



# Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office

## City of Goleta Police



Kelly Hoover  
Public Information Officer  
(805) 681-4192

Date: 10/13/2015  
Time: 6:30 p.m.

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## Updated News Release

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The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office is pleased to report that Dianne Thacher is no longer missing. She returned to her dorm room at Sierra Nevada College this afternoon. The Washoe County Sheriff's Office has confirmed that she is safe, not injured and that there was no foul play associated with her disappearance.

Thacher allegedly met a male acquaintance from Lompoc when her vehicle received a flat tire. Her cell phone battery died shortly afterwards. Thacher reportedly stayed with the male acquaintance for several days at various locations in Santa Barbara County. When she left to return home, he saw the media coverage indicating that she was a missing person and contacted the Sheriff's Office.

The Sheriff's Office wants to thank the media's assistance in its coverage of this missing person case with suspicious circumstances. The Sheriff's Office takes every missing person case seriously and we are always pleased when there is a happy outcome and the person is located safely.

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The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office with the assistance of the Washoe County Sheriff's Office in Nevada is actively investigating the whereabouts of 23-year-old Dianne Thacher who was reported missing on October 11. The Sheriff's Office has several detectives assigned to the case. They are following up on leads and are in the process of gathering new information. At this point, no foul play is suspected but the case is considered suspicious.

Sheriff's detectives are looking at Thacher's phone records, social media posts and are conducting interviews with family and friends in hopes of determining the circumstances leading up to her disappearance.

Investigators are also working to get a more detailed analysis of Thacher's phone records to help pinpoint a more specific location of where she might be located. Thacher's cellular phone has not been recovered, but an emergency "ping" of the phone placed it in an area approximately 5 to 10 miles north of the City of Goleta and south of Gaviota along the coast. The area is about 15 miles west of where her car, a dark blue 2000 Honda CRV with a Rhode Island license plate, was located abandoned with a flat tire on October 6. Santa Barbara County Air Support has flown the area several times. Before dusk last night, October 12, Sheriff's Search and Rescue members, with the assistance of a k-9,

searched the area where her car was located. Both ground and aerial searches will resume as new information is obtained regarding her last known location.

We understand there are many people who are very concerned about Thacher's well-being. We will update you as new information is available. We encourage anyone with information that may be of assistance in this missing person case to contact the Sheriff's Criminal Investigations Division at 805-681-4150 or to leave an anonymous tip call 805-681-4171.

## **Public Assistance Requested to Help Locate Missing Sierra Nevada College Student**

**Goleta** – The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office is requesting public assistance to help locate a 23-year-old Sierra Nevada College student who was reported missing yesterday, October 11, 2015. Dianne Thacher's family, from Rhode Island, reported her missing to Washoe County, Nevada authorities and to the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office. They had not heard from Thacher since October 5. Thacher was reportedly in California to meet up with friends and was staying at a motel in the 6000 block of Hollister Avenue. She was last seen checking out of her motel room on October 6. The same day, her vehicle, prior to her being reported missing, was found abandoned on the side of the road with a flat tire in the 7600 block of Hollister Avenue.

Thacher's cell phone was traced to an area several miles north of where her vehicle was located. The cell phone has not been active since October 6. Sheriff's deputies with the assistance of Nevada authorities have conducted an investigation into her disappearance. The past two days, Santa Barbara County Air Support has conducted aerial searches of the areas surrounding where her vehicle was found and where her cell phone was traced. The Sheriff's Search and Rescue team is conducting a ground search of the area.

At this point, there is no evidence to suggest foul play but the circumstances regarding her disappearance are uncharacteristic for her and described by her family as suspicious. The Sheriff's Office is requesting anyone with information that would assist in locating Dianne Thacher to call the Sheriff's Office at 805-683-2724 or to leave an anonymous tip call 805-681-4171.

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