

# CAMPUS NEWS/FEATURES

## Gunman stopped taking medication, police say

MCT WIRE SERVICE

A gunman accused of killing five students in a Northern Illinois University classroom recently had stopped taking medication "and became somewhat erratic," campus police said.

At the same time, officials corrected an earlier statement that six other people besides the gunman had died, saying there had been a "miscommunication."

The gunman was identified as Stephen P. Kazmierczak, a former NIU student, who took his own life. (The spelling of Kazmierczak's first name was supplied by a university official. Other references list him as Steven.)

"There were no red flags," said campus Police Chief Donald Grady, saying that Kazmierczak was someone "revered by faculty and students alike."

Kazmierczak's motive is a mystery, he said. Grady refused to discuss what medication Kazmierczak was taking or anything about his medical condition.

He said Kazmierczak brought four weapons — a shotgun and three handguns — with him when he kicked open a door to the classroom and began firing. Police found 48 shell casings and six shotgun shells in the classroom, indicating the number of shots, he said.

Authorities have traced the shotgun and one of the handguns to a gun dealer in Champaign, Ill., where Kazmierczak was attending graduate school at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. They said the purchases were legal, and there was no reason that Kazmierczak should have been denied purchase. Agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives are tracing the other two weapons, said agent Kevin Cronin.

Earlier, the DeKalb County coroner's office had issued a news release saying that a sixth wounded student had died overnight, but university officials retracted that, saying there had been a miscommunication and that only five students and the gunman had died.

The dead students were identified as: Daniel Parmenter, 20, of Westchester, Ill.; Catalina Garcia, 20, of Cicero, Ill.; Ryanne Mace, 19, of Carpentersville, Ill.; Julianna Gehant, 32, of Meriden, Ill.; and Gayle Dubowski, 20, of Carol Stream, Ill..

Before the Friday morning news conference at which Kazmierczak was identified, NIU President John G. Peters said "the shooter had a very good academic record, no record of trouble."

Kazmierczak was not a current student at the school 65 miles west of downtown Chicago, authorities said. Peters earlier had said the man had been enrolled as a sociology graduate student at NIU but left school last spring.

In an interview at his home near campus Friday morning, a visibly rattled Joseph Peterson, the instructor of the ocean science class on which the gunman opened fire, said he did not know the man and had no idea why he targeted his classroom.

In Lakeland, Fla., local sheriff's police were interviewing Kazmierczak's father, Robert, at the request of investigators in DeKalb, but would not release details.

Speaking briefly with reporters at his home about 50 miles southwest of Orlando, Robert Kazmierczak, 66, who is retired, said: "Please leave me alone. I have no statement to make. This is a very hard time. I'm a diabetic."

Then he broke down crying and went back inside his mobile home. Records indicate his wife died in 2006.

Officials said Kazmierczak, dressed in black, stormed into an oceanography class Thursday afternoon and opened fire with a shotgun and two handguns. In a matter of seconds, he killed five and wounded 15.

Then, still on stage, he killed himself, authorities said.

NIU classes have been canceled indefinitely. The dorms, however, remain open. "It's not a lockdown," NIU's Peters told reporters recently.

It was the worst campus shooting since April 16, 2007, when 32 people were shot to death on the campus of Virginia Tech University by a student who later killed himself. Virginia Tech officials have called NIU offering help and advice, Peters said.

Eyewitnesses described hearing a door to the right rear of the stage slam open and seeing the gunman, wearing a knit cap and sweat shirt, wielding a shotgun. He stayed within 10 feet of the door and started shooting — first with the shotgun and then with the handguns.

"He stood there for a second, looked and then just started shooting," said Meghan Murphy, 22, a junior, a student in the class. "His face was blank, like he wasn't a person. He was a statue, aiming."

Instructor Peterson, who was giving a PowerPoint presentation, ducked and was shot in the arm.

Junior John Giovanni, 20, and others said the gunman aimed at the center of the auditorium.

"He just fires right into the audience," Giovanni said. "He didn't say a word. It didn't look like he was aiming directly at someone. I think he was trying to hit as many people as he could."

The blast was deafening, Giovanni said. Chaos erupted, with students dropping to the floor and crawling, running and shoving their way to the doors behind the rear seats, eyewitnesses said. Giovanni said he ran out of one of his shoes.

Half the class bolted for the doors; the rest covered on the floor and attempted to hide under their seats or under desks, said Loren Weese, 18, a freshman who was seated on the aisle about halfway up the auditorium.

"A lot of people fell," she said. "I don't know if they did that on purpose to avoid being shot. I remember stepping over them. I didn't talk to anybody."

Chicago Tribune reporters David Heinzmann, James Kimberly, Gerry Smith, Josh Noel, Deborah Horan, Megan Twohey, Mary Ann Fergus, Andrew L. Wang, Jo Napolitano, Jodi S. Cohen, James Janega, William Presecky, Richard Wronski, Jeff Coen and Ray Quintanilla contributed to this report. It was written by Tribune reporters Ted Gregory and David Elsner.)

## Doctors use body mass index to determine level of obesity

Tierra Berthau  
STAFF REPORTER

In the past few years, the media has presented many reports on the growing problem of overweight Americans. Being overweight leads to many health problems that cost people their lives as well as money as medical care needs increase.

According to Hubert Chen, M.D., Associate Director of Medical Sciences at Amgen Inc. and Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine University of California at San Francisco, obesity is a disease defined as "an increase in total body fat determined by your Body Mass Index (BMI)."

Obesity is the excessive accumulation of body fat or having a BMI of 30 or greater. As a result, "as many as one-third of all Americans" are obese based on BMI criteria, according to HealthCentral.com. Body Mass Index can be determined by using a simple formula. HealthCentral.com instructions to calculate your BMI are as follows: you multiply your weight in pounds by 705; divide by your height in inches; divide this number by your height in inches a second time. It should be understood

that a person with a high BMI and a muscular body would not be considered obese. The excess body fat is the determining factor of obesity.

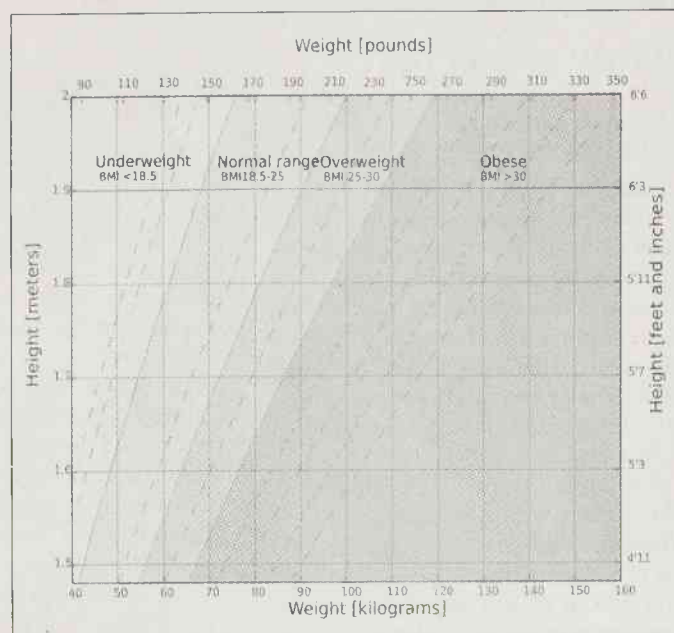
After smoking, obesity is the second leading cause of preventable death and is associated with Type 2 diabetes, hyperlipidemia, coronary artery disease, arthritis, gallstones, and certain types of cancer according to HealthCentral.com.

While obesity is a serious health issue, it can be treated. A person along with the assistance of a physician should determine their BMI and then formulate a plan that he or she can follow to reduce their weight and/or excess body fat.

A physician should perform a physical examination, which should be conducted at least annually. The examination should include a measurement of height and weight to help diagnose whether or not one is obese. The physician should also have the patient's complete medical and family history.

This history would include finding answers to the following questions:

- When were you first considered or diagnosed as being obese?
- Do you have any close



family members who are obese?

- What is your current eating and exercise behavior?
- Do you smoke or drink alcohol?
- What is your previous weight gain or weight loss experience?

Additionally, blood tests will help a physician determine if you have abnormal glucose, cholesterol, or triglyceride levels as well as to discover whether any obesity-related conditions may be present.

Once the physician has all the needed data to make a diagnosis, he can consult

with the patient and determine the best treatment strategy. The strategy will most likely be a weight loss and exercise program, which the physician will monitor.

One needs at minimum 20 minutes of constant exercise to achieve a sufficient heart rate to get the necessary impact for weight loss.

Additionally, the patient would be expected to engage in behavioral modification to change their eating and exercise behavior until it becomes a new way of life and a routine of exercise becomes normal for them.

## SPRING BREAK: More than just fun in the sun

Larry Williams  
STAFF REPORTER

For students at Winston-Salem State, March 10 is an important date. It marks the first day of spring break at WSSU.

The week-long break — March 10 to 14 — gives students a chance to recharge and relax for the final push of the semester.

Most college breaks fall between March 8 and 22. Panama City Beach, Florida and South Padre Island, Texas remain top destinations for the college crowd, according to a recent article on MSN.com.

Other popular destinations are South Beach in Miami, Lake Havasu, Arizona; Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; and Las Vegas. This year Panama City Beach is hosting MTV's Spring Break party starting March 9. BET's "Spring Bling" takes place in Riviera Beach, Florida, March 28 to 30.

Students at WSSU have planned a variety of activities over spring break. Working to earn money is a popular choice.

"I'm going to work and get more hours so I can earn some more money," said freshman Joshua Black.

Dwayne Tate, a senior, echoed that sentiment: "I plan on resting and I might work a little bit."

Besides working, vacation is also on many students' minds.

"I'm going to Atlanta, GA, to see my



Virginia Beach is one of many popular destinations during spring break.

sister for the week and to also celebrate my birthday," said freshman Krystal Mackey, "I plan on catching a train headed north with no destination planned, and just be by myself for some days." said junior Nicolina Stewart

Although partying and vacationing with friends is still popular, there is a growing shift toward college students doing volunteer work in communities across the U.S.

"There has been a steady decline in traditional party trips," said Gibb in

the MSN article. "Spring Break is growing up ... The days of drinking all day on Daytona Beach are dwindling."

"College students want to make a difference in the world. They are more informed and socially responsible," Gibb said.

Meredith Munday, who is in the accelerated nursing program, said she'll prepare for that goal over spring break.

"I plan on studying a whole lot the whole week," she said.

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