College Students Beware

## Stat of the Day

*Over 50% of sexual assaults on college campuses happen within the first 3 months of the start of school.*

Tripwire, 2019

**The Tripwire**

*A Situational Report of events and research on security matters impacting the United States and its citizens today*

The body of an Ole Miss student was discovered approximately 30 miles from the campus of Old Miss University in Oxford, MS.



 (Photo: Clarion Ledger)

The body[of 21-year-old college student, Alexandria 'Ally' Kostial](https://bit.ly/2JVqlMH), was found Saturday morning in the neighboring town of Harmontown by officers on routine patrol, according to the Lafayette County Sheriff's Department. Harmontown is approximately 30 miles from Oxford.

Although details are scarce, police are saying that foul play was involved. What we do know is that the person arrested was a fellow student. There no doubt will be questions. Did she know the person who killed her? Did the other student show concerning behavior? Were there indicators? Was there a relationship between killer and victim? Were there signs visible to others who will later say, “I never trusted him.”, “I never liked the guy.”

Many cases involving assaults or even national security are met with comments like, “I didn’t see that coming.” It is possible we will hear that here also. However, not seeing it may have been due to not looking for it or refusing to see the obvious. The key is seeing things that you normally wouldn’t see. Becoming aware of a violent situation or a security issue takes only a change in security culture. Begin noticing the things you never noticed before.

Situational Awareness and using our IDENT method can provide the intelligence necessary to prevent a violent act. IDENT simply means, Identify, Document, Engage, Notify, Take action.

In the case of freshman college co-eds, heading off to college campuses around the country, you are potential targets of pursuers and/or predators. Pursuers and predators are doing their research and young women who are trying to fit in and become part of their new environment make attractive targets. Make it a practice of Identifying concerning behaviors and Documenting them, even mentally. They help you paint a picture of someone who is engaging and attentive. They may be really nice guys, or not. Remember, guys who won’t take no for an answer, look for women who can’t say no.

Next, Engage with others. Others may be noticing the same concerning behaviors or have also been victimized. They may have critical information to complete a threatening picture which may provide what is needed to prevent a violent act.

Prevention is the final or Take Action piece to IDENT. Having identified concerning behavior or actions that concern you, you have every right to take steps to provide for your safety and security. Trust your intuition, trust your gut. Do not let your concerns for pushback or a feeling of being rude stop you from enforcing your safety and security. Remember, humans are the only species that can sense they are in danger and then talk themselves out of it.

Finally, practice not being a victim. Say no and mean no. Do not be alone with someone that makes you uncomfortable. Share pertinent information with friends and work with each other for safety and security. Be aware of your surroundings and harden yourself as a potential target.

Pursuers/predators have formed the intent. They are only looking for opportunity and conditions in order to commit the violent act. By not providing the favorable conditions and eliminating opportunity, one can minimize the chances of being a victim.

**“The only real security that a person can have in this world is a reserve of knowledge, experience and ability.”**

 Henry Ford