

April 11, 2020

Dear Ms. Salvini,

I am writing you out of a matter of urgency and at the recommendation of Coach Tanner. Due to an NTV I received Friday at 6:30 pm to be removed from campus, I am now in a dangerous situation both personally and academically. I am stunned to learn that the incident that occurred resulted in a write up/incident report; an action that will leave me homeless at the height of a pandemic. I would greatly appreciate your time in considering this situation.

I was hitting golf balls on the sidewalk on the southwest side of Blalock Hall towards the driving range using a golf mat supplied by Coach Tanner. I am the golf team. I would pause for any vehicles or pedestrians that were passing giving them the courtesy to go about without interruption. A forklift approached and I waited for it to pass and then it turned up the sidewalk towards me. The gentleman stopped about fifteen feet away and turned off the forklift and stared at me for a moment. He then said to me, "You know the campus is closed to the public." I responded by saying, "Yes, sir." He paused again and then asked me if I was an employee. I replied, "No sir." He then repeated, "Well, the campus is closed to the public." I then responded, "I am a student here, I stay in Winona." He then said, "well I don't see a sticker in your front window." I assured him one was there. He then told me that I should be hitting balls across the street at the golf course. I told him there was not a golf course across the street. He then chuckled for a moment and corrected himself and said the driving range. I told him that I hit balls out here every

evening from different locations and my current location was one of them. He paused and then said, "I'm just trying to keep you safe." I replied, "safe from what?" He then pointed to the construction guys on the north end of Blalock fixing the roof. I told him that I felt ok and safe with my distance. He paused and then told me I needed to move over to the driving range. I said, "Ok, that's all you had to say initially. I hope you're happy now." I proceeded to pick up my equipment. He started his forklift and headed back onto the street and then drove up to my car to examine the windshield further without getting out of his forklift at any time. Once he identified the sticker, I asked him, "Do you feel better now?" As I was moving my golf bag, mat, and range balls towards the street, he turned around and drove towards me. He asked me for my student ID. I told him I did not have my ID me; it was in my dorm. He then told me that I needed to move my car because it was in a "no parking" zone. I then said to him that there aren't any signs posted and nobody, including security, has asked me to move my car over the past three weeks. He repeated, "Your car is not supposed to be parked there." He turned around to drive away. I then asked him, "Are you on some kind of power trip?" He proceeded to drive off while saying, "I'm going to take a picture and have your car ticketed or towed." I said, "You're being an asshole." He then said, "Did you just call me an asshole?" I said to him, "NO! I said you're being one!" He turned around once more and then drove north on Perimeter Rd. towards Winona. Shortly after a gentleman in a hard hat drove up in a pick-up truck and began to look at the workers on the roof. We greeted one another and then I asked him who was the gentleman in the forklift. He told me it was Steve LaCour, the head of facilities. I had placed my mat on the south side of the road near the range and continued hitting balls.

Minutes later, Mr. LaCour passed by on his forklift and a few minutes after that the security guard came walking up the

hill from the Winona area. I met him under the tree, we had a pleasant exchange, and he asked my name and I told him. He then asked for my ID, which I responded that it was in my dorm. He told me I could continue hitting balls, but I had to move my car. I mentioned that this was the first time anybody has said that to me after all this time. I also told him that due to the conditions of the grass I began to use the mat and how I hit from various, safe areas onto the driving range. I told him that I was going to leave because I no longer felt like practicing at that point and that Mr. LaCour was on some sort of power trip and could have addressed the situation differently. I packed up my belongings and headed back to Winona. As I arrived Ernie and Clayton were standing outside in front of the building. I began talking and laughing with Ernie and asked him what just happened. He shrugged and laughed, and I then proceeded to tell him everything that I listed in my exchange with Mr. LaCour.

According to the NTV, the Level II action “for violence indicating threats to one of more federal employees” is extreme and simply not true. At no point did I approach Mr. LaCour or say anything that would imply a threat or violence. At the most, my mood towards the end of that exchange was irritable as my actions showed to leave all together and return to my dorm where I engaged in a conversation with housing staff. They can verify that my mood was in no way negative or hostile. Furthermore, anybody that I have encountered on this campus can verify that my behaviors have been nothing close to what was described. At the beginning of the exchange, the gentleman did not identify himself as staff which explains my initial apprehension. As the conversation progressed, I felt targeted due to my appearance as a large person and non-traditional student who is not immediately recognizable as Native. The result of that has led to a dire situation that will directly affect my health and my ability to complete the semester; a situation that I did nothing to cause. This incident also has a long-term affect

because a police report was filed according the paperwork I received and there is no place for that on my permanent record. Up to this point, I have felt completely supported by everyone at this university and now I am homeless.

I implore you to please consider the dire position that I am in.

Sincerely,

Russell Parker