offense harassment.

He was arrested in connection with an incident that occurred at about 2:30 a.m. Wednesday outside of the Acacia fraternity house, 234 Locust Lane, police said.

No one was injured as a result of the incident, police said.

Skinner, of Hermitage, Pa., did not return an e-mail requesting comment by press time Wednesday.

Juan Jafit Morales, the student Skinner approached, said he was

walking with two friends near Highland Avenue and Locust Lane when Skinner confronted him for speaking Spanish and asked where he was from.

Morales (senior-industrial engineering) said he told Skinner he was from Colombia.

Skinner then made derogatory statements about Morales' ethnicity, Morales said.

Skinner began to argue and eventually pulled a knife on the student, swinging it at him, Morales said. Morales said he ducked out of the way in time to avoid being cut, but the blade did slice his shirt.

Police said a witness told them Skinner threatened to stab the student, then threw a bottle of liquor on him and charged at him with the knife. The witness told police Skinner then ran into the Acacia fraternity house, police said.

But in a statement provided to police, Skinner denied swinging the blade at Morales.

Skinner told police an argument broke out between three other men and him, and one of the men began swinging punches at him, police said. Skinner said he pulled a knife out and told the men to

leave and also said he made comments to the other men that denounced their Colombian heritage, police said.

Skinner was taken to the Centre County Correctional Facility on Wednesday after he was arrested at the Acacia fraternity house and released for 10 percent of his \$35,000 bail, jail officials said.

A preliminary hearing has been scheduled for Sept. 8 at the Centre County Courthouse, according to court documents.

University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) President and former UPUA Student Life and Diversity Chairman Christian Ragland called news of the incident an "eye-opener" and said he was sorry to hear about the conflict. Ragland (senior-political science) said similar incidents are probably often underreported, and he wants to take this as a cue that Penn State needs to work harder to improve race relations and educate students about diversity.

Morales said many minority students are targeted because of their heritage and their problems too often go unnoticed.

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Tom Ruane/Colegian

A broken elevator in University Towers forces tenants to climb stairs.

Residents annoyed by broken elevator

By Colleen Boyle
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Since the elevator broke in University Towers Apartments this summer, resident James Lenz has taken the stairs to his seventh floor apartment.

After weeks and countless trips up and down the stairs, Lenz said he is furious his requests for a fixed elevator have been ignored.

He noticed the elevator was broken on July 5 — a situation that has left residents without another option to get to their apartments for at least seven weeks.

Lenz (senior-security and risk analysis) blames the apartment company — Associated Realty Property Management (ARPM) — for failing to repair the elevator quickly while he continues to pay his \$900 per month rent.

"You run into people on the stairs and everyone seems angry," he said. "I gotta go down and up and down and up. It's really a pain."

ARPM President Mark Bigatel said control over the repairs has been delegated to the elevator companies Eastern and Otis and is out of his hands. The elevator — which is 12 years old — requires a new computer part, Bigatel said.

After building a new control panel in the elevator, repairmen found that other changes needed to be made and other parts had to be ordered — including pieces yet to be manufactured.

"They found that they needed another part to meet safety

requirements," said Bigatel. "It's been a long four weeks for all of us."

Over the weekend, workers are scheduled to work overtime. By early next week, Bigatel estimated, the work should be complete.

But for now, the elevator remains at a standstill.

Building resident Sam Robins said she notices that other residents are very upset by the lack of an elevator, especially when venturing down to the basement to do laundry. Residents continue to speculate about when they will be able to ditch the stairs, she said.

"There's all this confusion and nobody really knows," Robins (junior-psychology) said. "When we signed our lease, the elevator was considered as part of the convenience. It sucks."

Despite the inconvenience of a broken elevator, Bigatel said his main concern is safety. Ensuring a completely safe elevator, he said, along with complications in the repair work is why the elevator has been out of commission for so long.

"Safety people from the state come in to certify the elevator," he said. "They can't just put a part in and get it going. It has to be all certified and safe."

Still, Lenz said he's outraged by how the company has handled the situation.

"Every time you call about it, they rush you off the phone and we just have to accept it," he said.

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PSU announces TEDx speakers

By Micah Wintner
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

YouTube sensation Jordan "DJ Earworm" Roseman is coming to Penn State in October.

Roseman is one of 14 speakers attending a TEDxPSU event scheduled for Oct. 10. The day's theme is "attend, listen and enlighten." Zach Zimble, president and general of The Lion 90.7 FM, said during a radio announcement of the speakers on The Lion Wednesday night. Zimble (junior-supply chain management and information sciences and technology) said Roseman is famous for his music "mash-up" videos in which he combines several pop songs into one.

Schreyer Honors College Dean Christian Brady said during the announcement that Technology, Entertainment, Design (TED) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1984 dedicated to ideas worth sharing out in the open.

TED features videos of speech-

If you go

What: TEDxPSU event

When: Oct. 10

Where: Schwab Auditorium

Details: Attendees can register at tedxpsu.com

es and talks on its website — ted.com — that have been viewed by more than 250 million people, TEDxPSU executive director Steve Garguilo said.

The X in TEDxPSU signifies an independently organized TED event. The TEDxPSU event is headed by an executive team made up of Information, Science and Technology (IST) alumni and Zimble, a current IST student.

With a list of potential speakers well into the hundreds, Garguilo said it took an organization committee of more than 100 people to reduce the list to 14. The committee wanted to bring in speakers

from outside of Penn State as well as showcase some of Penn State's researchers, Garguilo said.

As Zimble announced the speakers he provided their backgrounds, which ranged from architecture, humanities, business, sociology and more.

Michael Pritchard, inventor of the Lifesaver water purification bottle, and Tonee Ndungu, a media consultant from Kenya, will also speak.

Garguilo said each speaker brings something unique to the podium.

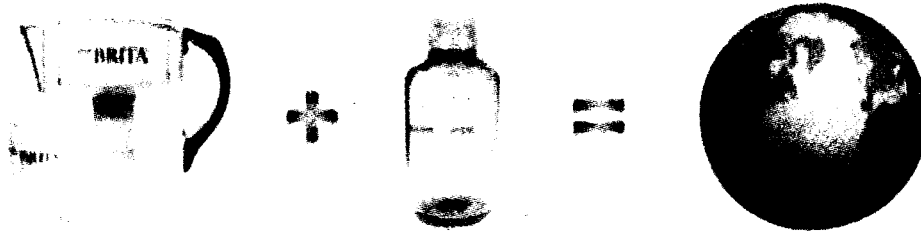
"We are equally excited about everybody," he said. "Everybody is going to have an amazing talk," he said.

Garguilo and his team have been working on the event since March — he is looking forward to seeing all the hard work come together.

"I think TED is truly a revolution of global education," he said.

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