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EXCLUSIVE: Murder, kidnapping, brutality charges: These are the cops Ron DeSantis paid to come to Florida

Florida's police recruitment bonus appears to have attracted a certain kind of cop.

Michael Zhang David Covucci

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Posted on May 21, 2023 Updated on May 29, 2023, 6:12 am CDT

In July 2021, the [son of a high-ranking](#) New York Police Department (NYPD) deputy allegedly plowed his car into Black Lives Matter protesters in New York City, injuring a teen. The protesters were calling for the firing of a cop who hurled homophobic slurs at a suspect while beating him.



Florida

In addition to the job, Burgos got a bonus: \$6,693.44, a check for coming aboard, offered by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) to recruit cops to the Sunshine State, where they could work in a state where mantras like “defund the police” weren’t being chanted by protesters.

Burgos isn’t the only officer to take the money. In response to a Daily Dot FOIA, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity provided a list of the over 1,700 [officers](#) who received nearly \$9 million.

The issues with officers don’t stop with Burgos either.

In response to DeSantis’ call, the Daily Dot found officers who since joining Florida police departments have been arrested for kidnapping and murder and officers who, before they moved to the Sunshine State, had numerous complaints against them, ranging from excessive force to false imprisonment to sexual extortion.

Josh Bogwandas was hired by the Miramar Police Department in December of 2022. He too received the same \$6,693.44 check.



chasing her after she escaped the house and dragging her back in. The victim, who wasn't named, suffered "several bumps, marks, scratches, and cuts, including on her forehead, lip, right arm, and neck," [reported Miramar News 10](#)

Bogwandas was charged with domestic battery and kidnapping and the charges are still pending.

The Miramar Police Department cut ties with him after.

Chloe Davidson joined the [Escambia County Sheriff's Department](#) on August 5, 2022. Five months later, Santa Rosa County Police came to her door, after responding to a domestic disturbance.

Her husband had been shot dead, and Davidson was booked on felony murder charges after police found no evidence she acted in self-defense.

She, too, received a nearly \$7,000 check from DeSantis. The charges against her are still pending.

The money is part of [HB 3](#), legislation designed to improve policing in Florida. DeSantis dubbed it the "strongest law enforcement recruitment and support initiative in the nation." It provides funds for officer pay raises and training programs, and features a signing bonus



nation.

“If you’re being mistreated, you’re not being supported—whether you’re on the West Coast, whether you’re in New York, whether you’re in Chicago, any of these places—if you’re qualified and you can fill a spot here, you know, we’re gonna get your back,” DeSantis said in April.

“We’ve stood for this being a noble profession. We want to support the folks who are protecting us.”

It was clearly a hit.

On April 6, DeSantis announced more than 1,750 bonuses had been issued to newly employed law enforcement recruits in Florida as a part of his program.

The Daily Dot obtained the full list of the officers.

The governor hasn’t taken this PR opportunity for granted. He has taken a tour throughout the state, hand-delivering these [checks](#) to grateful cops.

These police stations have reciprocally presented the governor with tokens of appreciation, including a [gag](#) \$5,000 bill with DeSantis’ face on it.

The figures in the Daily Dot’s sheet appear to be officers who received the \$5,000, an additional \$1,000 bonus, and



to be fleeing the NYPD, which faced significant backlash for their [violent response](#) to the racial justice protests in 2020 after the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor.

Numerous [reports](#) have detailed the exodus of law enforcement from the NYPD following the open invitation from DeSantis in 2021.

In the list of bonus recipients, the Daily Dot found at least two dozen officers with identical names that also appear in NYPD's [Civilian Complaint Review Board](#) (CCRB) database, a searchable site run by New York City that makes public reports filed against officers for things like excessive use of force and racial profiling.

The complaints against names in the database and on the bonus list include accusations that officers unlawfully pepper sprayed, assaulted, and pointed their firearms at suspects, as well as used chokeholds and offensive language regarding race and ethnicity.

Allegations were also made that officer propositioned individuals for sex and performed unwarranted strip searches.

The Daily Dot is not naming the officers who it could not independently verify were NYPD officers who got DeSantis'



NYPD—was accused in [April 2021](#) of making a sexual proposition toward an individual. An internal investigation was reportedly dropped in August of that year, after investigators were unable to contact the complainant, [according to 50-a](#), an independently run database that tracks outcomes of complaints and is sourced directly from NYPD data.

Meblin was also one of several officers involved in a [\\$160,000 settlement](#) stemming from an incident in May 2020 during protests in New York over the deaths of Floyd and Taylor.

Meblin and his fellow officers were [accused](#) of illegally detaining a peaceful protester before “punching him in his face, head and other areas of his body” before striking them with a baton and obstructing their breathing, according to court documents.

A photograph of Meblin in the 50-a database matches that of an officer who was hired by the Palm Beach Police Department the same month that Meblin left the NYPD.

The Palm Beach PD confirmed to the Daily Dot that it employed the same Daniel Meblin and said he had been an “exemplary” officer since coming on board. The department said it was aware of the disciplinary complaint



Captain Will Rothrock said to the Daily Dot, speaking only for the Palm Beach PD, it found the bonuses “beneficial in our hiring attempts. While it may not be the largest factor in any applicant’s decision-making calculus as they determine their desired career opportunities, it has received positive mention from our new hires.”

The department declined to make Meblin available for an interview with the Daily Dot.

Officer History as of 05/15/2023

CCRB NYPD Officer History

Status: Inactive
 Tax No: [REDACTED]
 Shield: [REDACTED]

Officer Name: Meblin, Daniel
 Rank: Police Officer
 Command: 001 PCT

Total Complaints: 2
 Substantiated Complaints: 0

Complaint Date	FADO Type	Allegation	Board Allegation Disposition	Board Officer Discipline Recommendation*	NYPD Allegation Disposition	NYPD Officer Penalty
202101657 01/03/2021	Abuse of Authority	Stop	Complainant Unavailable			
	Abuse of Authority	Threat of force (verbal or physical)	Complainant Unavailable			
	Offensive Language	Race	Complainant Unavailable			
202102629 04/03/2021	Abuse of Authority	Sex Miscon (Sexual/Romantic Proposition)	Complainant Unavailable			
	Abuse of Authority	Threat of arrest	Complainant Unavailable			

NYPD Member of Service Histories

Also part of the NYPD exodus appears to be Haitham Hussameldin, who according to the [50-a police database](#), served over 20 years. According to [public records](#), a Haitham Hussameldin who previously lived in Staten Island now lives in Lake Worth, Florida, which is five miles from Manapalan, Florida, where a Haitham Hussameldin on the force there received a bonus

Hussameldin racked up [6 formal](#)



theft and falsifying records by claiming overtime hours he never worked.

In all incidents, the complaints were either withdrawn, unsubstantiated or the complainant and victim did not want to cooperate with the CCRB process.

He's been accused, in complaints and lawsuits, of tackling suspects without provocation, including a kid.

On the morning of April 28, 2017, a teenager was walking with her friend to South Brooklyn Community High School. Hussameldin stopped her and [according to a suit filed by the victim](#), asked for a school ID to prove she was a student.

She replied that she didn't have one, that she "just wanted to go to school," and began walking towards the campus, which was just half a block away.

Hussameldin, according to the suit, tackled her to the ground, putting her in handcuffs, and shoving her into the back of a police cruiser, she claims, with her backpack still dangling behind her.

Throughout the encounter, the teenager said she felt ill, needed to vomit, and could not breathe and that officers ignored her.

The girl was charged with misdemeanors for resisting arrest and obstructing



On February 13, 2014, Hussameldin and his partner were called to the scene for a disagreement between neighbors over a snowblower. According to the [suit](#) filed by the victim, one of the officers tackled a person to the ground and pushed his knee against his head. The person’s brother questioned the officer’s extreme use of force, according to the complaint.

In response, Hussameldin “tackled [him] and threw him to the ground. As a result of this tackle, the victim suffered bruising to his arms and body.”

Those two cases against Hussameldin were settled by the NYPD, costing the city [over \\$100,000](#).

Manapalan Police and Hussameldin did not respond to a request for comment from the Daily Dot.

Officer History as of 05/15/2023

CCRB NYPD Officer History

Status: Inactive Officer Name: Hussameldin, Haltham
 Tax No: [REDACTED] Rank: Lieutenant Total Complaints: 6
 Shield: [REDACTED] Command: 122 PCT Substantiated Complaints: 0

Complaint	Incident Date	FADO Type	Allegation	Board Allegation Disposition	Board Officer Discipline Recommendation*	NYPD Allegation Disposition	NYPD Officer Penalty
200912260	10/11/2009	Discourtesy	Word	Complaint Withdrawn			
201703312	04/28/2017	Force	Physical force	Alleged Victim Unavailable			
201707000	07/14/2017	Force	Physical force	Unsubstantiated***			
		Abuse of Authority	Question	Alleged Victim Uncooperative			
		Discourtesy	Word	Unsubstantiated***			
		Discourtesy	Word	Unsubstantiated***			
201709892	11/22/2017	Abuse of Authority	Strip-searched	Complainant Uncooperative			
201805903	07/20/2018	Abuse of Authority	Threat re: removal to hospital	Complainant Uncooperative			
202105753	09/22/2021	Abuse of Authority	Search of recording device	Unfounded			

[NYPD Member of Service Histories](#)

Office Dawn Ortiz is now a member of the city of Longwood’s police force.



was swinging a folding chair and charging at them. Ortiz and her partner ordered him to stop and when he didn't, Ortiz shot him in the chest and killed him.

The two officers were not charged by the Brooklyn District Attorney and were initially praised for acting heroically, named “[Cops of the Year](#)” by the NYPD’s Holy Name Society.

That praise would soon diminish in the coming months.

The two women faced internal disciplinary charges for not having taken measures to avoid the fatal shooting.

The NYPD paid the family \$100,000 in order to settle a civil case over the death, but the internal review took much longer.

Ortiz was also accused of [strip-searching a woman inappropriately](#), a charge the NYPD found substantiated, and [implicated](#) in a lawsuit of a woman who died in custody of an overdose, after police removed her from the hospital and took her to a jail cell.

Now, a Dawn Ortiz, who used to live in Brooklyn and Staten Island, and is the same age of the NYPD officer according to record reports, lives just 12 miles from the Longwood Police Department



respond to a request for comment.

Robert Corbett was one of the officers who got nearly \$7,000 to relocate to Florida, where he joined the Clermont Police Department. A [LinkedIn](#) page for a man with the same name shows that he is currently a police officer in Clermont, a city in central Florida. Before he moved to the Sunshine State, Corbett's LinkedIn says he spent over two decades working at the NYPD.

According to the NYPD's [CCRB](#) Corbett received four civilian complaints during his time with NYPD. From 1999 to 2001, three complainants accused Corbett of abuse of authority for conduct including threatening force and retaliatory arrest. One of those complaints also accused him of using physical force. Records show that two of the complainants were Black men, the third individual's race and gender are not recorded.

The NYPD deemed that Corbett violated department policy by using excessive force and conducting a retaliatory arrest on one complainant, described in [ProPublica's](#) records as a 25-year-old Black man.

He was reportedly exonerated of abusing his authority in the other complaints. The accusation that he was disproportionate to a 28-year-old Black man



protesters. The NYPD found that the physical force was within guidelines and could not determine if the use of pepper spray was legitimate

The Clermont Police did not respond to a request for comment. Corbett did not respond to a Daily Dot request for comment.

Officer History as of 05/15/2023

CCRB NYPD Officer History

Status: Inactive Officer Name: Corbett, Robert
 Tax No: [REDACTED] Rank: Lieutenant Total Complaints: 4
 Sheet: [REDACTED] Command: LB PALS Substantiated Complaints: 1

Complaint	Incident Date	FADO Type	Allegation	Board Allegation Disposition	Board Officer Discipline Recommendation*	NYPD Allegation Disposition	NYPD Officer Penalty
20000610	09/20/2000	Discourtesy	Word	Complainant Uncooperative			
200101024	02/11/2001	Force	Physical force	Substantiated (Charges)			
		Abuse of Authority	Retaliatory arrest	Substantiated (Charges)			
200103355	05/09/2001	Abuse of Authority	Threat of force (verbal or physical)	Exonerated**			
		Discourtesy	Other	Unsubstantiated***			
202105997	06/28/2020	Force	Pepper spray	Unable to Determine***			
		Force	Pepper spray	Unable to Determine***			
		Force	Physical force	Within NYPD Guidelines**			

[NYPD Member of Service Histories](#)

The NYPD did not respond to a request for comment regarding any of the officers above

Outside of New York City, other cops were also involved in large settlements at their previous departments.

Benjamin Petering, an officer who came to the St. Petersburg Police Department in Florida after working in Colorado, made [headlines](#) over a 2017 encounter that led to a \$125,000 settlement.

The incident involved an arrest and charges against a man that were



The man followed up by suing the department for unlawful search and excessive force, earning him the six-figure payout.

Aurora PD confirmed Petering left the force in October 2022. Petering did not respond to an inquiry sent over Facebook Messenger.

A spokesperson for the St. Petersburg Police Department confirmed that Petering worked in Aurora before transferring and that he received the recruitment bonus. They said that “Our hiring process includes an extensive background investigation, interview, and polygraph examination,” when asked about Petering’s past incidents.

The department also revealed they were aware of an officer-involved shooting Petering was a part of when he was in Aurora, but that it did not affect the decision to bring him on board, as it had been deemed “justified” by the state of Colorado.

As for Davidson, charged with homicide, she was a cadet for the Escambia County Sheriff’s office before she [allegedly](#) shot her husband, Doug Davidson Jr., in their home on Jan. 1, in Pace, Florida.



become a deputy but had failed the field training program. It said she had not been employed by the department in the 30 days before the shooting.

According to [WEAR News](#), Chloe spoke with investigators on the record when they arrived on the scene. She told officers that her husband tried to choke her before the shooting.

She told police that she was acting in self-defense but Investigators reported that there were no injuries, scratches, or cuts consistent with her account of a physical altercation.

Investigators said she appeared calm and claim she smirked when they left the room after she asked for a lawyer.

The two had three young boys together who were not home at the time of the shooting

The Escambia County Sheriff's did not respond to a request for comment. Contact information for Davidson could not be found.

While the case against domestic violence Bowgandas is proceeding, the Miramar Police Department declined to comment on the bonus program.

“This arrest illustrates the department’s commitment to enforcing the law without



who is charged with a crime, he enjoys the presumption of innocence. An administrative investigation is also underway.”

Bowgandas did not respond to a request for comment sent over Facebook Messenger

The New York District Attorney’s office said that the records regarding Burgos’ case, for driving into protesters, were sealed and could not reveal how his case concluded. Cases in New York can be sealed under certain conditions, including if charges are dismissed, the defendant enters a dismissal agreement on the condition they aren’t arrested again, or the defendant pleaded guilty to disorderly conduct.

The Apopka Police told the Daily Dot that Burgos left the department in February 2023, but did not specify why. Contact information for Burgos could not be found.

The DeSantis administration and the Florida Office of Economic Opportunity did not respond to requests for comment about the story.

Additional reporting by Athena Hawkins.

This post has been updated with comment by several police departments.



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The Daily Dot

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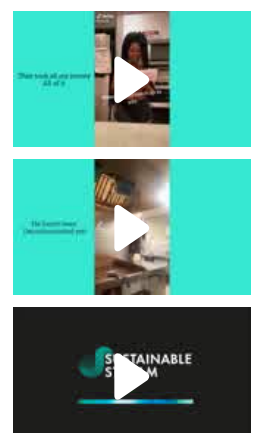
Shawn Pardazi wows cops with his system for spotting lies—experts say taking his class makes them worse

Reviews are rave, but the science is questioned.

Michael Zhang Tech Posted on May 10, 2023



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Featured Video

His [TikTok](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts have thousands of followers, with content geared toward officers watching.



@capsavvysheikh

Episode 12 - Compartment in an Audi
#SmugglersInc #k9softiktok #co ...See more
original sound - Capt. Savvy Sheikh



officers a variety of secret, intuitive methods on how to tell when a suspect is being deceptive, which will lead to more successful interrogations.

These courses have attracted the interest of police officers across the nation.

On July 30, 2021, nearly a hundred officers across Texas—including the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Frisco Sheriff’s Department, and the Fort Worth Police Department—all came to Round Rock for 24 hours of training from Pardazi, hosted by the Round Rock Police Department.

These officers attended two of Pardazi’s trademark classes “Decoding Cover Alibis” and “Smugglers Inc. 2.0.”

These two specific courses focused on teaching officers how to “identify suspicious occupant demeanors,” “identify various types of lies,” and how to catch “cover stories of criminal intent during interviews.”

And just in case the police of Texas happened to detain a member of the KGB, they would be taught how to “identify influential methods used by clandestine organizations to maintain secrecy while being interviewed.”

The reviews for Pardazi, obtained by the Daily Dot via FOIA requests to the Round Rock Police Department, were raves. Texas officers described the sessions as the “Best class ever. Could be a full week class!”

It was a “No bullshit approach to interdiction with proven concepts, Pardazi is a hell of an instructor,” said one. One review also noted “How relatable the information” was, and “how it resonates with



He is not affiliated with any of the police departments he teaches at. Pardazi did not respond to multiple requests for comment by the Daily Dot.

According to the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement, officers are required to take refresher training designed to help cops improve their policing practices. The training requirements vary, but every two years an officer is expected to take approximately 40 hours.

Regulations like these are where police personalities like Pardazi thrive, as his class can be hosted by any department to help officers become better cops.

Alongside courses in tactical rifle marksmanship and operating a vehicle in self-defense, Pardazi pushes a type of investigative tactic that's been criticized heavily by academics, who have noted that people trained in the methods taught often do worse in interrogations compared to those who never took his course.

Pardazi describes his trademark "Evading Honesty" system as a "cross-cultural/crossgender system" that utilizes behavioral analysis to elicit information.



Pardazi claims that by taking his courses, an officer will be well equipped to identify lies and omissions when suspects are stopped and questioned, thus being able to deduce criminal intent behind their words.

The Paul Ekman Group defines microexpressions as “facial expressions that occur within a fraction of a second. This involuntary emotional leakage exposes a person’s true emotions.”

The group advertises that people can be trained to easily read these microexpressed emotions.

According to the Paul Ekman Group, these microexpressions can last for just 1/25th of a second and can be as small as a purse of the lip or a twitch of the eyebrow. And by being able to “recognize” these minute details, one can tell an individual’s true emotion and intention.

The Paul Ekman Group did not respond to a Daily Dot request for comment.

After taking Pardazi’s Ekman-influenced course, officers should be able to pick out cues from people who are lying, ones that happen faster than the average person can blink.

However, a [2019 study](#) by John Jay College, tested the claims of lie detection based on microexpressions. They found that microexpression detection doesn’t work as a lie detection tool.

The group that underwent microexpression training did not outperform those who went through a placebo “microexpressions recognition” training session or those who had no training at all.

Even worse, taking the actual “microexpressions recognition” training course made participant accuracy even worse than fully relying on pure chance.

:heir



Maria Hartwig, a researcher on the study and co-director of Project Aletheia, a center dedicated to improving the science and practice of interrogation, criticized Ekman's research and Pardazi's training in a comment to the Daily Dot.

"When Ekman talks about his microexpression training, he's very clear that if you learn how to read faces, and if you understand and learn to recognize microexpressions, you'll achieve a hit rate of about 90%. It's outlandish. It's an incredible claim that he has never supported."

According to Hartwig, microexpression theory relies on the fact that a deceptive person feels emotions that a truth-teller will not, such as nervousness. However any person can experience nervousness in a high-stakes scenario like a traffic stop or a police interrogation, the exact scenarios Pardazi's course focuses on.

Pardazi also claims that through his nearly three decades of law enforcement experience and various positions as a patrol officer, narcotics agent, and canine handler, he has developed a "rapid behavioral analysis technique" that can be implemented to determine deception in an interview and interdiction scenario.



is evidence that he is wrong.” Hartwig said. “To my knowledge, there’s been no study showing police officers outperform lay people. However, they’re lie-biased so they make more lie judgments and they’re more confident ... this is dangerous decision making.”

Pardazi’s courses have become so popular that they’ve been hosted across the country, with departments in Montana, Colorado, and Oklahoma learning his methods.

The fact that this phenomenon is happening across the country worries experts like Hartwig.

“Training in faulty tools is very bad ... This will put innocent suspects at risk even more,” Hartwig said. “Police relying on these twitches and indicators of emotions, investigators playing the role of armchair psychoanalyst, is dangerous.”

According to comments left by the officers who attended the Round Rock class, many indeed believe that they learned valuable skills and are now able to recognize psychoanalytical tells of deception.

Officers provided statements such as, “Gave me better understanding on road side interview and how to detect lies” and “This class is not at all about trophy shots, the students leave the class and have knowledge of the tradecraft of clandestine activity along with what to identify during the roadside interview.”

Policing experts such as Jeff Kukucka, associate professor of psychology at Towson University and active researcher of police interrogation science, described how police taking on a sensationalized, armchair psychoanalyst role factors into the many issues in modern policing.

“We all view the world through our own lens, right? So if we see two people exhibiting the same

orist
nore



human behavior.

In a recent article, [the Intercept](#) found a litany of material from these lie detection course resources. One of them was from Renee Ellory, who claims to be a human lie detector. According to Ellory, she was one of 50 individuals identified as an “expert in deception” as part of the Wizards Project, run by researchers associated with Ekman.

Ellory did not respond to a Daily Dot request for comment.

But regardless of the accuracy of these methods, there’s no denying they are lucrative.

Pardazi’s in-person courses such as Smugglers Inc. can cost \$300 a person. Other courses, such as Ellory’s, can run up to \$1,950 a person.

The Round Rock Police Department did not respond to inquiries from the Daily Dot about the costs it paid to host Pardazi or any other questions related to Pardazi.

“I think that these courses are so popular, because they dovetail so well with not only what people think to be true, but with what people want to be true, right?” Kukucka says “We want to be able to detect lies, and we want to believe that it is as easy as looking at a person’s nonverbal behavior. And then of course, when we pour several hundred into something, we’re highly motivated to think that that thing actually works.”



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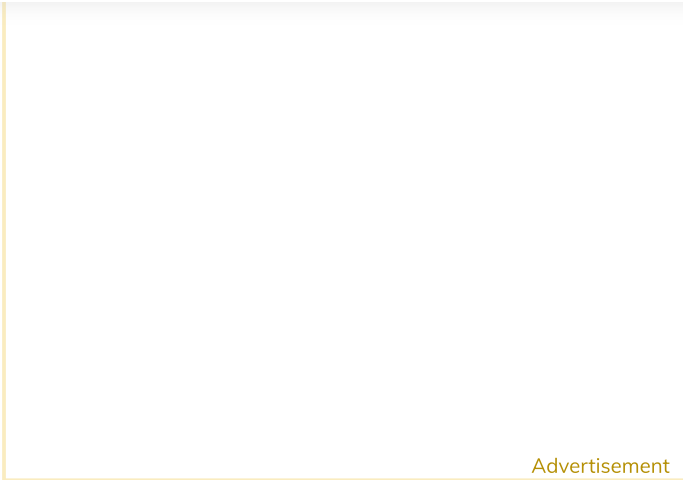
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The Daily Dot

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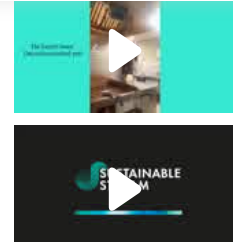
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EXCLUSIVE: Gainesville Police dogs violently injured Black people at more than double the national rate

Victims of violent attacks by Gainesville Police dogs were 85% Black.

Michael Zhang Tech Posted on Mar 15, 2023 Updated on Mar 19, 2023, 8:25 pm CDT

On March 3, Gainesville City Manager Cynthia Curry announced the Gainesville Police Department's K-9 unit would be temporarily shelved until further review.



Featured Video

The [decision](#) came as Gainesville considered upcoming budget cuts. However, after the mauling of Terrell Bradley by Gainesville Police's K-9 unit in 2022, hundreds of community members protested the department's use of dogs in policing.

Protesters, over the past year, [demanded reforms](#) to the K-9 unit, questioning the safety of the dogs and calling out the department's history of racist behavior.

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The Daily Dot obtained records that reveal the stark racial disparity on display in the city's K-9 units, which highlight how much more frequently Black victims are violently attacked by police dogs.

In response to a FOIA request, the Gainesville Police provided the Daily Dot with the documents detailing training records and bite incidents involving the K-9 unit.

In a report titled "[K-9 Injury and Demographics](#)," which covers data from Jan. 1, 2016 to July 31, 2022, Gainesville Police reported that out of all injuries suffered in K-9 incidents, 85% of bite victims were Black, while only 13% were white.

Gainesville's population is [21%](#) Black.

That disproportionate data includes the violent and heavily scrutinized apprehension of Bradley, which was



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On June 10, 2022, Officer Andrew Milman reported pulling over Bradley for running a stop sign, although the Gainesville Police later [verified](#) that no such stop sign existed at the intersection.

[According to Bradley](#), after being ordered out of the vehicle, he accidentally elbowed Milman and ran, hiding in the bushes of a nearby apartment complex. Bradley said he was worried how other incidents with police had turned deadly, which prompted him to flee. Milman called for backup and Officer Josh Meurer brought his K-9, Ranger, with him.

After Ranger was let off leash, the dog bit into Bradley's face, shaking back and forth, before ripping his eye out of the socket. Bradley lost vision in his right eye, broke two fingers, and needed 12 stitches on his right temple.

In the wake of images of Bradley's apprehension, citizens and community advocates throughout Gainesville [gathered](#), calling for the entire unit to be abolished.

Danielle Chanzas, Gainesville community advocate and member of Florida Prisoner Solidarity, described the community's demands for reform to the Daily Dot.

"We don't want to see our community members brutalized, especially not by canines, not anymore ... My prayer is that the city commissioners hear our cries, hear the community's cries for help because ultimately this is an issue of public safety."

Many within the Gainesville community called for the total abolishment of the K-9 unit. However, as of now the unit is only temporarily suspended, and both dogs and handlers still remain within the department

Since 2017, according to the documents reviewed by the Daily Dot, there have been 57 other "laceration
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An examination by the [Marshall Project](#) found that the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department uses K-9 units more frequently than any other department. Its bite victims were 55% Black, compared to 85% in Gainesville.

In the Gainesville data, just seven victims were white and one was Hispanic.

According to a study published by the [Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine](#), police dog bites sent 32,951 Americans to emergency rooms from 2005-2013, with almost all being male. Nationally, Black men represented 42% of bites, meaning Gainesville Police were way above the national average.

In a separate document reviewed by the Daily Dot, Gainesville Police averaged a bite-during-apprehension ratio of under 10% from 2018-2020. These percentages, the document claimed, were consistently below the national average of 40%, although the document did not cite any evidence for that number.

In a statement to the Daily Dot, the City of Gainesville said that the police department is currently “limiting its deployment. The K-9 unit is under review as [Gainesville Police] works to evaluate and update the program.”

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Christy Lopez, a legal professor at Georgetown University, who directly led the Department of Justice's civil rights investigation into the Ferguson Police Department, said the use of K-9s in suspect apprehension is inherently racist.

“Not only are they [K9s] consistently used disproportionately against people of color, especially Black people, but I believe that the very fact that we have canines at all, is almost certainly linked to the disregard we have for the lives and the dignity of Black people,” Lopez said. “I don’t think that if we didn’t have that racialized history of policing, that we would be allowing dogs to attack human beings for minor violations.”

According to an investigation by [VICE](#), the statistics reflected in the documents the Daily Dot obtained mirror similar concerns about the department.

Former police officer and the Gainesville Police K-9 unit’s only Black officer, Edward Ratliff described how other officers would repeatedly make racist remarks within the department.

When the unit received news that one of the police dogs would have to be euthanized, unit supervisor Sergeant Charlie Owens said the K-9 “bit a lot of [N-word].”

A lawsuit filed by Ratliff [revealed](#) similar racist communication within the unit. The lawsuit states that Ratliff’s superior officer and others regularly used the N-word in reference to other Black officers and citizens.

When a non-white officer was under internal investigation, one cop allegedly stated: “Sounds like there’s some [N-word] in the wood pile.”

According to communications detailed in a [Gainesville Police internal investigation](#), after Bradley’s apprehension, the officers within the K-9 unit texted one another and celebrated the violent act.

“It was the nastiest thing ever his eye was split open and just hanging outside of his face,” Milman said in the [text](#).



“I saw the pictures BRAVO,” Officer Matthew Shott replied.

The department gave Milman and Shott a five-day suspension each and diversity training.

After the violent attack, the dog, Ranger, was put on a brief “administrative leave” but returned to the force earlier this January. The decision was protested by many within the Gainesville community.

“The police department has repeatedly tried to argue that again this is something for public safety. And the community has repeatedly argued that those dogs, you can’t control what they do out in the field,” Chanzas said. “The community is not safe while they’re patrolling the streets.”

Even cops aren’t immune. On Feb. 20, 2022, the Gainesville K-9 unit responded to an armed robbery. The suspect was not captured in the original chase, as a dog [bit](#) an officer during the apprehension.

For years, civil rights advocates and academics throughout the nation advocated for the removal of dogs in suspect apprehension, believing they disproportionately inflict lifelong injuries upon people of color.

Violent apprehensions that start from low-level offenses, such as in Terell Bradley’s case, are common nationwide. According to the Marshall Project, many people involved in K-9 bite incidents were unarmed and accused of non-violent crimes.

“People will say, Well, you know, we need K-9s because you know, people are robbing banks ... but it’s never those things,” Lopez said. “It’s always these minor things and it’s always people of color.”



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