

Purdue University placed on lockdown after fatal shooting of teaching assistant

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22 January 2014

A teaching assistant was shot and killed Tuesday at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, in what authorities are describing as a targeted school shooting. The gunman killed 21-year-old Andrew Boldt inside Purdue's electrical engineering building. The alleged shooter, Cody Cousins of Centerville, Ohio, is now in custody after surrendering himself to police outside the building where the incident took place.

The tragic episode is the latest of several killings or woundings that have taken place on college campuses and at schools in the United States in just the past two weeks.

The shooting took place around noon while classes were in session. According to the *Purdue Exponent*, the university's daily student newspaper, the incident occurred in the classroom of electrical engineering professor D.G. Meyer. A student in the adjacent classroom told the *Lafayette Journal & Courier* that he heard two shots and loud shouts of "get down, get down!" Several photos have appeared showing a young male being walked out of the building in handcuffs by police.

The school was immediately placed on lockdown. Police arrived 25 minutes after the incident occurred. By 1:30 p.m., students were told the school was secure and that people could move about freely. Purdue's provost, Tim Sands, standing in for the school's president, Mitch Daniels (the right-wing, former Bush administration official), who is traveling in Colombia, announced that classes would be canceled for the rest of Tuesday and Wednesday.

The police have stated that Cousins, 23, has been arrested on suspicion of murder, without bail. Boldt is said to be from Wisconsin. According to CBS Chicago, "both were teaching assistants in the Electrical Engineering department."

Purdue University Police Chief John Cox told a press conference that there had been "little to no cooperation" so far from the alleged shooter. Cox said that the shooter "seemed to have had intentions for the decedent." There is currently no known motive for the shooting.

Incidents such as this one at Purdue University, one of the top research universities in the country, known in particular for its engineering program, are all too commonplace in the US. Only the night before, a student was shot and severely wounded in a parking lot at Widener University in suburban Philadelphia in an act police described as "not a random act of violence."

Additionally, there were three other school shootings over the past week. On January 14, a middle school student in Roswell, New Mexico, opened fire with a sawed-off shotgun in a school gymnasium, seriously wounding two fellow students, 12 and 13 years old.

In Philadelphia on January 17, two students were injured by a student who smuggled a gun past metal detectors at a charter school. The student purportedly sought to defend himself from an assault once school got out. Finally, also on Friday, a student was shot in the arm in Albany, Georgia, near a high school.

At least 78 people died from mass shootings in the US in 2013.



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