NEWS

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Law School advocacy clinic requests records on ICE arrests at Tweed

BY EVELYN RONAN
STAFF REPORTER

A Yale Law School clinic and a local immigrant advocacy group last Wednesday filed a public records request demanding information about Tweed-New Haven Airport Authority's partnership with Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

On Sept. 4, ICE agents arrested a Southern Connecticut State University student at a bag-scan checkpoint at the airport. Footage of that arrest — which the News obtained through a public records request — revealed that federal agents had access to the airport's security checkpoints. The arrest, alongside another detention at the airport a week later, prompted city officials and local activists to raise concerns about the airport's collaboration with ICE.

At the Airport Authority Board of Directors' monthly meeting last Wednesday, Trinh Truong '19 LAW '27, a litigator from the Law School's Worker and Immigration Rights Advocacy Clinic, said the clinic, on behalf of the New Haven Immigrants Coalition, had requested copies of judicial warrants for the two confirmed in-airport arrests.

The clinic and the advocacy group is also seeking proof that ICE agents with access to the airport had passed criminal background checks, Truong said. She added that the clinic also requested the names of every ICE agent with access to the airport and documentation on what parts of the airport agents had access to.

In response to a Sept. 9 public records request submitted by the News, a Tweed spokesperson wrote that the names of people with access to secure areas of an airport qualify as "sensitive security information" under federal law.

On Sept. 16, Mayor Justin Elicker sent a letter to Robert Reed, the chair of the Airport Authority's board of directors, to urge the airport not to cooperate with ICE beyond what is required by federal law, including by giving federal agents preferential parking.

At the Wednesday board meeting, Reed said Elicker's recommendations were being "actively pursued."

"We are aggressively, thoughtfully looking at the request from the mayor as well as boundaries and policies that guide the airport from the FAA," Reed said, referring to the Federal Aviation Administration.

Jessica White, an organizer with the NHIC who testified during the public comment portion of the board meeting, said she was worried by what she described as the Airport Authority's lack of transparency in response to questions about its relationship with ICE.

"Serious questions remain about what ICE is doing at Tweed and what airport officials are providing," she said.

On Sept. 16, a Tweed spokesperson told the News that federal law mandates the authority give ICE agents "unescorted" access to the airport as long as they pass a criminal background check.



ZOE BERG

At a monthly meeting where a clinic member announced the records request, the chair of the airport's authority board also said the airport was "thoughtfully" reviewing Mayor Justin Elicker's recommendations last month to cooperate with ICE minimally.

Both people arrested by ICE agents at Tweed in September have since been released from detention.

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Yale clerical and technical workers pressured to use AI, report alleges

BY CHANTAL EULENSTEIN
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A report published by Yale's clerical and technical workers union slammed the University's implementation of artificial intelligence in their workplaces, which members said has threatened their jobs.

Local 34-UNITE HERE released the report, titled "Artificial University," on Oct. 7. The report accused administrators of "rushing to implement AI" over the last two years and failing to include the voices of union workers in the process. Yale employees, the report said, have been pressured to adopt AI use in order to facilitate their everyday tasks, which in some cases have made work less efficient.

"The gains of AI have started to produce a slow, steady attrition of middle-class clerical work through 'passive automation,'" the report reads. "Companies, universities, and governments will deploy AI to do more administrative labor without needing to rehire workers who have quit or retired."

According to the results of a survey included in the report, the three departments that reported the most AI use were Yale Development, Yale Library and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Union members quoted in the report said parts of their work were being replaced by AI following the University's rollout of Clarity, Yale's AI chatbot whose use is limited solely to students and faculty.

Tamera Sternberger, a program coordinator with the Yale Development Office, said in a statement included in the report that the department does most of its writing "with the help of AI, strongly reducing the need" for union workers.

She also described pressure from management in her department to adopt AI use, and said that she now "rarely" does any writing or editing work that once comprised at least half of her job.

Sternberger said that prior to the launch of Clarity in August 2024, she was responsible for emailing donors at Yale. Her work, she said in the report, used to take her weeks and involved close collaboration with her managers. Now, she said, her work is done exclusively by AI and her managers, while she is assigned to move equipment and materials.

"This is not the job she was hired for," the report wrote.

In an emailed statement to the news, Tina Posterli, the director of University media relations

for the Yale Office of Public Affairs & Communications, wrote, "Yale has not reduced positions in favor of AI tools." Instead, the University's strategy is to "empower" units to determine if AI "should play a role in their mission," she wrote.

In 2024, Yale announced a five-year $150 million commitment to helping faculty, students and staff engage with AI. The commitment followed the work of the Yale Task Force on Artificial Intelligence, an 18-member group of faculty and campus leaders. The taskforce established actions such as purchasing a portfolio of processing units, hiring new computational research support analysts and launching the Clarity platform.

"To fulfill the university's mission to improve the world and prepare the next generation of society's great leaders and thinkers, we must explore, advance, and harness AI for its benefits while providing ethical, legal, and social frameworks to address the challenges it poses," Yale Provost Scott Strobel wrote in a 2024 announcement to the Yale community.

Amber Suess, a frontline services assistant at Yale Library, is quoted in the report discussing the library system's implementation of several AI tools, including Clarity, AI research platform Consensus AI and a custom Model Context Protocol tool.

The library's AI functionality, Suess said, "directly competes with the work that I do at the Library, reducing the overall caseload and need for my current role," according to her statement in the report.

Lauren DiMonte, the associate University librarian for research and learning, wrote in an email to the News that the library's AI tools are "focused on improving access to collections and unlocking new research possibilities for students, faculty, and others."

Dana Greene, a senior administrative assistant in the School of Public Health, is quoted in the report detailing how her manager encouraged her to use AI to answer questions that she would have previously addressed to them.

A spokesperson for the School of Public Health did not respond to a request for comment.

In an emailed statement to the News, a spokesperson for the University wrote that Yale's AI strategy "involves careful attention to the human aspects of our mission and the very essential social fabric of a residential university."

"Yale has not reduced positions in favor of AI tools but instead is exploring how AI can support staff in their work and expand access to Yale's resources," the spokesperson wrote.

The statement added that Yale has adopted custom chatbots to "help community members access accurate information," especially when desks are closed after hours, including AI assistants on the Yale College Academic Advising, Yale Finance Chatbot and School of Medicine Library websites.

The Local 34 report concluded by calling on the University to "provide a national model of a responsible transition" to AI use that would include both higher pay for workers and investment in training programs.

The report suggested that Yale could employ joint task forces between the University and its workers and commit to maintaining its current number of employees in order to "give workers more confidence that innovative AI use will augment University operations instead of eliminating jobs."

Local 34 represents 3,933 clerical and technical workers at Yale.

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In a report published on Oct. 7, Local 34, the University's clerical and technical workers' union, decried the implementation of artificial intelligence technology to supplement — and in some cases replace — employees' responsibilities..

