

Breitbart columnist to speak at WSU

College Republicans say they have raised enough money to pay for security for controversial speaker

It appears the show will go on for a controversial conservative speaker scheduled to appear at Washington State University next month, now that College Republicans who organized the event say they have raised enough money to cover security.

Milo Yiannopoulos, a British columnist for Breitbart.com, is known for denouncing concepts associated with the political left, such as the Black Lives Matter movement, in language critics say is designed to shock.

Yiannopoulos' "Dangerous Faggot Tour" - he identifies as gay - is scheduled to come to WSU's Compton Union Building on Jan. 19.

"We do intend to allow it to proceed, provided that the proper security arrangements are made," WSU spokesman Robert Strenge said Wednesday.

A post from earlier this month on the WSU College Republicans' Facebook page indicated the group raised enough money for security measures through an online crowdfunding account after being informed by the WSU Police Department that the money would be necessary.

"Due to your overwhelming support, we were able to meet our goal of \$1,000 to cover last-minute security fees in less than a week," the post reads.

Strenge said \$1,000 is the school's estimate for covering security officers and barriers between the stage and audience at the event.

WSU police recommended a total of six security people, Strenge said, two uniformed WSU police officers and four private officers.

"The College Republicans have characterized that as a fee," he said. "It's not a fee."

Strenge said the university also takes issue with the College Republicans referring to the security costs as "last-minute."

"They registered back in July and were told they needed to contact WSU police to arrange security," he said.

That never happened, Strenge said. When WSU police had not heard from the group by late November, he said, an officer contacted the College Republicans.

"It's nothing that was done at the 11th hour to try to stop (the event)," he said.

Attempts to reach WSU College Republicans representatives via email and Facebook on Wednesday were unsuccessful.

In a guest column published in September in the university's newspaper, The Daily Evergreen, WSU College Republicans President James Allsup described Yiannopoulos as a "notorious safe-space violator."

Links to Yiannopoulos' speeches on YouTube are posted to Breitbart.com, where transcripts of his remarks also are published.

During a speaking engagement on his tour earlier this month, Yiannopoulos called out a transgender woman at a university in the Midwest for suing the school for the right to use women's locker rooms.

"He got into the women's room the way liberals always operate, using the government and the courts to weasel their way in where they don't belong," Yiannopoulos said. "In this case, he made a Title IX complaint. You know, Title IX, the set of rules to protect women on campus? Now they protect trannies in your bathrooms, instead."

Yiannopoulos told his audience at the next university where he spoke that the student he described had subsequently dropped out of school.

"I made women on campus a little bit safer," he said. "I've rid their bathrooms of a dude in a dress."

Strenge said he is aware of people on the WSU campus who are "not happy" about Yiannopoulos' scheduled appearance. However, he said he knows of no organized opposition.

The Rev. Stephen Van Kuiken, minister at Pullman's Community Congregational United Church of Christ, has advocated for social justice on the WSU campus. Van Kuiken said he also is not aware of any organized opposition to Yiannopoulos' visit.

"I think the best strategy is just kind of ignore him," Van Kuiken said.

Stone may be contacted at mstone@lmtribune.com or at (208) 848-2244. Follow her on Twitter @MarysSchoolNews.