



**The Ruston Daily  
Leader**  
Ruston, Louisiana **ONLINE**

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### **Tech student arrested at Wal-Mart**

#### **Text message about gang violence stokes concerns over student's gun**

Nick Todaro, Reporter  
03-19-2009

A Louisiana Tech student involved with a campus gun rights organization was arrested at Wal-Mart on Wednesday night.

Alfred Saurage, a vocal supporter of Rep. Ernest Wooton's bill for allowing students to carry concealed weapons on campus, is a senior in mechanical engineering at Tech. He has said he openly wears a .45 caliber semi-automatic pistol when out and about in Ruston.

The gun drew unwanted attention Wednesday from store workers and members of the public at Wal-Mart, partly because of a separate report of impending gang-related gun violence at the store originating from text messages.

Ruston Police were called to the scene.

Capt. Kevin Peden said store management asked Saurage to remove his gun and put it in his car because he was scaring customers and workers. He refused. Louisiana law empowers the public display and carrying of firearms.

"Store management advised the Ruston Police officers that a text message was going around about a person that was going to enter Wal-Mart and kill two women employees," Peden said in a release. "At this time, it is not known from where the texts originated."

Officers approached Saurage and asked him to leave the store. He refused again.

He was arrested on a charge of entry or remaining in a place after being forbidden, and bond was set at \$1,000.

"According to Louisiana law, it is legal to wear an exposed firearm so long as it does not create a disturbance or alarm any persons," Peden said. "Mr. Saurage was obviously creating a disturbance and causing a great deal of concern in the store, to the point of customers approaching officers as they arrived. The store was well within its rights to ask Mr. Saurage to leave the store and not return to the store unless he was unarmed."

Police are investigating the text messages, Peden said, in relation to reports of text messaging hoaxes at Wal-Mart stores in Delaware and Maryland. Investigators in those states have been inundated with calls regarding a text message that has been circulating, warning of an alleged gang initiation in which women will be killed in Wal-Mart. It has been dismissed as an urban myth.

The text message in that area reportedly read: "i don't noe how tru dis is but here it is. Dont go 2 any walmarts 2nite ther will be a gang initiation n dey have 2 kill 3 women at each store. Tell ur love 1s."

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