Chinese student in Illinois vanishes without a trace after getting in car

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By Hong Xiao in New York |   
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A Chinese student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has not been seen for five days after security footage showed her getting into a car on Friday.   
"We are doing everything we can to search for her, including the use of resources offered by our partner law enforcement agencies and the FBI," UIUC Police Chief Jeff Christensen said on Tuesday.   
Zhang Yingying, 26, a visiting scholar from Fujian, had been in the US for about a month. She was conducting research at UIUC's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences and living in university housing.   
According to local media, Zhang sent a text message on Friday to a prospective landlord that she was going to Urbana to sign a lease on an apartment, but she never showed up.   
Her last phone activity was at 1:30 pm that day, saying that she was running late and would arrive about 2:10.   
The last message on her phone was from the landlord at 2:38 pm. "Hey Yingying! Just checking in to see if you're on your way."   
   
   
There was no reply.   
University police released security camera footage on Monday showing Zhang getting into a black Saturn Astra, which then continued north on Goodwin Avenue.   
On UIUC's Reddit page, a user named "rosabel34" said the driver of a black sedan had also approached a friend of hers on Friday and that "she reported it to the police".   
According to the friend's Facebook post, the man, wearing a badge on a chain under his shirt, said he was an undercover police officer. "He asked me to come up to his car so he could ask me a few questions, which I refused to do," she said in her post.   
"We have received many pieces of information and our detectives continue to work around the clock to develop new information," Christensen said in his latest statement.   
The Chinese Consulate General in Chicago has been in touch with police, the school and Zhang's parents, mobilizing all available resources to help find her. The consulate is helping Zhang's parents get an emergency visa for the US.   
Chinese student groups are gathering whatever information they can about her disappearance.   
"We're doing what we can, using all of our resources, and people here to help," Robin Huang of the Chinese Students and Scholars Association said. "We really hope that we can speed things up, and we really hope the girl is safe."   
According to Beijing News, Zhang's friends and schoolmates in China are making an effort to raise awareness of her disappearance.   
Investigators tried to plot the location of Zhang's cellphone, but it was shut off and they could not locate it.   
Zhang's boyfriend in China, Hou Xiaolin, is collecting information and spreading it on as many platforms as he can, hoping to raise awareness of her plight.   
"I wish the search process in the US would speed up," Hou said. "Everything is moving too slow."   
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