

# Campus Police to Keep Guns

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

like to go through this," she said. "I know the decision's been made, and there's nothing we can do, but I pray that one day you guys change your mind, hopefully sooner than later so this doesn't happen to anyone else."

Olivia Pace, a PSU graduate who said she's been calling for campus police to be disarmed for more than five years, told the board she was "disgusted" by the decision.

"I still have to be here," Pace said. She called the interim president's action to allow campus cops to continue to carry guns "unpopular, undemocratic and racist."

Pace said she did not condone Percy's safety plan and said arming campus police will only lead to more tragedy.

"Jason Washington was just a black man trying to break up a fight involving a firearm. He was not a threat, he wasn't doing anything wrong, and he was still killed by the police," she said. "The right we have to live and breathe is extinguished with your

decision. The decision to arm security will be paid in black lives."

Pace then called for a boycott of the university.

"This decision is a declaration of war," she said. "You have declared war on your students and from this moment on we will use every fiber of our being to letting the world know: Do not come here."

As the meeting broke up, angry students yelled, "Shame! Shame! This is a board of hypocrites! No justice, no peace! Blood on your hands! Boycott PSU!"

Members of the media then went to a small room where Percy answered questions about the decision to allow guns on campus.

The first question concerned calls for a boycott.

"I'm very worried about that," Percy said. "I'm very sorry about the death of Jason Washington and what we're trying to do a lot here is create an inclusive campus that respects diversity. We think in this day and age that policing in a large urban campus is very complex and requires a lot of different approaches."




PHOTO BY BEVERLY CORBELL/  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER  
Portland State University Interim President Stephen Percy holds a brief news conference Thursday to answer questions on the school's new safety plan.

The plan calls for more transparency and strengthening of the University Public Safety Committee, continued use of firearms and body cameras by some officers, more training for officers, better building security (including electronic access pads), hiring four more unarmed officers, and better collaboration with mental health experts in responding to crisis situations.

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