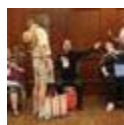
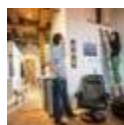


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Wentworth sends errant warning of gunman on campus

By **Matt Rocheleau** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT JUNE 20, 2014



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Wentworth Institute of Technology officials sent out an erroneous schoolwide alert Thursday night saying there was a gunman inside a campus building and warning students to “shelter in place.”

On Friday, school officials said that while there were reports of gunfire at an adjacent off-campus public housing development, there was never a shooter on campus. The college did not explain how the mistake occurred.

“In situations where there may be an issue of a threat to the safety of our community, we will always advise our students to exercise an abundance of caution until the facts of a situation can be determined,” said a statement from Amy Intille, chief of staff for Wentworth president Zorica Pantić.

The false alert rattled some on the campus, located in a part of Boston where the Fenway, Mission Hill, and Roxbury neighborhoods converge. Messages posted on social media reflected the unease.

“Man, did they catch these guys yet! I can’t sleep till everyone’s safe,” one Twitter user wrote before learning the reports of an “active shooter” were not true.

Others said they were angered by the mistake. “Seriously disappointed in this disgusting display of erroneous communication. Keep us safe, not guessing,” wrote a Twitter user who described himself as a rising junior at Wentworth.

The confusion began shortly after 10 p.m., when Boston police received a report of “shots fired” at the Alice Heyward Taylor Housing Complex on Annunciation Road, along the eastern edge of Wentworth’s campus, said Bill Powers, public safety director at Wentworth.

He said Boston police notified the school’s Public Safety Department, which then alerted members of the campus community via Wentworth’s emergency notification system.

The system can send alerts via e-mail and text message to students, faculty, staff, parents, and others who sign up for the service.

According to photos of text messages posted online, an initial alert said: “Be advised shots fired on Annunciation Road.”

A subsequent alert sent about 10 minutes later said: “Active shooter in building ----- . Lock all doors and windows. Shelter in place and await further instructions.”

The next alert, sent about 20 minutes later, said: “Reports of shots fired on Annunciation Road. *No active shooter on campus.*”

Finally, a fourth alert said: “To reiterate, there is and was no active shooter ever on campus. Shots were fired on Annunciation Rd and shooters immediately fled. BPD investigates.”

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