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Livingston, NJ

Seton Hall Student Charged with Making Up Story

Police Say Student Fabricated Sexual Assault Claim

By Joshua Wilwohl, Patch Staff

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A Seton Hall University student, who said she was sexually assaulted in a campus parking lot on Nov. 16, has been charged with filing a false police report, according to the Essex County Prosecutor's Office and a South Orange Police Department release dated Nov. 30.

South Orange police have charged Laura Siegel, 18, of Williamsburg, Va., with making a false report of a sexual assault. Siegel claimed the alleged assault happened in lot F, near Ivy Hill Park on the South Orange campus, the prosecutor's office said .

Siegel's original statement to police said that at 11 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 16, she left Walsh Library on the university's campus for her residence hall. She was then approached by a clean-shaven black man, 20 or 21 years old, approximately 6-foot, 2-inches tall, with a muscular build and short hair. She claimed he led her to a car parked outside the parking deck. The alleged assault took place next to a car, according to authorities.

On Friday, Nov. 19, Siegel recanted her story and said the assault occurred off campus. Meanwhile, students and faculty challenged security measures on campus and students held a Nov. 22 protest on the university lawn to voice displeasure about what they felt were security flaws at the university.

The woman's name was released by the Essex County Prosecutor's Office and is considered public record. The prosecutor's office also confirmed the investigation into the matter has ended.

According to Siegel's Facebook account, she's currently a freshman at Seton Hall and enrolled in the criminal justice and international relations program.

Filing a false police report is considered a disorderly persons offense, according to the South Orange Police Department, who consulted with the prosecutor's office on the case. Siegel is expected in court on Dec. 6.

Siegel could face up to six months in prison and fines, according to authorities.

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