MU police arrest man on suspicion of threatening call to MU Health Care

KATHARINE ROBERTS, 16 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Campus police arrested a 51-year-old man over the weekend on suspicion of making a threatening phone call to University Hospital last week, according to a news release from MU Police.

Ruben Espinosa, 51, was arrested Saturday afternoon in connection to a terrorist threat reported by MU Health Care on Tuesday. Espinosa is not an MU student. He was contacted at his residence in northeast Columbia by campus police. He agreed to come to the MU Police Department to speak with officers, where he was later arrested, according to the release.

Espinosa was sentenced to five years in prison in 2011 for second-degree assault. He was also charged with misdemeanor stealing in 2014.

MU Health Care facility received an anonymous phone message Tuesday from a caller threatening to kill himself and others because he did not receive his medicine, according to the Columbia Daily Tribune. MU Health System employees were notified by email that officials had “implemented enhanced security measures” in all facilities.
MU police allege man threatened hospital via phone

COLUMBIA - The University of Missouri Police Department (MUPD) announced Monday it arrested a Columbia man over the weekend for allegedly threatening University Hospital via phone.

Employees of University Hospital reported receiving the threatening phone call on Oct. 6. MUPD said it arrested Ruben Espinosa, 51, Saturday afternoon and are seeking charges of making a terroristic threat.

MUPD said it would not release any more information, citing an ongoing investigation.

Espinosa was listed as an inmate of the Boone County Jail as of Monday morning. He had a $4,500 bond.

According to court documents, Espinosa previously pleaded guilty to felony assault charges in 2011, after being arrested by Ashland police.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

CARL KENNEY: Diversity training the beginning of a much-needed conversation

CARL KENNEY, 1 hr ago
A long exhale was my response when I saw the email. After a year of meeting to discuss racism at MU, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, with one swift click on the keyboard, mandated all incoming students to complete diversity training before enrolling in classes.

Loftin is also requiring all faculty and staff to complete diversity training. That decision may be met with resistance by a few members of the faculty. Many refused to endorse a plan to add a diversity course as a requirement for all MU students. Members of the faculty contend requiring the course is an infringement on their right to dictate curriculum.

Loftin was trapped in the middle of a bitter fight with students on one end demanding action and faculty on the other refusing to bend. As students waited for more beyond being told to wait, tension on campus began to resemble a mountain bubbling before the eruption. Something had to be done to minimize the fretfulness heading into Homecoming festivities.

Loftin displayed strong leadership in requiring diversity training for students, faculty and staff. He could have opted to limit the training to students. Loftin’s decision reflects his awareness and sensitivity regarding how implicit bias and racism transcends the student body. His action is a bold statement that makes shifting the campus culture a priority that everyone must claim.

Few people applaud Loftin’s email as the end all solution.

“You and your staff will be on the wrong side of history if you continue to erase the voices of marginalized students who fight for their lives and the lives of their friends every day,” Jonathan Butler, a research graduate assistant at MU, wrote in a letter sent to Loftin. “I hope that your staff puts out an additional statement acknowledging these facts because otherwise your words will end up being another shallow message that is not beneficial to the student body.”

Butler, who serves on MU’s Faculty Council committee on race relations, participated in the MU student protest that blocked the car driving University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe in Saturday's Homecoming Parade. The protesters call themselves Concerned Students 1950. 1950 is the year Gus T. Ridgel was admitted as the first black graduate student at MU.
The name Concerned Students 1950 offers a clue related to the philosophy of students who continue to protest. It was on display when students posted notes on the sitting statue of Thomas Jefferson behind Jesse Hall.

“Slave owner, racist, rapist, I wouldn’t be here if up to him, hypocrite and murderer” were messages posted to bring attention to the untold history that led to MU being the first school founded within the territory that Jefferson obtained with the Louisiana Purchase.

A year of perceived silence raised the concerns and demands of black students. It all began with a simple protest after the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. Students peacefully gathered at Speakers Circle to lament Brown’s death. Students waited for a response from Loftin to offset the anxiety they felt before and after the grand jury decided not to press charges against Darren Wilson, the officer who shot and killed Brown.

Discomfort on campus increased after a threat was made to bomb the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center. Reports of racial slurring became more common, and black students began to worry about the climate on campus. Black students sought a more aggressive response after Payton Head, Missouri Student Association president, reported a racial slur was yelled at him by men in a pickup truck.

The last straw was the disruption of the Legion of Black Collegians' rehearsal for a Homecoming performance called "Mis-Educated." A student, who was under the influence, walked onto the stage and used racial slurs toward members of the group.

Now, more than a policy decision is needed to absolve the pain black students feel at MU. Butler’s letter and the Homecoming Parade protest reveal a deeper expectation. Black students want Chancellor Loftin and President Wolfe to acknowledge MU’s racist past. Even more, students want an affirmation that MU’s past, combined with the implicit bias among some members of the faculty, foster a culture that makes it difficult for black students to trust that Loftin’s diversity training will work.
It would help if Loftin makes a statement that speaks to the burden carried by black students in witnessing, on a consistent basis, the symbols of MU’s racist past. Jefferson’s statue is one of many reminders that MU was built by slaves. Beyond that, the black people who work in the service industry on campus remind students of the line drawn by those who use racial slurs to remind them of the places where some white people want them to stay.

Loftin made a bold move to begin conversations involving systematic change. Change is a big pill to swallow, and talking is tough when you’re afraid of what you might say because your mama and daddy used the N-word every day. No one can blame a person for what their parents taught them. I will blame anyone who refuses to consider a better way.

This is not the MU many have come to love. MU is growing beyond the antebellum culture that fuels language that tarnishes its reputation. A much-needed conversation has begun.

Next stop, more change.

MU Students Protest Columbus Day

Watch story:  http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=222c90be-ab5f-42c7-8ec5-02a8e1f7c63c
Crisis Sells: Spinning Data Into Hot Headlines

October 13, 2015
By
Keith R. Martel

NO MENTION

It’s no secret that higher education in America is in a tight spot.

The cost and worth of college is a hot topic -- from dinner parties to political debates. The majority opinion is that college graduates are significantly dissatisfied with what they are receiving for the price of the “product” they receive.

Gallup released its most recent poll data of college and university alumni through its “Gallup-Purdue Index 2015 Report,” which is based on interviews with more than 30,000 graduates. This year, the survey included new questions concerning the “worth” of college. It’s time to step beyond anecdotal evidence and get our hands dirty with some data.

For those of us who fastidiously follow the headlines of Inside Higher Ed and The Chronicle of Higher Education, we initially found that all of our hand-wringing over how the public views higher education might be justified.

Inside Higher Ed led with: “Not Worth It?”

The Chronicle ran: “Just Half of Graduates Strongly Agree Their College Education Was Worth the Cost.” (Note: The article title was changed. The piece was originally entitled, “Just Half of Graduates Say Their College Education Was Worth the Cost.”)

And on Sept. 30, Jeffrey Selingo, former editor of The Chronicle, wrote a piece for The Washington Post entitled, “Is College Worth the Cost? Many Recent Graduates Don’t Think So.”

Yikes. The sky is falling, right?
Well, not really. Each of these headlines seems to insinuate that college grads are disgruntled by the cost of their education. However, if we read beyond the headlines, and take even a quick look at the numbers, we find that the sky isn’t falling.

In fact, maybe things are actually better than we imagined.

Gallup’s chart shows alumni responses to the statement: “My education from [university name] was worth the cost.” Respondents answered on a scale from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). While the headlines suggest that alumni are dissatisfied, I find myself reading these numbers differently.

Even if we assume that an answer of three (3) is indicative of “neutral,” we still find that 77 percent of recent alumni either agree or strongly agree with the statement that their college or university education was worth the cost.

I read the data this way: most grads believe that their education was worth the cost.

That is good news. Even better news is that only 10 percent disagree or strongly disagree. Some additional good news is that, even though the recent graduates who participated in the survey were less likely to think their education was worth the cost, as they get farther and farther away from commencement -- as they are promoted out of entry-level positions -- their satisfaction regarding the cost of education will probably get better (as the Gallup report indicates).

The Gallup report includes significant data -- including factors that lead to student thriving.

But here is my real point: headlines matter.

In our current context bent on scrutinizing higher education, as we look ahead to report cards, and as we struggle to make a case for the import of this sector of society that has been educating citizens in America for nearly four centuries, let’s at least lead with
more accurate headlines -- even if crisis sells.

Here’s what the headlines could have been:
“Is College Worth the Cost? Only 10 Percent of Grads Don’t Think So.”

Same numbers. Entirely different story.

**BIO**

*Keith R. Martel is director of the Master of Arts in Higher Education at Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Penn. He is the co-author of the newly released Storied Leadership, a faith-based, narrative approach to leadership.*