

CENTRAL FLORIDA FOCUS

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PHOTO COURTESY OF UCF NEWS.

Record 36 vehicles broken into on UCF campus

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Thirty six vehicles were broken into near the Lake Claire Apartment complex and Greek Housing early Tuesday morning.

Victims had their windows shattered and items from inside their vehicle stolen, according to a press release by the UCF Police Department.

UCFPD received a call at 2:30 a.m., as an eyewitness reported seeing a vehicle burglary in progress. The witness reported to see a red Toyota Prius that pulled into a Greek housing lot, and “backed out and left once they saw [her] car too.” She then described the suspects to authorities, saying that there were two white suspects and a black male with a red hoodie.

Responding to the 911 call, police tried to catch the suspects who fled from them. The suspects crashed the reportedly stolen red vehicle near Rouse Road and then fled the scene of the accident.

Police have not caught the suspects.

Surveillance footage from the Fairfield Inn & Suites, located at University Boulevard and Rouse Road, showed one of the suspects entering and exiting the hotel, after the vehicle had crashed.

UCF Police Department Chief Richard Beary said the break-ins were a record for the UCF campus. However, these break-ins are not unique.

“The crime’s familiar pattern we are seeing all across Central Florida and the state of Florida,” Beary said in a recorded statement by UCF News.

The Lake Claire community officers have been set up to assist all the victims from this crime. Currently, UCF police victim advocates and housing are working with students to provide them whatever they need to secure their vehicles, make insurance claims or to report crimes. UCFPD wants to get them whole as soon as they can, Beary said.

Ryan McCauley, 18, is one victim who is dealing with authorities in the wake of these break-ins. McCauley received a voicemail from UCFPD saying that his car had been broken into. The psychology major said that he went outside to find his passenger window shattered, and items from his console thrown about.

McCauley said he is thankful that no items were stolen and has filed a police report but has not been contacted since he received the early morning voicemail.

Courtney Gilmartin, public information officer for UCFPD, commended how the eyewitness exhibited the “see something, say something” approach, noting that eyewitnesses should report anything suspicious to the authorities and learn from this report.

Gilmartin said anyone who recognizes the suspect in the surveillance footage or has additional information should call UCFPD at 407-823-5555.

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