

## Husky Oil Refinery Explosion and How it Shook UW-Superior

Promethean Staff

If you were one of the hundreds of individuals at the UW-Superior campus on the morning of April 26th, 2018, chances are very high you'll never forget the event that literally shook Superior on that sunny morning. Just when spring was finally coming around to the Northland after a long, dragged out winter.

Around 10 am CST, the campus of UWS felt a tremble in the ground that was almost like an earthquake. Alyssa Lawrence was

getting ready to leave for school on the morning of April 26th when all of a sudden her whole house shook. "I heard the 'boom' and at first I thought that we were having an earthquake," said Lawrence.

What Alyssa felt wasn't an earthquake, but a sonic boom resulting from an explosion at the Husky Energy Oil Refinery only a half-mile away from Alyssa's home. "After a while I figured it wasn't serious and just carried on with my day. But soon I was able to see the smoke and then I heard about the 'casualties' and my stomach sank."

Alyssa was referring to the initial figures that the Superior Fire Department reported after responding to the fire that took

place after the explosion. The department had at first reported 20 casualties which obviously concerned many people.

Like most people in Superior, Alyssa is connected with the refinery and knows many people who work there. "It's scary to hear the word casualty because most people think it

means death," said Alyssa. Fortunately only a total of 16 victims were treated in area hospitals, all of whom were released, except for one who needed to be admitted but was listed in good condition.

Although the explosion did not inflict any fatalities after the initial blast, a fire started that was put out but then erupted again that would then cause a serious situation for the city of Superior. From the main campus at UWS large plumes of smoke could be seen

6 miles wide, with a one mile radius north, east, and west. UWS students were following their email alerts waiting for the latest update on the campus situation. Students would soon be told to gather in the YU before being transported to safety at the College of St. Scholastic in Duluth.

"When I heard that there was an evacuation order I went to my work to help take care of my PCA clients who were getting ready to evacuate and then I picked up my grandma and went to the mall in Duluth." During this

time the Superior fire department was on "defensive mode" as the flames were so hot that they were melting firefighter's boots.

After hours of waiting the firefighters "caught a break" in the conditions and were able to attack the fire's flames with water and chemicals which put the fire out quickly. When she was finally able to go home that evening Alyssa said, "I was relieved and thankful that nothing terrible happened and was happy how the community came together during this time."

Mayor Jim Paine and other emergency officials have been praised for their professionalism during this difficult event and many Superior citizens like Alyssa

feel safer knowing that they can trust in these people in times like these. "I feel a reassurance knowing that there are professionals who can do this job when it is needed."

The aftermath of the Husky Oil Refinery

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Photo by Jack Nikko

rising into the air. Many students were outside snapping photographs and conversing about the situation and talking about all of the media attention that the fire was bringing.

At 1:30 p.m. the city was forced to evacuate an area 10 miles long south of the refinery,

## One on One Interview with Newly Elected SGA President Scott Holmes

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On April 19th, the Student Government Association at the University of Wisconsin-Superior held their annual election for the positions of senators and president for the 2018-19 academic year. There were four candidates for the position of President that participated in a debate the day before the election. These four candidates were Scott Holmes, Sam Moscatelli, Dakota Rice, and 2017-18 SGA President, Marinel Walfridsson. Later that evening, President Walfridsson withdrew himself from the election which reduced the number of candidates for the election to three.

The results of the election were announced to the UWS campus on Friday, April 21st and the elected candidate for the role of 2018-19 SGA President was Scott Holmes with a total vote count of 73. The Promethean had a chance to sit down with the newly instated SGA President Holmes to learn more about his story before UWS, and what his aspira-

tions for campus are as the SGA President.

TT: Can you give background information about yourself before coming to UW-Superior?

SH: I grew up in the Twin Cities, graduated from Hopkins High School, joined the National Guard when I was eighteen, right out of high school. Did that for six years, I was a radar person. We told the 155 bouncers where to shoot the big gun that you see in the movies. Then I got a job as a cook in downtown Minneapolis, and it turned into a career. I wasn't just a cook I ended up being a chef within five years at mostly fine dining restaurants.

TT: What restaurant did you start at?

SH: Market Bar-B-Que. Then I worked at the Lexington Restaurant in St. Paul, it's on Lexington and Grand, fine dining, been

around since the 1930's. There were also a couple restaurants that are now closed. I worked at the 8th Street Grill next to the IDS building, busy busy place. Then the Target World Headquarters in the Nicollet Mall and that was one of my last jobs in the Cities, and then in 2001 moved up north. I got married late, i do everything late. Got married when I was thirty three had my son who's a freshman here and started this semester. I then worked at Grandma's corporation which helped pay for my move up here, but only worked for them briefly.

Then I worked at Edgewood Vista up by Sam's Club, it's a senior place and ran the food service there. Then I was at the Black Bear Casino up until four years ago, and then I had elbow surgery, hip surgery, and spinal fusion surgery which kept me from being a chef anymore which brought me here [UWS], because I couldn't be a chef anymore. I then took some aptitude tests,

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