

## Nine Burglaries in One Weekend at Prairie View A&M

Contributed by Richard White -- Black College Wire  
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Most students were out of town at big football game

A total of nine burglaries occurred the first weekend in October in the Phase III apartments of Prairie View A&M University's Village North.

According to Lt. David Webb of the university police department, the break-ins happened during the evening from Friday to Saturday, although the authorities were first notified Saturday, Oct. 4. Stolen items included electronics such as televisions, laptops, digital cameras, clothing, and gaming consoles.

The break-ins were closely related, all occurring during the weekend of the Prairie View vs. Grambling football game in Dallas, Texas. Webb said burglaries normally happen in Phase I and II, and while officers were targeting that area, Phase III was burglarized.

Sophomore chemistry major Crystal Okoche got word Sunday afternoon from her roommate that her room was burglarized as she was coming back from Dallas.

"My roommate called me crying hysterically, I couldn't believe it," Okoche said. I rushed to get to my room, and it was trashed. My door was kicked in, my drawers were open, closet doors were open, and my bed was moved."

Senior accounting major Erica Nelson had a similar experience. She, too, was notified by her roommate as she got back on campus Sunday afternoon.

Nelson said, "My screen was on the second floor, that's when it started sinking in. My door was already open, and clothes were everywhere." Among the things that were stolen from Nelson was a laptop, a textbook, and calculator.

Webb said, "The police department is still gathering information, the main characters have been apprehended, and others who played a role in this will be found. Two arrests have been made in University College, and they were sent to Waller County jail. Most of the items have been returned, and there is a good chance that everything will be replaced. If they try to sell anything, we will know and catch them. We are working on others, it's a matter of time, we're working cautiously because we want to be accurate."

To ensure security and safety on campus, campus police have devised new tactics to make sure this problem never happens again. "We will be more spread out, and a lot more active. We did some prevention, but the criminal element moved to Phase III," Webb added.

Webb knows that students recognize that they want no part in that activity, so people will come forward. "It takes one thief to mess it up for everyone. We believe that the students will do the right thing. We want their experience with us to be positive, not negative, but if you break the law, look out. Crime doesn't pay, if you break into anyone's room or apartment we will find out and put you in jail. Those who perpetrated the crimes this weekend are finding that to be a true statement."

Hotline (no name required): 936-261-1375.

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Richard White is editor of The Panther, the Prairie View A&M University student newspaper, which originally published this article.