

UPDATE

Report on Student Death Released

Task force: Response was ‘appropriate and consistent with the University plan for dealing with emergencies.’

By Kathleen McGarvey

THE DEATH OF JUNIOR JEFFREY BORDEAUX Jr. last winter was not something the University could have foreseen or prevented with information possessed at the time, according to a report commissioned by President Joel Seligman from the University’s Office of Counsel.

The 36-page report, submitted to Seligman this summer, notes that the systems and policies in place at the time of the tragedy were similar to those at other universities and that the University’s response was “appropriate and consistent with the University plan for dealing with emergencies.”

Bordeaux died in January following a fight with junior Daren Venable on the Fraternity Quad. Venable was found not guilty of second-degree murder charges

at a nonjury trial in April, when a Monroe County judge ruled that he had acted in self-defense.

In January, Seligman asked Sue Stewart, senior vice president and general counsel for the University, to review the University’s policies related to the incident and submit a report to him.

The task force she led included three University attorneys and a University-retained law firm that specializes in higher education issues and that had no prior relationship with the University. The external law firm was asked to review the report and its methodology.


Seligman also charged the counsel’s office to propose additional steps the University could take to provide a safe environment for all students, faculty, and staff. The report includes 23 recommendations,

and Seligman has asked Stewart to oversee their implementation.

“I do not believe that any of these recommendations would have prevented this tragedy,” Seligman wrote in a University-wide memo on the report. “All in the future may contribute, often in incremental ways, to further enhancing safety on our campus.”

In acknowledging the thoroughness and persuasiveness of the report and the effort that went into producing it, Seligman recognized the anguish caused by the incident.

“Nothing in this report should detract from how painful and saddening were the death of Jeffrey Bordeaux Jr. and the subsequent criminal trial of Daren Venable,” he wrote. “The pain to the family and friends of both of these young men is real and has been wrenching. My heart goes out to those who were touched so deeply and personally by this tragedy.”

The full report is available online at www.rochester.edu/president/memos/2011/bordeaux-report.html. 



Get Ready for ‘The Sing-Off’

YellowJackets selected for singing competition starting September 19 on NBC

SING OUT LOUD: Tune in to NBC’s reality singing competition, *The Sing-Off*, in September to see—and hear—Rochester’s YellowJackets compete with 16 a cappella groups from across the country in this fall’s edition of the show. The weekly competition culminates in a live season finale to name the grand prize winner.