

Matthew LeBlanc
Georgetown University, SNAP Representative
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My name is Matt LeBlanc and I'm the Program Coordinator in the LGBTQ Resource Center at Georgetown University. I joined the SNAP team in the fall of 2009 out of an interest in working on safety, civility, and social justice issues with our off campus students following a bias indecent perpetrated in the local community.

Having previously worked at two other Jesuit universities in urban settings, I can say that Georgetown has one of the strongest outreach and safety programs available to students and members of the surrounding community.

Our concern for safety takes many different forms and complements the policy enforcement portion of SNAP's work. SNAP is not simply reactionary but a proactive mechanism to address safety and civility in the neighborhoods of West Georgetown and Burleith. The University is proactive in scheduling additional or early SNAP patrols during important campus celebrations or on holiday weekends. This can mean SNAP is out in the neighborhoods starting as early as noon and running until 3am the following morning. In our routine patrols, SNAP members often stop at homes to remind the residence of their roles and responsibilities as good neighbors and our expectations of them as Georgetown students in an effort to assure problems don't develop later in the evening. Our patrols take us well off the main roads to cover area alleyways and dead ends where our flashing yellow light is just one more deterrent to anybody with ill intentions. I have never known students to monetarily turn down the music when we drive by but instead have a saying, "Respect the light." They know that when we arrive we're there to address concerns either from a neighbor or as a Student Affairs professionals and our number one goal is the safety of everybody involved.

On the occasion that we do need to shut down and document a gathering, we help the host disperse the guests in a way to minimize any noise to the surrounding neighbors. We assess the safety of all those leaving the residence and will often call for a Safe Ride van in an effort to cut down on foot traffic. We don't leave the scene until everybody has left and, upon request, even have follow up conversation with concerned neighbors or other students.

It's important to note that the efforts of SNAP extend beyond just the students of Georgetown University. Along with MPD, the University's reimbursable detail, and the CAG patrol, SNAP has investigated suspicious activities ranging from front doors that have been left open, parked cars that were victims of a hit and run, and even breaking up fights of non students, that are coming off of M street. Recently I was part of a detail that stopped a reckless driver who narrowly missed hitting pedestrians. The driver was found to be high school student who residents with his family in West Georgetown.

Just last week during graduation celebrations a young women made a point to come shake my hand and thank me saying, "You were there when we needed you most," remembering my interaction with her and her friends during SNAP in the Fall semester. Her gratitude reaffirmed to me the importance of our presence in the student's lives.

My participation in SNAP has brought me closer with our students and neighbors. I look forward to working together as a community to keep all of us safe and respected.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 10-32
EXHIBIT NO. 179