

BPD investigating students' allegations of racial profiling, bogus arrests

BY HAROLD PIERCE
hpierce@bakersfield.com

Bakersfield Police Department officials have launched an administrative investigation into allegations two black college students have made in a video that they were racially targeted, assaulted and arrested on trumped-up charges.

The two Bakersfield College students, Timothy Grismore, 21, and Xavier Hines, 19, say they were walking on Valhalla Drive behind West High School at about 10:40 p.m. Dec. 5 when two officers in an unmarked patrol car stopped them. They were heading to a Taco Bell on Ming Avenue.

By the end of the interaction, Grismore needed stitches and both were arrested on suspicion of walking in a roadway and resisting arrest, according to the video, which was released by the Bakersfield NAACP and has gone viral.

An arrest resume the BPD regularly sends out to the media confirms the arrests but also shows Grismore was arrested on suspicion of disorderly conduct with



COURTESY NAACP

Xavier Hines and Timothy Grismore allege in a Facebook video they were racially profiled, roughed-up by police and arrested on trumped-up charges. BPD is investigating the incident.

alcohol and/or drugs involved.

The video had attracted more than 87,000 views on Facebook as of Wednesday evening and attracted hundreds of comments from community members expressing frustration and anger. The video was posted Thursday

afternoon and comes just weeks after then-California Attorney General Kamala Harris launched a civil rights investigation into an alleged "pattern and practice of excessive force" by the BPD and the Kern County Sheriff's Office. The BPD would not comment

on the matter other than to say it's investigating it.

"Upon viewing the video, Chief of Police Lyle Martin ordered an internal investigation into the allegations made by Grismore and Hines. Use of force in any arrest situation is a serious matter and this incident will be carefully investigated and thoroughly reviewed," Sgt. Gary Carruesco said in a press release Wednesday afternoon.

The department encouraged anyone else who feels police have violated their rights to contact its Internal Affairs division.

In the video, Grismore and Hines say they were on the sidewalk when officers approached them, asking if they were on parole or had any open warrants.

They didn't, they say. Then the officers began searching the two, despite their objections. Grismore and Hines say the officers didn't identify themselves as police.

"We didn't know what was going on," Hines says. "They just kept searching us anyway."

Officers told Grismore to put his hands above his head, accord-

ing to the video. Neither officer told the two why they were being detained, Hines goes on to say.

"When he told me to unbuckle my hands, he slammed me. When he slammed me to the floor, he hit me with his elbow in my chin, then yelled to get on my stomach," Grismore says.

Then, Hines says, two marked patrol cars rolled up from both directions.

"The guy hops out with a baton and runs at me and says, 'Stay seated boy unless you want to be beat, too,'" Hines says. Then the officer struck Grismore with the baton while he was being handcuffed, Hines alleges.

Grismore sustained bruises on his thighs and received stitches on his chin, inside his lip, on the back of his knee, he says in the video. The video includes still photographs of injuries to Grismore.

"I just really don't trust walking. I really don't trust the police any more because I thought they were out here to protect me, and now

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