

# DPS responsible for campus safety

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The library closes. You head back to East Quad after a long night of studying. You drowsily slumber to your room to catch a little sleep before tomorrow's test. But wait! Your stereo is missing. Your TV is gone too. You've been robbed! What do you do now?

It is time to call the University's official police force — the Department of Public Safety. DPS has served as the University's police department since 1990.

Since that time, the department has fought crime and protected campus, but also stirred up some controversy along the way.

## HISTORY

Prior to 1990, the University's safety was ensured by security officers, not police officers. Security officers could not make arrests and did not carry guns.

Anytime campus security needed police help, it had to call the Ann Arbor Police Department for assistance. Many believed this system did not work.

A 1990 survey found that 62 percent of University affiliates were afraid to walk at night alone and 81 percent of women were concerned about being sexually assaulted on campus. The University administration was also concerned about slow response times by AAPD officers.

A March 1990 task force determined that "all major crimes, with the exception of murder" were a problem at the University. The task force also concluded that "organization and management of campus safety and security activities is highly decentralized and somewhat uncoordinated."

The University had heard enough — in June 1990 the University Board of Regents voted 6-to-1 in favor of establishing a University police force.

And DPS was formed.

By becoming a legitimate police force, DPS officers were trained as police officers and not simply security officers. They were now permitted to make arrests and carry guns.

Ann Arbor had a new crime-fighting agency.

## SERVICES

Among the official duties of the 30 authorized DPS officers is the task of fighting and preventing crime on University property and protecting anyone affiliated with the University.

If a crime is committed on University property, DPS should be contacted.

The department has implemented a number of programs designed to prevent and fight crime.

One of the most noticeable of these programs is the blue emergency telephones located across campus.

"The blue phones are for students to report an

emergency," said DPS spokesperson Elizabeth Hall. "When you pick it up, you connect directly to DPS dispatch."

Although DPS discourages students from walking alone at night, they have strategically placed the telephones throughout campus for students in danger.

Hall said that even if the student is unable to speak, whenever the phone is knocked off the hook, DPS will respond.

To help students and faculty better protect themselves and their belongings, DPS has distributed fliers and implemented programs to better ensure safety.

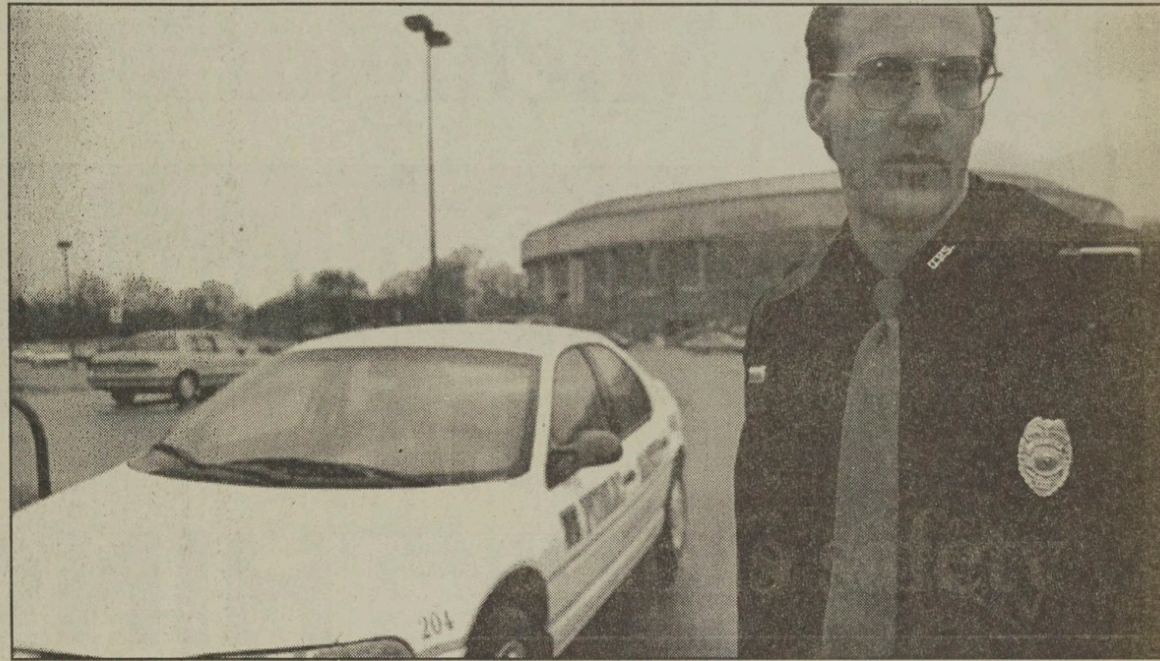
Programs, including the Building Watch Program and Community Oriented Policing, were designed to allow people get involved in preventing crimes.

"DPS emphasizes prevention and education," Hall said.

Hall said students need to be aware of steps they can take to protect their belongings. Larceny was the most prevalent crime on campus last year.

DPS suggests students lock their rooms whenever they leave, lock their bikes, lock their cars and report any suspicious persons or activities.

Statistics show crime on campus has steadily declined since DPS was formed.



Greg Nowak, an Ann Arbor native and a Department of Public Safety officer, shows one of the new Dodge Stratuses DPS began using in April. The cars have a block "M" painted on the side.

FILE PHOTO

In 1990, more than 2,600 crimes were reported to DPS, including 2,213 larcenies.

Each year since, the number has gone down. By 1994, the total number of crimes had declined 23 percent from the 1990 total. Only last year did the campus crime rate rise slightly.

## CONTROVERSY

Like any other law enforcement agency, DPS has had to face its fair share of controversy.

The fall of 1990 saw some of the largest student protests on campus since the 1960s. Many students felt threatened by a police force controlled by the University.

Rallies and sit-ins were held to protest the deputization of campus security. Students voiced their concerns about the new power the University gained from DPS.

Then-Michigan Student Assembly President Jennifer Van Valey told The Michigan Daily in September 1990 that the regents were using DPS to serve their "own repressive agenda."

"They're trying to make us believe deputization is for our own safety," she said.

Van Valey claimed DPS was formed as a way for the University to keep a better eye on students.

More recently, DPS has been the center of attention since the arrest of John Matlock, director of the office of academic multicultural initiatives.

## University Crime

Crime	1993	1994	1995
Murder	0	1	0
Forcible Rape	6	5	4
Robbery	7	9	16
Aggravated Assault	31	24	24
Arson	22	37	23
Burglary	183	166	165
Larceny	1,714	1,704	1,927
Car theft	39	36	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,012</b>	<b>1,999</b>	<b>2,219</b>

Two DPS officers arrested the OAMI director at a charity basketball event for allegedly assaulting an officer.

The misdemeanor charges were later dismissed on the morning jury selection was to begin after the two officers wrote a letter to the judge asking that the charges be dropped.

But, still, the arrest brought changes to DPS, including the restructuring of an oversight committee to better monitor the department.

The Department of Public Safety has worked to help fight crime on the University campus. Meeting some problems along the way, DPS has been successful in lowering crime on campus.

So if you find your stereo is missing or someone is following you, the next step is to call DPS