Rohan Maharjan

Dr. Adams

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A safe place to stay

**Problem**:

When I saw Monroe for the first time, I thought of it as a peaceful town. I could hear the birds singing, water flowing and trees rustling. There weren’t any annoying noises, so at times I used to get lost in its serenity. But as time passed by, the city felt way too peaceful for me. I was not able to see any people when I stepped out of Campus. All of them were inside their vehicles rushing to their destinations. Even if the place is in a walking distance, people drive. There is literally nobody in the streets. The city feels cold and unwelcoming. To worsen the situation, it is dangerous to walk here. Many international students have become victims of robbery on and off campus. For instance, a few months ago at around 7 pm, when my friend Sishir was on his bike riding back to his apartment behind Madison, he got robbed by two big guys. Per him, one of those guys kicked his bike and knocked him on the ground. He tried to run away but the other guy caught him from behind. He was desperately trying to kick the guy and run, but the guy hit him on his head, and put his hands in his pocket as if to grab something. My friend got scared so he screamed in fear, “Please take anything you want but just leave me alone.” He was feeling helpless and couldn’t resist anymore. They took his phone, and purse, and ran away. His head was wounded too, but fortunately his life was safe. A similar incident happened just a few weeks after that. Four international students who were walking to Walmart near Campus at night to buy some groceries got attacked by two men. When the students were returning to their apartments, two guys came to them and asked for money. When they denied, one of the men got aggressive and tried to attack them. There were four of them, so they tried to fight back, but the man took his knife out and tried to cut them. When one of the students tried to block the incoming attack, the area between his thumb and index finger got cut. He was bleeding and scared. The students were in a panic so they shouted, “Help! Help! Somebody, please help”. The two guys ran away to avoid any trouble. There weren’t many people around, so nobody could help the injured immediately. After some time, people started gathering as they heard the desperate cry for help. Then, the injured person was taken to the nearest clinic for treatment. After a week, when I met him at ULM, he said in a sad voice, “I don’t want to live here anymore. I just want to go home.” After I heard him say that, I began thinking about ways to solve this problem of robbery. And now, I have come up with a solution.

**Solution:**

After those incidents, campus police have become more active and started patrolling the suspicious area. But that alone cannot reduce the criminal acts occurring around Campus, because it’s not possible for police to put all their resources in just patrolling. This will allow criminals to attack the students at places where less patrolling takes place. So, my solution goes like this. The police officials take all the information of international students from the international student office. Then they divide the students into two groups. One, students living on campus and two, students living off campus. The students living on campus are pretty much safe as compared to those living off campus. So, off-campus students’ security will be prioritized. After collecting addresses of students living off campus, our campus will put enough street lights in those areas where students reside so that the street seems bright even at darkest night. Then, many surveillance cameras will be attached to the poles at those locations from where the camera can capture a wide range of view (This will help reduce the number of cameras needed). To make the procedure more effective, there will be constant patrolling at night on the way that students take to reach their apartments. Furthermore, a large signboard or postures will be put along the way which says, ‘You are being watched’, with a picture of eyes on it. The picture is important because it will subconsciously make people feel like somebody is ‘really’ watching them. If the above steps are taken seriously and implemented properly, the number of criminal cases around ULM will decrease dramatically.

**Justification:**

The one very important thing that international students research before admitting to a college in the United States is whether it is safe or not. When the solutions above are executed properly, ULM will be very safe for students. Furthermore, increased number of people in streets will make Monroe more lively and welcoming. This will attract the number of internationals to study at ULM. So, my solution is killing two birds with one stone. First, it is benefitting college by increasing number of international students, and second, it is making a safer environment for students that are already enrolled here.