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Massasoit student held, another suspect sought in sex assaults

By [Evan Allen](#) and [Matt Rocheleau](#)

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BROCKTON — Police arrested one man Wednesday and are searching for another in two separate assaults in four days at Massasoit Community College in Brockton, as school officials stepped up police presence on campus and urged students to be vigilant.

Massasoit student Eliphete Pierre, 22, was held on \$25,000 cash bail after pleading not guilty in Brockton District Court Wednesday to charges of rape and indecent assault and battery on a person 14 or over, in allegedly sexually assaulting another student in the woods near the college on Friday, Sept. 19. He was arrested Wednesday by Brockton police.

Massasoit Community College Police are still investigating a separate indecent assault and battery that occurred Monday, when a female student told officers she was attacked in a campus hallway by a man who identified himself as a first-year

student.

“People are definitely on heightened alert; people are walking around on a buddy system,” said college spokeswoman Laurie Maker, who added that community members are still out and about, and the campus is bustling.

Police have stepped up foot, bike, and cruiser patrols and are offering escorts for students who want them to their classes or cars, she said. Staff has been passing out safety tip sheets, she said.

In Brockton District Court Wednesday, Assistant Plymouth District Attorney Shanan Buckingham asked Judge Ronald Moynihan to revoke Pierre’s bail on a previous case from Stoughton, which Pierre’s attorney said was a minor motor vehicle case.

“Based on the nature of the new offense, the Commonwealth believes that further release could endanger the community,” Buckingham said.

Moynihan denied the request. Defense attorney Jennifer Gonzalez argued that there were major problems with the case against her client, including the fact that the female student was unable to pick out Pierre in a photo array.

“I think there’s a real problem here that she can’t identify him,” said Gonzalez. She also argued that the woman was depressed, suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder, and was taking several different medications. Gonzalez said the woman wanted a more serious relationship with Pierre than Pierre wanted.

According to prosecutors, Pierre and the woman met Sept. 15 and exchanged phone numbers. The victim knew Pierre as Ali Pires, according to court documents. The two allegedly met Sept. 19 on the Massasoit campus and walked into the woods.

Pierre allegedly spread a plastic bag on the ground, began kissing the woman, and then sexually assaulted her, according to court documents. The woman ran away, according to the documents, but Pierre allegedly followed her with her backpack, and the two talked briefly, and she repeatedly told him no.

The woman reported the alleged assault to police on Sept. 22. Brockton police tracked Pierre down using cellphone records, according to court documents. The woman could not pick him out of a photo array, but Pierre allegedly told police he went by Ali Pires, knew the woman, and had met up with her Sept. 19.

He allegedly told police that their interaction was consensual, but when the woman became “kinda scared,” it ended. He said the two planned to meet again Monday, but the plan fell through.

On Wednesday evening, students on campus said they were shaken by the news of the assaults, but appreciated the police presence.

Johanne Jean, 36, said she feels safe on campus, but was unnerved by the knowledge that other students could be predators.

“You don’t know who and when,” she said.

Pierre has been suspended from the college, Buckingham said.

Campus police said they were investigating and asked anyone with information to call authorities at 508-427-1296 or at an anonymous tip line, 508-427-1210, or to fill out a confidential online tip form at www.massasoit.mass.edu/mccpd/tipform.

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