

Proud Boys assault students at University of California, Davis ahead of right-wing Turning Point USA event

Jacob Crosse
28 October 2022

On Tuesday night, prior to a scheduled appearance by far-right Turning Point USA operative Stephen Davis at the University of California, Davis, members of the Proud Boys militia group assaulted students, community members and anti-fascist protesters.

A fight between roughly 100 students and right-wing elements lasted for over 20 minutes, with no police or security intervening to stop the mayhem.

Video footage shows students suffering from the effects of pepper spray, and men dressed in black and yellow, the traditional colors of the far-right militia group, hurling metal barricades at students. It is unclear how many people were injured. However, as of this writing, no arrests have been made.

One of the Proud Boys who engaged in the assault has been identified by California anti-fascists and local media as Jeffrey Perrine. Perrine, 38, previously lost a bid for the California State Assembly and is currently running for a seat on a Sacramento-area school board.

In a video posted online during the attack, Perrine, speaking to an associate, admits that Proud Boys are on campus and that the police won't interfere unless called upon by the Proud Boys.

Referring to the police, Perrine says, "They're not gonna come cause they know we're here. They want us to fight them."

Speaking to KCRA3, the local NBC affiliate, Will Alpers, a recent UC Davis graduate who was pepper-sprayed by fascists on Tuesday, said the violence began when the Proud Boys showed up.

"The Proud Boys came and they instigated fights and they hurt people with mace and fistfighting and scuffles and throwing things," Alpers said. "So it does cross a line at some point from speech to violence."

Independent photo journalist @pinkknightpress, reporting on the ground Tuesday night, said that the Proud Boys waited to launch their attack on the counter-protesters until it

had grown dark. The photo journalist reported that the Proud Boys used their "fists, a baton, and bear mace."

The statement continued: "The fascists took potshots at students who were scattered by their chemical irritants. A man in a black Proud Boys shirt punched a ... student in the head, knocking them to the ground where they landed silent..."

Like the Proud Boy assault on Penn State students the day before, the fascists were allowed to commit felonies without any intervention by the police or private security.

In a statement released on October 26, the university admitted that "UC Davis police were on site," and that they "worked with Student Affairs to monitor the protest in real time and make decisions quickly."

"They were on stand-by when fighting broke out," the statement continued, "but the situation de-escalated on its own, eliminating the need for the police to engage."

The university claimed, "No serious injuries were reported."

The same statement said the decision to cancel the event was made by the students who organized it because of safety concerns, with staff from Student Affairs agreeing that "there was grave danger should the event continue."

"It is unfortunate that the event could not proceed as planned," the statement read. "As a public institution, UC Davis values and supports freedom of expression as rights guaranteed to every citizen. When the students agreed to cancel the event, UC Davis Student Affairs staff successfully evacuated the students and speaker from the building."

The event, titled "Systemic Racism Isn't Real," was sponsored by the student chapter of Turning Point USA (TPUSA) at UC Davis. TPUSA was founded by Charlie Kirk and Bill Montgomery in 2012.

After the university released its statement, Kirk attacked "far left Antifa agitators" on Twitter, falsely claiming they had provoked the violence.

Like Monday's "comedic" event at Penn State headlined

by Proud Boys founder Gavin McInnes, titled “Stand Back and Stand By,” a reference to former President Donald Trump’s command to the Proud Boy militia group during his September 2020 debate with Joe Biden, Tuesday’s event at UC Davis was not a legitimate expression of “free speech,” but a deliberate provocation by Republican-backed groups and militia elements seeking to violently assault left-wing students and community members.

The scheduled speaker for Tuesday’s event was Stephen Davis, who goes by the moniker “MAGA Hulk.” As a regular contributor to Turning Point USA, Davis writes “columns,” hosts a podcast and speaks at Turning Point USA events.

In a March 17, 2022, article headlined “LGBTQ Nation Is Coming For Our Children,” published on TPUSA.com, Davis wrote: “The left is waging war on your rights to raise your children ... we have to fight back. The LGBTQ movement is an army of dust; the moment we challenge them, they melt into victimhood and slither back under the rock they came out of... Fight back, don’t be silent. The left wants to corrupt your children. Will you fight tooth and nail for them? Or will you sit back and watch it happen?”

Unsurprisingly, Davis attended Donald Trump’s “Save America” rally at the Ellipse outside the White House on January 6, 2021. It is unknown if he participated in the storming of the Capitol.

Kirk’s organization (Montgomery died from COVID-19 in 2020) has become the largest right-wing student movement in the country, thanks to generous funding from wealthy sponsors. Turning Point USA’s first major donor was Foster Friess of Friess Associates. The Friess family, including son Steve and his wife Polly, enjoy close connections with the billionaire Koch family.

Charlie Kirk himself has previously acknowledged the immense support his organization, with an \$8 million yearly budget, receives from the fossil fuel industry, telling the *New Yorker* in 2017 that some donors of TPUSA are “in the fossil fuel space.” Kirk is regular speaker at the Conservative Political Action Conference as well as Turning Point USA events such as the Student Action Summit and America Fest.

TPUSA claims to have over 1,400 chapters on college campuses across the US. Through these chapters aspiring Republican operatives and politicians invite known fascists and racists to college campuses under the guise of “free speech” and “debate.”

Far from embracing open and free democratic discussion, under Kirk, Turning Point USA has spearheaded Republican efforts to demonize public and college education and target professors deemed to be liberal or left-wing.

Turning Point USA not only hosts a “Professors Watch List,” which includes photos, names and locations of

“radical professors,” but has expanded to include a “School Boards Watch List.” This, according to the website, is “dedicated to protecting our children by exposing radical and false ideologies.” These include “anti-American, radical, hateful, immoral, and racist teachings... Critical Race Theory, the 1619 Project, sexual/gender ideology, and more.”

Kirk was an avid supporter of Trump’s efforts to overturn the 2020 election. After Trump’s defeat by Joe Biden, Kirk organized in support of the “Stop the Steal” effort.

To this day, his organization continues to propagate the lie that the election was stolen. In a since-deleted January 4, 2021, tweet, Kirk wrote, “The team at @TrumpStudents & Turning Point Action are honored to help make this happen, sending 80+ full buses full of patriots to DC to fight for this president.”

Kirk not only has access to, but partakes in high-level strategy sessions with the Republican elite. The *Guardian* reported in September 2021 that Kirk is a member of the Council for National Policy (CNP).

Members of CNP include executives from major right-wing organizations such as the Koch-affiliated American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and the American Conservative Union. The president of the Federalist Society, Eugene Mayer, the president of Americans for Tax Reform, Grover Norquist, and the president and CEO of the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, Richard Graber, are all members.

Host of the War Room podcast Steve Bannon and Virginia “Ginni” Thomas, wife of arch-reactionary Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, are also members of the CNP.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact