

MPD officer who killed Amir Locke disciplined for controversial 2012 Occupy MN DRE training

<https://www.bluestemprairie.com/bluestemprairie/2022/02/mpd-officer-who-killed-amir-locke-disciplined-for-controversial-2012-occupy-mn-dre-training-.html>



In an article published Thursday in the Hutchinson Leader, Stephen Wiblemo reports in [Former Hutchinson officer fatally shoots man in Minneapolis police raid:](#)

A former Hutchinson police officer now working for the Minneapolis Police Department fatally shot a man during a Wednesday morning raid in downtown Minneapolis.

Mark Hanneman, who worked as a full-time police officer at Hutchinson Police Services from March 21, 2012, to Sept. 12, 2015, and again as a part-time officer from July 25, 2017, to March 24, 2019, was part of a Minneapolis police SWAT team executing search warrants for a St. Paul police homicide case, according to the Minneapolis Police Department. . . .

We wondered if the paper published any other news about Officer Hanneman.

In 2013, Terry Davis reported in [Hutchinson Police and officers among those sued by Occupy Minnesota protesters:](#)

The Hutchinson Police Department and three employees are among several agencies and more than two dozen officers being sued by six Occupy Minnesota protesters who claim they were given drugs as part of a now-suspended Drug Recognition Program.

The suit, filed in Federal District Court in Minneapolis, alleges the program was an unethical clinical trial designed to give members of the public marijuana in order to observe the subjects and their behavior while under the influence of the drugs.

Occupy Minnesota was a group of mostly young people who took part in protests for several months in and around Peavey Plaza. It was part of the National Occupy Wall Street movement protesting actions by financial institutions that are believed to have led to the 2008-2009 recession.

The suit names as defendants the state of Minnesota, the Minnesota State Patrol and several other law enforcement agencies and officers, including HPD and two of its officers, Karl Willers and Mark Hanneman. Also named is HPD's Barb Mathwig, who oversees the department's property/evidence room. . . .

The allegations first surfaced in May 2012. The Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension launched a criminal investigation into allegations that police officers, including Hutchinson's Willers, provided marijuana to Occupy Minnesota protesters during part of the State Patrol's drug evaluation and classification training. Willers and fellow officer Hanneman were participating in that program at that time.

No charges filed

Hatten confirmed in May that his department requested the Bureau's investigation. Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman in September declined to press charges, saying "there simply was insufficient evidence for us to file charges."

Freeman said people making the allegations offered investigators differing accounts of what happened in May near Minneapolis' Peavey Plaza. Additionally, their accounts contradicted other evidence, and "there was no substantial evidence to corroborate any of the allegations."

Freeman further said there were inconsistencies in statements made by an officer who had said he saw another provide marijuana to a test subject, and the version from an Occupy Minnesota member who allegedly received the marijuana. The suit filed Friday claims one officer who stepped forward was Chisago County Sheriff's Office deputy Andrew Mahowald, who is also named as a defendant in the lawsuit.

In 2014, Davis posted in [Officer says he provided drugs](#):

Two Hutchinson officers were disciplined last year for their alleged involvement in an incident that took place during the state's Drug Recognition Evaluator training program in the Twin Cities in May 2012.

The Minneapolis Star Tribune newspaper reported Thursday that one of the officers, Karl Willers, admitted to Hutchinson Police Services superiors that he gave people marijuana during the DRE training exercise in Minneapolis. . . .

The admission apparently came about a month after prosecutors said in September they lacked evidence to charge officers alleged to have given test subjects drugs. Prosecutors also said at the time an extensive investigation by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension found that people making the allegations gave differing accounts of what happened near Minneapolis' Peavey Plaza.

The allegations surfaced after Occupy Minnesota protesters posted a YouTube video purporting to show police giving protesters drugs as part of the drug evaluation training program. Occupy Minnesota was a movement of mostly young people protesting as part of the national Occupy Wall Street movement that swept the country in early 2012.

When asked to comment Thursday at the Star Tribune's article, Hutchinson Police Chief Dan Hatten initially declined, but then added that the story "needs to be done, these officers have been through enough." . . .

Hatten acknowledged that the other Hutchinson officer taking part in the training last year was Officer Mark Hanneman. He said Hanneman received disciplinary action similar to Willers', though they were not partnered during the training session. Both are still with the department.

[updated, 2/4 11:33 am] At Unicorn Riot, Niko Georgiades reported on Thursday in [Minnesota Police Kill Man in Minneapolis Apartment, Making Three Victims in 66 Days](#):

Hanneman was previously a police officer in [Hutchinson](#) and was involved in a statewide intra-agency scheme to [offer illicit drugs to protesters in the Occupy movement and the unhoused](#) as part of Minnesota State Patrol's Drug Recognition Evaluator (DRE) program. The program was briefly halted during the controversy and a lawsuit but continues to operate. Hanneman had since become an officer with MPD after serving a minor reprimand for his participation in DRE and recently [graduating](#) with a masters degree in criminal justice. **[end update]**

About the DRE controversy

Here's the Occupy Minnesota YouTube Davis mentions; it was posted by Dan Feidt, who is a founder of the Unicorn Riot collective:

At the Southwest Journal, Nick Halter reported in [Occupy protesters in Minneapolis say out-of-town police gave them drugs](#):

Protesters part of the OccupyMN movement say that suburban and rural sheriff's deputies picked up people from Peavey Plaza and provided them drugs as part of the state's Drug Recognition Evaluator program.

A YouTube video ("MK Occupy Minnesota: Drugs & the DRE Program at Peavey Plaza") posted by independent media activists and members of Communities United Against Police Brutality show several people getting into cruisers and alleging the officers provided them drugs at a Richfield Minnesota Department of Transportation facility.

Minneapolis Police Chief Tim Dolan said he had no prior knowledge that this practice was taking place, if the allegations are true.

"We looked at the allegations but there was nothing involving Minneapolis Police, and I'd be shocked if they were involved," Dolan said.

The video shows cruisers or deputies from Dakota, Fillmore, Olmsted, Chisago and Kanabec counties.

At a public hearing on May 2, activist Forest Oliver told a city committee that law enforcement officers took him to an airfield in Richfield, gave him a bag of marijuana and a pipe, and told him to smoke the marijuana. He's featured several times on the video.

Others on the video say police offered them all sorts of drugs, including cocaine and heroin.

Two phone calls to the Minnesota State Patrol, which administers the Drug Recognition Evaluator program, were not returned to the Southwest Journal.

The State Patrol, did, however, tell the Star Tribune that there was no evidence of the allegations that law enforcement officials actually gave drugs to the people they picked up. The State Patrol said the

program is designed so that officers pick up people who already used drugs and does not give them drugs.

OccupyMN protesters at a May 7 city committee hearing said that officers would drop off intoxicated people at Peavey Plaza, making their protests look bad.

Dolan said his department is looking into the allegations.

"We've seen the allegations or heard the allegations," he said. "If that's the case, we're not very happy about that, but we'll look into it and find out and get some answers. There's nothing implicating Minneapolis in this."

Asked if he knew that out-of-town agencies were giving drugs to protesters, Dolan said: "No. I think we'd probably have an issue with that."

City Council Member Cam Gordon, who sits on the committee, raised concerns about the allegations on his blog.

"I can appreciate that it is in the interest of the public to have a well-educated police force, able to identify intoxicated people," he wrote. "But there must be better, more ethical, alternative ways to provide them that education."

Reporting for the Guardian in May 2012, Ryan Devereaux reported in [Minnesota police under fire over claims they got Occupy protesters high](#):

Public safety officials in [Minnesota](#) have launched a criminal investigation following multiple claims that law enforcement officers got Occupy protesters high on drugs in a program examining the effects of street marijuana.

A state trooper has been placed on leave in connection with the allegations and the program has been suspended. One participant in the program said police got him "high as fuck".

The story was broken by independent journalists based in Minnesota who began recording officers picking up and returning protesters to a local park where the demonstrators have been camped out. Individuals repeatedly claimed that the police would provide them with marijuana, watch them smoke it, then observe their behavior. In several instances individuals who seemed sober when they left with police, return appearing to be under the influence.

"I got stoned with a couple cops," a protester who goes by the name Panda said on camera. He claimed he was walking near the park when an officer said he smelled of marijuana. This prompted Panda to walk faster, but then the police officer did something unusual and asked if he would like to smoke more. Panda said yes.

"I'm high as fuck," he said, following his alleged encounter.

Panda said the officers treated him to a meal after they smoked him out. "They bought me dinner," he said, claiming the police paid for a double cheeseburger from McDonalds. Panda said the police then timed how long it took him to eat the meal and observed how eagerly he ate once the burger was in his hands.

He speculated that the police wanted to "see how people act with the munchies".

Dan Feidt, an [independent journalist](#) with the Occupy movement, says he began noticing the activity two weeks ago. Feidt joined with other independent media outlets – including Rogue Media, Communities United Against Police Brutality, and Twin Cities IndyMedia – in documenting what was going on at the park.

A [35-minute video](#) compiled by the group shows law enforcement officers from nearly a half dozen departments transporting people to and from the park. Numerous anonymous individuals interviewed in the video claim that officers had a practice of picking up people off the street who were under the influence of illegal substances, transporting them to a building at a local airport, then observing their behavior and administering evaluations as part of study.

Minnesota is among 48 states – as well as the District of Columbia and Canada – that participate in a so-called Drug Recognition Evaluator (DRE) program, aimed at helping officers learn how to spot impairment and troublesome drivers. The program began in Minnesota in 1991 and requires officers to perform evaluations on volunteers, generally recruited from the community, who are high.

The program does not permit officers to provide drugs to subjects, but that's exactly what Feidt's video suggests they did.

Forrest, another interviewee in the video, claims police got him high, but didn't test him because they suspected he was working with the journalists.

"They didn't test us this time. They just smoked us up this time," he said. Forrest was allegedly given a black box by the police complete with "weed, pipes and lighters." Forrest said he got high on the substance provided by police. "It was a whole bag of weed," he said.

The state patrol [initially said there was "no evidence"](#) to support the allegations made in the video but on Wednesday the Minnesota department of public safety [issued a press release](#) announcing that it had launched a criminal investigation into claims that a Hutchinson police officer provided marijuana to subject in the drug program. The allegation was made by an officer from another law enforcement agency. The DPS also announced that it was suspending the program.

Feidt says the program is consistent with police behavior he's observed at Occupy camps around the country.

"What we saw happen in many, many different cities was they would take people that had chemical dependency issues, they would take people that had mental illness issues and that kind of thing and they would basically drop them off at the Occupy site," Feidt told the Guardian.

He hopes the video will call attention to the war on drugs. "For me, the cruel and dehumanizing nature of the war on drugs has been a major issue for a long time," Feidt said. "There's public debate about this program that never really happened, so I'm really hoping that we can have a constructive debate and finally wind down this incredibly destructive system."

At Minnesota Public Radio, Laura Yuen reported [Head of suspended drug training program has history of complaints](#) and [Investigation's report of Drug Recognition Evaluator program exposes inconsistency, confusion](#).

Public Intelligencer supplied documents after this copy in [Minnesota Police Investigation of Officers Providing Drugs to Occupy Protesters](#):

The following document contains files related to the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension's investigation into allegations that law enforcement officers participating in Drug Recognition Evaluator (DRE) courses provided drugs to sober people they had picked up from Peavey Plaza in downtown Minneapolis where protesters connected with Occupy Minnesota had been located since April 2012. The officers then used the intoxicated subjects for their training course, sometimes providing them with rewards like food or cigarettes, and then returned them to the Plaza. Though the investigation confirms many aspects of the story and a Sheriff's Deputy [admitted to the DRE course instructor that he had witnessed his partner in the course providing marijuana to subjects](#), the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension found that there was insufficient evidence to sustain charges and obtain convictions against any of the officers involved. This was partly due to the fact that [29 former officers and employees associated with the program refused to testify](#), blocking the investigation. For more information on the file, see [Dan Feidt's article on the documents](#) and [watch the video report](#) he helped produced in May 2012 which played a significant role in raising public awareness of the issue and spurring the investigation.

We'll continue to update this post as we dig to find the Star Tribune story mentioned in Davis's copy- and other material related to the story. We've contacted

While this tale may seem old, we do believe it reveals a culture of policing which doesn't respect citizens' rights and lives.