

## **Statement of the Family of Peter Cukor April 12, 2012**

Since the Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> murder of my father my family has struggled with this incomprehensible loss. We now feel it is important to speak out – for him and for others.

First, I would like to state that my father called the correct Berkeley Police Department emergency number – the one listed on their website as the best number to call “in case of immediate threats to life or property” 981-5911. He did not call their non-emergency number.

I am aware that the Police have stated that they made no “mistake” in their response to my father’s call for help. We find this very disturbing – that a citizen’s call for emergency help can go unanswered and lead to his death is not a mistake? Surely something is terribly wrong – and other citizen’s should be deeply concerned. My father was not told that his call was ranked Priority 2 – he asked for “an officer up here right away” because there was a “6’4” “ intruder who “says he lives here. He wants to come inside” and “he’s pretty spacey”. My father saw a clear threat of an invasion of his home and asked for immediate help. The police have also stated that my father’s call came during “shift change” and a “briefing session” on Occupy marchers who might be coming to “UC Berkeley”. This should be of grave concern to all and perhaps some changes need to be made:

- all emergency callers should immediately be told what Priority their call is being given
- callers should be given an approximate response time so they can take appropriate precautions to protect themselves during the time the police are not responding
- dispatchers should receive additional training to more accurately assess the nature of calls
- shift changes and briefing sessions must not impact emergency responses

Secondly I would like to say that Daniel DeWitt should have been locked up long ago – he was a clear danger to himself and others. There is a law, Laura’s Law, that was passed in 2002 that tries to end the “revolving” door of the mental health system. However, this law must be adopted by counties to go into effect – we urge Alameda County to adopt this law immediately.

My father should be alive – and we hope steps will be taken to insure that this can never happen to another citizen.

Thank You.