

Campus Politics Turn Violent at Lake Superior State University

Contributed by Douglas Anger
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SAULT SAINTE MARIE, MI. Tuesday, November 4 marked a historic day for the peaceful transfer of power between opposing political parties, but it also demonstrated the extent of a less peaceful political controversy on the campus of Lake Superior State University.

As previously reported in The Compass, on Wednesday, October 29, Student Government President Joseph Cantwell admitted to embezzling University funds to give meals to members of the LSSU Cross Country team.

After Cantwell's admission, a number of students expressed their sentiment that Cantwell had tainted the Office of President and should resign. When no resignation was forthcoming, student Diana Jensen requested an impeachment petition from the LSSU Student Judiciary Board on November 4.

Jensen and a few like-minded students spent much of the day collecting the signatures required to bring the impeachment to hearing. The group began to meet opposition when two students started shouting at them in the campus dining hall, eventually attracting the attention of food service personnel.

Later that night, letters from Cantwell appeared in the Walker Cisler Student and Conference Center stating that Cantwell believed he was "more than adequate" as a representative of the students and requesting students who disagree "contact Diana Jensen."

Between 10:15 and 10:45 Tuesday night, someone did just that.

Jensen told The Compass that as she was walking near the east end of the Townhouses she was assaulted by a male approximately six feet tall with dark hair and medium build.

Jensen said the man asked her if she was involved in the petition and, when she answered in the affirmative, shouted an expletive and hit her in the face with a set of keys.

The attack was reported to the LSSU Public Safety Department and an investigation is currently underway. Jensen withdrew the petition with the hope of avoiding further violence.

"I wish people wouldn't take school politics so seriously," Jensen told The Compass. "It's not worth getting hurt over."

At the request of the LSSU Public Safety Department, the Student Judiciary Board has sealed the petition to protect the students who signed from further attacks.

On Wednesday, November 5, Cantwell, in blue jeans and a cross country team jacket, walked into the Anchor Room at Cisler Center, called to order the meeting of the Student Government, and resigned without explanation, leaving the gavel to Chair Pro Tem Kayla Robertson.

While The Compass has received reports of other threats against signers of the petition even after Cantwell's resignation, no substantive evidence has been found linking Cantwell to the attack. "I had nothing to do with having it done or doing it," said Cantwell.

All reports to The Compass have indicated females as the targets of these threats.

The Compass encourages all students to exercise reasonable caution when away from home. Being aware of surroundings, walking with friends instead of alone, and avoiding areas with little traffic are all ways of reducing the risk of becoming a victim. In addition, the LSSU Public Safety Department is available to escort students twenty-four hours a day.

Students should report any information they may have about Tuesday's attack to the LSSU Public Safety Department.