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Brief blackout occurs at student center

By Brianna Wallen
News Editor

A brief power outage at the Adanti Student Center in the early morning on Feb. 9 left students and staff without electricity for approximately 30 minutes.

“Very quickly, they found out it was a defective transformer down the street,” Robert DeMezzo, senior director of Conferences, Events and Student Affairs Auxiliaries, said.

The outage, which occurred during normal operating hours, paused food service operations and temporarily darkened meeting rooms and common areas.

This prompted building officials to follow safety protocols while they waited for service to be restored.

“In the event of a power failure, what we actually try to do is ensure that all of our students are downstairs,” DeMezzo said. “One of the reasons is just to make sure there’s lighting. The meeting rooms, if the doors are closed, you can’t see anything in front of you.”

Staff members carried out a sweep of the building’s common areas and meeting rooms to guide people toward the food court, where there is more natural light and



PHOTO | BRIANNA WALLEN

Robert DeMezzo, senior director of Conferences, Events and Student Affairs Auxiliaries in his office on the third floor of the Adanti Student Center on Thursday, Feb. 12.

space for students to gather during an outage.

While students did not have to stay in the building, operations were paused until power returned.

“We can’t operate any function of the building,” DeMezzo said. “Food service can’t function, and even something like the coffee at Dunkin’ will get cold. The primary goal is just to make sure the students are okay.”

As part of protocol, staff also checked elevators to ensure no one was trapped. Although the building is equipped with emergency lighting, a generator system and battery backups, DeMezzo said procedures still call for grouping students together in the case of equipment failure.

“There are emergency lights in the building and such, as well as actually a generator system that

will light up everything. But we still move the students together because what if there’s a failure,” DeMezzo said. “We just don’t leave anything to rest.”

University officials initially waited for information from facilities management rather than immediately placing calls.

DeMezzo said this route helps to avoid overwhelming the department with calls.

“Facilities is probably getting a ton of phone calls,” DeMezzo said. “So, we wait a second because we usually hear from them with the cause and the anticipated length.”

Since the interruption was brief and the building’s safety systems remained operational, the university did not cancel classes or close the facility.

“The building is safe,” DeMezzo said.

“The sprinklers and fire alarms all work. There were no issues there.”

The incident affected only part of campus due to the university’s electrical grid structure. DeMezzo explained that different areas, including some residence halls, operate on separate grids.

This explained why other buildings retained power during the outage.

The minor disruption highlighted that the university prioritizes student safety and visibility.

If the outage lasted longer, the university could have considered canceling classes or sending students back to residence halls, depending on repair timelines and larger impacts such as traffic signals in surrounding areas.

For DeMezzo, the response reflects years of experience in student services and residence life.

“I’ve done this a long time,” DeMezzo said. “There’s much more protocol in residence halls, but in this building, our role is to sweep the spaces, bring people together and make sure everyone is safe.”

Power was restored within the estimated timeframe, and the building returned to normal operations.

Newly released Epstein files expose elite connections

By Brianna Wallen
News Editor

The U.S. Department of Justice released more than three million pages of records related to Jeffrey Epstein on Jan. 30.

According to BBC, “three million pages, 180,000 images and 2,000 videos were posted publicly.”

The documents detail Epstein’s connections to prominent figures in business, politics and entertainment.

This offers new insight into the web of his social and financial network and the long-running sex trafficking investigation.

According to AP News: “The documents, which include police reports, FBI interview notes and prosecutor emails, provide the clearest picture to date of the investigation — and why U.S. authorities ultimately decided to close it without additional charges.”

Bank records, wire transfer data, flight details and FBI interview summaries are also part of the disclosure, providing a detailed look at the financial transactions and travel patterns that investigators say supported the trafficking operation.

Prior to his 2019 arrest and death, Epstein was a wealthy American financier and convicted sex offender who used his money and elite relationships to run a sex trafficking ring that exploited underage girls over the course of several years, according to PBS.

The release stems from the Epstein Files Transparency Act, signed into law Nov. 19, 2025 by President Donald Trump, which requires the Justice Department to reveal all unclassified records related to Epstein and his associate, Ghislaine Maxwell, who was convicted in 2021 for her role in helping Epstein to traffic underage girls.

On Feb. 9, Maxwell appeared virtually for a private deposition from a Texas prison, where she is serving a 20-year sentence on sex trafficking charges. Maxwell refused to answer questions from the U.S. House Oversight Committee.

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According to BBC, Rep. James Comer, the Republican house oversight committee chairman, said that “as expected,” Maxwell invoked the Fifth Amendment and declined to answer questions.

The Fifth Amendment allows individuals to avoid self-incrimination by declining to answer questions while under oath.

In a post on X, Maxwell’s attorney, David Oscar Markus, said she would be willing to cooperate if she received clemency from Donald Trump.

“Only she can provide the complete account. Some may not like what

they hear, but the truth matters,” Markus posted.

Other powerful and wealthy figures were also named and pictured in the files, including wealthy businessmen.

U.S. Rep. Ro Khanna publicly named six men whose identities had been redacted in the Jeffrey Epstein files during a floor speech on Feb. 10 after reviewing unredacted Justice Department records with Rep. Thomas Massie.

The six men identified were Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, chairman and chief executive officer of DP World and an Emirati billionaire businessperson; Leslie Wexner, former CEO of Victoria’s Secret and a retail billionaire; as well as Salvatore Nuara, Zurab Mikeladze, and Leonid Leonov.

None have been charged with crimes connected to Epstein, and Khanna did not present evidence of wrongdoing.

According to reporting by The Guardian, four of the men had no ties to Epstein and were included only in a law enforcement photo lineup. Two of them told the outlet they did not know Epstein and said their photos likely appeared because of unrelated past arrests.

Many who were identified in these files are pleading their innocence or retreating from the spotlight as scrutiny intensifies.

According to the Wall Street Journal, bin Sulayem stepped down

after newly released Justice Department records revealed a close relationship with Jeffrey Epstein.

“The documents and other recent disclosures indicate the two men maintained friendly email correspondence for years, including messages in which they discussed women in explicit terms,” WSJ stated. “Photographs also show that bin Sulayem traveled to Epstein’s private island.” Federal officials said the total body of evidence includes about 6 million pages, with no date yet on when the remaining documents will be released.

“If we found six men that they were hiding in two hours, imagine how many men they are covering up for in those 3 million files,” Khanna said.



PHOTO | THE NEW YORKER

Survivors of convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein lift their hands during Pam Bondi’s appearance before the House Judiciary Committee on Feb. 11.

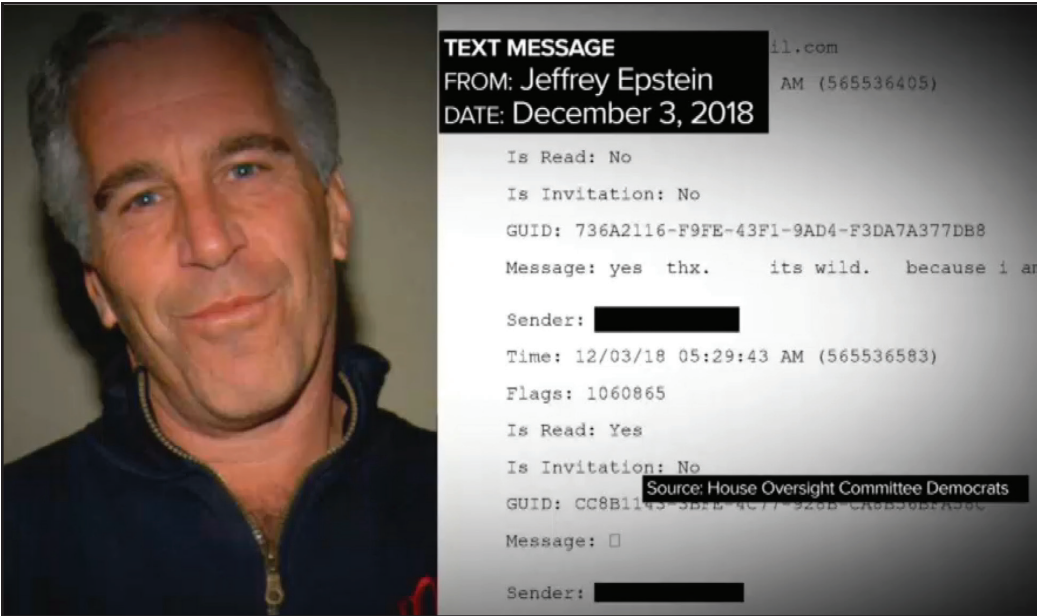


PHOTO | 6ABC

Jeffrey Epstein’s text messages sent on Dec. 3, 2018 which can be viewed on the U.S. Department of Justice website.