

# National

## Murdered Student Choose Fayetteville State University for Safety Reasons

FAYETTEVILLE (AP) — A woman who was murdered in her dorm at Fayetteville State University chose that school over others because she thought she would be safer there, her mother said.

"They had this same thing happen at Elizabeth City State University a few years ago," said Catherine Faye Simpson, mother of Kiesha Simpson. "We had debated on whether she should go there because of that. We decided to send her somewhere else, someplace that might be more safe."

Kiesha Simpson, 20, of Moyock was found Saturday morning on the floor of her locked dorm room, her throat cut. A steak knife used in the murder was on her bed, said Fayetteville police Sgt. Richard Bryant.

"It's hard for me to believe that something like that would happen, but it does," her mother said. "And what makes it even harder is that it happened to my daughter."

Kiesha Simpson, a 1991 graduate of Currituck High School, was on her school's homecoming court

three years and was captain of the track team. She was a member of Students Against Drunk Driving, the Youth Council, Future Business Leaders of America and Future Homemakers of America.

Her death scared residents of Harris Hall. Most learned of the murder when they returned Sunday from the Easter weekend.

One woman who wouldn't give her name said she plans to stay with her brother off campus, at least until police catch the killer.

"I don't want him coming back for me. Every time we walk by her room, we just see the yellow tape and it reminds us of what happened," she said.

"I think it was meant for any one of us," she said of the murder. "She (the victim) was in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Another woman, who lived across the hall from the victim and spoke with her around 12:30 a.m. Saturday, said, "Nobody wants to stay up here when they don't know who did it."

"I think it was just someone

that came in here off Murchison Road. This is a bad area. I don't think it was somebody she knew."

FSU Chancellor Lloyd Hackley said he believes Kiesha Simpson knew the killer.

"There was no sign that anything had been knocked down or broken," he said. "There was no disturbance in the room."

Police would not say whether they believe Kiesha Simpson knew her killer.

Juease Dunlap was one of the last people to see Kiesha Simpson alive. She told officers she had seen the victim in her room between 1 a.m. and 1:30 a.m. Saturday.

Ms. Dunlap got worried when the woman didn't shut off her alarm clock Saturday morning or answer a knock at her door. She got the dorm's resident assistant, Pershawn Patterson, to unlock the door, the police report said.

Ms. Dunlap went in the room and found the body.

Kiesha Simpson was popular in high school with students and teachers, said Valerie Williams, her

sophomore English teacher.

"She wanted to move to a higher level of English because she wanted to go to college and make something of herself," Ms. Williams said. "She was very serious and determined."

At college, she concentrated on her schoolwork. She was an honors student majoring in chemistry with a 3.18 GPA.

"I only ever knew her to have one boyfriend," said an FSU senior who was moving out of Harris Hall on Monday to live with her roommate's parents in Fayetteville for the rest of the semester. "It's just eerie. She was just quiet and sweet. She'd never hurt anyone."

Security was increased Sunday and Monday. One student said the additional security is needed.

"This is a wake-up call when it comes to safety and security," said Rodney Mapp, who lives in Bryant Hall next to Harris Hall.

Harry Ghee, vice chancellor of student affairs, said three officers constantly patrol the campus, where 870 students live in eight dorms.

### FSU Student Charged with Murder

FAYETTEVILLE (AP) — A Fayetteville State University student, reportedly an acquaintance of a student found with her throat cut in her dorm room last weekend, has been charged with her murder.

Fayetteville police charged Darryl Myers, 19, of Fayetteville with first-degree murder, said Lt. David Pulliam.

Myers will be arraigned Monday morning in Cumberland County District Court. He is being held in Cumberland County jail.

Pulliam said Myers knew the victim, 20-year-old Kiesha Simpson. Pulliam did not give a motive. There is no indication Myers and Simpson dated.

Myers had not been a suspect in the case until last Thursday, when police received a tip that he might be involved, Pulliam said.

"The lead we got and the information we developed from that lead corresponded with physical evidence at the scene," Pulliam said.

Pulliam would not be more specific about the lead or the evidence.

Myers was arrested about 6:40 a.m. Friday in a room at Vance Hall, a male dormitory. Myers did not live on campus, but he was staying with a friend, Pulliam said. A group of angry students on Tuesday blamed poor security at FSU for Simpson's death. They said that earlier attacks at FSU should have sounded an alarm that bigger crime was on the way. But at a meeting with Chancellor Lloyd Hackley, FSU Police Chief Willie Bell and other officials last Wednesday, students said they shared responsibility for problems on campus and began looking for ways to combat future violence.

## Alabama NAACP President Praises Verdict In King Trial

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — The conviction of two Los Angeles officers in the beating of motorist Rodney King drew praise Saturday from an Alabama civil rights leader and the director of a police organization called it wise.

Lillian Jackson, state president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said she was somewhat disappointed that two other officers were acquitted in the federal civil rights case, but thought the verdict should satisfy most blacks.

"It may not be quite what we had hoped for," she said. "But the main two persons were found guilty and that sends a very strong message."

Sgt. Stacey Koon, the supervisor at the beating scene, and Officer Laurence Powell were convicted on civil rights charges Saturday. Powell delivered the most baton blows to King on a now-notorious videotape of the March 3, 1991, incident.

Officer Theodore Briseno and Timothy Wind, a rookie officer who was fired after the beating, were acquitted.

"The verdict reflects that there was somebody really wise on the jury," said Floyd Mann of Montgomery, who twice headed the Alabama State Troopers. "It was a settling kind of verdict, a kind of

verdict that didn't make people react either way."

Mann, now executive director for the state Fraternal Order of Police, said he doesn't think the verdict "particularly carries a message that law enforcement officers were not already aware of."

"Viewing that one scene (officers beating King), no officer condones what that appears to be."

Joe Sparks, director of the Northeast Alabama Police Academy at Jacksonville, agreed with Mann's comment on excessive force.

"We don't teach continued use of the baton once the subject gives up," said Sparks. Referring to the videotaped beating of King, Sparks said: "We certainly don't teach from what we saw on TV to do that."

He said he hopes people will use "common sense" and not engage in rioting or looting as a result of the verdict.

The state NAACP president said, "The main officers, those who were truly responsible, were found guilty. That says a great deal. It certainly helps restore the faith of black America in the judicial system."

All four men were acquitted of most assault charges in a state court last year. That verdict prompted three days of deadly riots in Los Angeles and protests nationwide.



The Rev. Cecil Murray, center of the First A.M.E. Church in South Central Los Angeles reacts Saturday to the verdicts in the trial of four Los Angeles policemen charged with violating the civil right of motorist Rodney G. King. Stacey Koon and Laurence Powell were found guilty, while Ted Briseno and Timothy Wind were found innocent.

"I don't think (Saturday's verdict) restores confidence completely," Ms. Jackson said. "We know of other incidents where African-Americans have been unjustly treated. But this certainly goes a long way to helping restore confidence in the judicial system."

She added: "We should accept this and be satisfied. We've come a long way from the first verdict." The NAACP will be working

to enact a law in Alabama requiring all cities to have citizen oversight committees for their police departments, Ms. Jackson said.

"We want to take positive

steps to make sure people's civil rights are not violated," she said. "And if they are, we want to have some resources in place to deal with that."

## Food Lion Hires Black PR Firm

Food Lion Inc. has nominated its first black director and has hired a well-known public relations firm to help improve its reputation following negative reports of the company's sanitation and labor practices.

The Salisbury grocery chain has hired Powell/Tate, a Washington, D.C., public relations company whose principals — Jody Powell and Sheila Tate — once worked for former presidents Jimmy Carter and George Bush.

Powell/Tate was hired two days after the unexpected resignation April 7 of the National Grass Roots Coalition, also of Washington, as the public relations firm for Food Lion. A November segment of ABC-TV's "Prime Time Live" aired a report that criticized Food Lion's sanitation practices. The U.S. Labor Department continues to investigate claims of labor law violations, and Congress has sponsored two hearings that included testimony about Food Lion's labor practices.

Food Lion has blamed its sagging sales and lower profits mainly on the ABC-TV segment. The grocery chain sued the network, accusing ABC of fraud and misrepresentation.

Most public relations experts say Food Lion's strategy backfired, failing to restore consumer confidence.

"Food Lion focused on beating ABC-TV and the unions and pretty much decided the public could take care of itself," said Tom Drew of Phoenix Communications in Durham. "But in a low-margin business like groceries, a little mistake can cost you big."

Neither Food Lion nor Powell/Tate would discuss strategies for improving the grocery chain's reputation, but other industry professionals did speculate.

"From some of the comments made, Food Lion seems to believe they're being attacked only indirectly by the networks," said Scott Burkhead, a partner at Rockett, Burkhead, Lewis and Winslow in Raleigh. "Perhaps the interest is in getting their story in front of the proper regulatory agencies."

Meanwhile, the company has nominated Livingstone College President Bernard Franklin to replace retiring company co-founder Ralph Ketner on the board of directors.

"I look forward to serving on the Food Lion board of directors and hope to contribute to its strong reputation in the industry," Franklin said in a statement issued Tuesday.

Company spokesman Mike Mazingo said the board chose Franklin, who lives in Salisbury, for his background in education. He said any improvement with minority communities would be a bonus.

Many of Food Lion's 1,034 stores are in minority neighborhoods, and some black leaders criticized the chain after the ABC report. The president of the North Carolina NAACP chapter called for a boycott of Food Lion stores unless an independent investigation resolved issues raised by the television report.

The chain also angered the head of the Columbia, S.C., Urban League by temporarily cutting off donations to the league's charity drive after its president made televised remarks critical of Food Lion.

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