News

UCONN REMINDS STUDENTS TO BE AWARE OF THEIR SAFETY IN THE NEW SEMESTER



Members of the UConn police department stand next to members of the Connecticut state police. They participated in the explosive Detection K9 class and training to better prepare themselves to protect students. PHOTO BY @UCONNSAFETY ON INSTAGRAM.

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University of Connecticut students received an email last week reminding them to think about their safety on campus concerning gun violence.

"We...know that campuses are not walled off from the outside world and we may, at times, be confronted by the same public safety emergencies that can happen anywhere, anytime," Associate Vice President for University Safety and Chief of Police Gene Labonte said in the email.

He reminded students about the Brown University shooting that took place last December.

On Dec. 13, a shooter entered Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island and killed two students and harming others, according to Christina H. Paxson, the university's president.

The shooting happened within the school's engineering and physics building in the afternoon. The university informed the community to shelter in place, Paxson said in an announcement.

During and after the shooting some areas of campus were closed off due to being an active crime scene, Paxson said.

The UConn Police Department participates in intensive training and preparation for numerous emergency scenarios, including an active shooter, Labonte said. UConn has an emergency communications system known as UConnALERT that would be used to alert the community in case of a situation, he said.

"One of the most important steps you can take right now is to sign up to receive UConnALERT text message notifications on your cell phone about emergencies, schedule changes, cancellations, and other important information," Labonte said.

"Instructions can be found under the "Get Alerts" section of the UConnALERT page," according to Labonte.

In case of an active shooter UConn will tell community members to find shelter behind a locked door and stay there, Labonte said.

He recommends that students move away from danger and, as a last resort, defend themself using any means possible.

A protocol for an active shooter uses the steps known as "run, hide, fight." This protocol includes steps that you can use to protect yourself, according to Labonte.

The email provided a link from a video made by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security showing what "run, hide, fight," is. The email asked students to review it.

"Run" means to exit the area as quickly as possible and try to find an alternative exit. "Hide" is used when you can't escape; find a safe area to hide and lock the doors. "Fight" is the last resort. The FBI explains this protocol further and emphasizes when fighting for your life, you do not have to fight fair.

Labonte said it's better for students and members of the UConn community to be prepared when there is danger.

"Our goal is not to scare our community or begin the semester on an ominous note, but rather to be proactive and forthright in urging you to consider your safety and how you would respond to danger should you be forced to react to it," Labonte said in an email.

The Daily Campus

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