

Safe and sound?

On-campus burglaries spark discussion of security

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Tulane's students and administrators saw a string of on-campus burglaries this weekend that raised questions about residence hall security. Non-affiliate Tyree Courtney gained entry to multiple residence halls before walking into at least seven unlocked rooms.

Tulane University Police Department arrested Courtney at 9:30 p.m. Sunday on two charges of unauthorized entry in Sharp Hall and one charge of simple burglary. The three charges were part of a number of on-campus crimes that TUPD is still investigating. Police linked Courtney to further incidents, but it is unclear if there will also be additional charges.

A freshman resident* woke up at 5:45 a.m. Sunday morning in her Josephine-Louise Hall room when she saw and heard a figure at the end of her bed going through her roommate's wallet. When she asked who was there, the intruder walked out of her room and she followed him out into the hallway to find him standing by the bathroom.

"Out of the corner of my eye I saw him leaning against the hallway wall," she said. "I turned around and jumped. I screamed, and I [said] 'Who are you' and he said 'Oh I'm just looking for somebody.' My RA's door was right there so I just started pounding."

The resident and her Residential Advisor reported the incident to TUPD. She reported that the intruder was wearing a green polo shirt and a Tulane baseball cap. Police then began looking through security camera footage in the area and in other residence halls for a man fitting that description. The footage did not capture the intruder in the JL hallway as the building only has one camera at the front.

Cameras across the campus in Sharp Hall did, however, capture footage of a man with similar appearance entering and exiting two rooms. In one room, the man removed a makeup bag, looked through it in the hallway, then returned it to the room before leaving.

Another freshman on-campus resident* was surprised when TUPD knocked on her door on the third floor of Sharp Hall to tell her that a man had been in her room the night before while she was sleeping. She did not notice anything missing despite her money, computer and phone sitting in plain sight.

"I honestly was not aware that any of this happened because I'm a really heavy sleeper," she said.

The footage from Sharp led to Courtney's identification and arrest on two charges of unauthorized entry of an inhabited dwelling and one charge of simple burglary.

"The [JL] victim provided a wonderful description [of Courtney]," TUPD Superintendent Jon Barnwell said. "In doing so based on the date and time of the incident we were able to go back to the cameras for the camera footage. When we pulled it up, the guy walking down the hall looked exactly like the description. It was pretty easy. We just did some legwork and began interviewing people."

TUPD officers identified three other rooms in Sharp Hall

SECURITY 3