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UMass Boston Student Held on \$20k Bail for Allegedly Calling in 2 Bomb Threats in Past Week

By **Matt Rocheleau**

Boston.com Staff

APRIL 23, 2014 1:08 PM

A senior at the University of Massachusetts Boston was ordered to be held on \$20,000 cash bail today after he was charged with allegedly using off-campus pay phones to call in two bomb threats to the school in the past week, authorities said.

Dean Beckford, 29, of Somerville, allegedly told police he was “not doing so good” in classes when he was arrested Tuesday afternoon by university police as he arrived on campus, according to the Suffolk County District Attorney’s office.

However, when questioned by police, Beckford did not directly address the accusations against him, prosecutors said in Dorchester District Court today, adding that investigators said they stopped questioning him after he



asked to speak to an attorney.

A plea of not guilty was automatically entered on Beckford's behalf when he was arraigned on two counts of making a bomb threat in connection with calls he allegedly made to the university on Tuesday and last Thursday.

On both dates shortly before 1 p.m., buildings were evacuated after the dean's office in Wheatley Hall received a call threatening that there would soon be an explosion in the building, UMass Boston said in a statement.

Boston Police and State Police bomb squads using K-9 units searched the

area each time but found no explosive devices and reopened the buildings.

Campus police traced the first call to a pay phone at the Davis MBTA station in Somerville and later traced the second call to a pay phone on Tremont Street near the Park Street MBTA station, according to prosecutors.

UMass Boston police worked with Transit Police to collect surveillance camera footage of the call being made from Davis Station. Authorities identified Beckford after matching him that footage and other footage from cameras on campus, prosecutors said. University faculty helped investigators identify Beckford.

Judge Lisa Grant ordered that, if Beckford posts bail, he wear a GPS device and surrender both of his passports to the court, the district attorney's office said.

His next court date is scheduled for May 19, the district attorney's office said.

Beckford's attorney Scott Lauer could not immediately be reached for comment this afternoon.

“Although we apologize for the inconvenience that these incidents caused for students, faculty, and staff, campus safety is always our highest priority,” UMass Boston Police Chief Donald Baynard said in a statement.

“I commend my staff for their timely and thorough investigation that led to this arrest,” he added. “I hope this will be a clear and resounding message that we take these types of actions very seriously, and will aggressively investigate and pursue criminal charges when unfounded threats are made to the safety of the campus.”

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at matthew.rocheleau@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter [@mrochele](https://twitter.com/mrochele).



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A federal judge in Washington ordered the U.S. military on Friday to at least




temporarily stop force-feeding a hunger striking prisoner at the Guantanamo Bay naval base.

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Genetically modified foods have been around for years, but most people in the United States have no idea if they are eating them.

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A convicted sex offender who killed his 12-year-old niece after luring her to his house with a ruse about a pool party is due to be formally sentenced to life without the possibility of



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Campgrounds in New Hampshire's White Mountain National Forest are open, but the Forest Service is warning people that some areas still have snow, and spring melt-off can lead to some slippery footing.

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Connecticut lawmakers moved forward this week on a new nutrition bill that could remove chocolate milk from public schools.

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The girls lacrosse team at Exeter High School is honoring their late coach Stephen Arkell, a New Hampshire police officer who was killed in the line of duty.

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Celebrating 10 Years of Gay Marriage

On May 17, 2004, Massachusetts offered the first marriage licenses to same-sex couples. We asked five couples to talk about what they've learned about themselves and their relationships over the past decade.

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10 Parting Shots at SNL Heading Into The Season Finale

Here are "10 Parting Shots at SNL" as the show's 39th season comes to a close Saturday night with Andy Samberg as host.

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Environmentalists will rally at the Deering Oaks Park bandshell in Portland to oppose the Keystone XL oil pipeline and the shipping of tar sands oil through Maine.

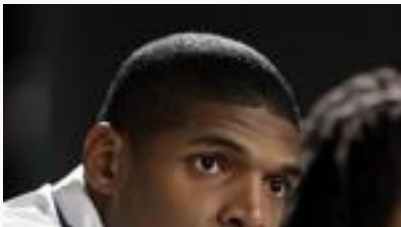
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Broke Beats: F.Stokes – ‘Liquor Sto’ Diaries’



Broke Beats is BDCwire’s open-source hip-hop column. Every Saturday, we showcase the best new albums, EPs, and mixtapes available for free stream or download. The Midwest has long been a stronghold for spirited rappers and producers who haven’t quite pierced the East Coast market. F.Stokes is among the most fearless of of these artists, and the... [Read more »](#)

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Oprah’s Network Postpones Sam Documentary



The planned documentary by the Oprah Winfrey Network on Michael Sam, the NFL's first openly gay player, has been postponed.

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Woman Falls Down Elevator Shaft at Fenway Park

A 22-year-old woman is hospitalized after falling down an elevator shaft at Fenway Park Friday during a Red Sox game, according to the Boston Fire Department.

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Obama, Congress Move to Address Veterans Affairs Firestorm



The Obama administration and Congress are moving quickly to respond to a growing political firestorm over allegations of treatment delays and falsified records at veterans hospitals nationwide.

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Conn. Exhibit Looks at Benedict Arnold as Hero

A new exhibit on display at the Slater Memorial Museum is the latest effort to bring heightened visibility to a subject Norwich has deliberately ignored for centuries.

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Testing Inconclusive, Suspected Bobcat Returned

A judge has returned a 38-pound feline to a New Jersey woman after DNA testing couldn't conclusively say whether it was a purebred bobcat.

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Clearing This Afternoon with Sunshine for Sunday

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Nissan's Taxi of Tomorrow Hoping for a Fare Future



Members of the New England Motor Press Association had the dual experiences of driving and riding in this Taxi of Tomorrow when Nissan brought a pair of the hackney versions of its NV200 van to town.

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Teen's Arm Reattached After Pasta Accident

Four surgeries later, 17-year-old Brett Bouchard can move his arm after it was severed below the elbow.



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Red Sox Fall to Tigers, 1-0, Back Under .500





The loss drops the Sox back below .500, at 20-21, and 10-12 at home.

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North Reading Man Busted Allegedly Selling Drugs Out of Restaurant



Richard "Ricky" Ward faces a number of drug charges following a six-month investigation by police.

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Feds Deny Tsarnaev Lawyers' Complaint About Leaks

Federal prosecutors say there's no need for a hearing on what defense attorneys have called leaks and improper comments in the case of Boston Marathon bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev.

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