

STATEMENT OF MOSTAFA TABATABAINEJAD

On November 14th, 2006, I suffered an unprovoked act of police brutality on the UCLA campus. I am filing a lawsuit today in response to that incident. On that night I was working on a history paper at the Powell Library. While there, for the first time ever, I was asked by a student security guard for my UCLA identification card after already having entered the library before 11:00 PM. Since this had never happened to me before I became concerned that I was being singled out by the guard.

For this reason, I requested that the student guard first ask another student for their i.d. card. I told him that after he did I would show him my card. Even though there were many students around us to choose from, the guard refused my request.

After a short period of time, I finished what I was doing and started to leave the library. On my way out of the library I was confronted by a UCPD officer who within seconds was grabbing me forcefully for no reason. I tried to explain to the officer that I was a UCLA student. A second officer also grabbed me. I went limp because of the way I was being treated and because I was fearful that the officers would hurt me. At no point did I act in a threatening manner to the officers or to anyone else.

As the officers dragged me through the library they used a taser gun to shock me several times. The shocks were very painful and at one point Officer Duren even lifted my shirt to tase me directly on my skin. I started crying. I told Officer Duren that I had a medical condition, but he contemptuously told me that it didn't have anything to do with my standing up. I felt utterly humiliated in front of my fellow students at the library that night and terrified because I knew something horrible was happening to me.

After being removed from the library I was arrested. I couldn't believe what had happened to me when all I had done was ask for clarity on a potentially biased situation.

That night I was in emotional turmoil. I cried and could not sleep all night. I have been emotionally upset by what happened every day since the incident. Today, months later, I still find it difficult to believe that campus police officers could behave with such unprovoked brutality against a student in a library. I am still amazed that the officers made no effort to resolve the issue by talking to me or even allowing me to leave the library on my own.

I hope that by filing this lawsuit and focusing attention on the way that campus police operate that there will be new policies and practices at UCLA that will ensure that no other student has to endure what I have gone through.

I have since learned about Officer Duren's long history of brutality. Officer Duren should not be a law enforcement officer at UCLA or anywhere else. Taser guns should not be used on students in school libraries or campuses. We need campus officers to protect us but we need individuals who perform those tasks with sensitivity, understanding they work on a university campus and are dealing with students.

My hope is that this lawsuit will bring something positive to what has been a very traumatic experience not only for me and my family, but for all the people around the world who have seen the video. I hope that no one else will ever have this experience at UCLA or anywhere else again.

I would like to recognize and thank my fellow students at UCLA, the community, and my friends and family for the overwhelming support and encouragement they have shown me during this difficult time.

Thank You