



Home News Features A&E Op-Ed Sports

Staff

VOICES: School shootings have become shockingly common — something needs to change

MAR 24 WRITTEN BY ALEXANDER BEATTY - STAFF WRITER





Home News Features A&E Op-Ed Sports
Staff

EDINBORO — An act of violence has shaken American society once again – a student was killed in a fatal shooting on campus at The State University of New York (SUNY) at Potsdam.

According to Ben Muir, a writer for the [NNY360](#), 21-year-old Elizabeth Howell passed due to gunshot wounds on Friday, Feb. 18. She was completing her senior year at Potsdam University.

Immediately following the shooting, the shooter had not been caught and the public had been urged to remain vigilant. Residents of Potsdam were told to lock their doors as this was considered an active threat. New York State Police did catch the man the following day, Friday, Feb. 20. All classes were canceled the following Monday.

“I will say there are a multitude of students that have not felt safe on campus even before the shooting. There have been multiple instances where crimes have occurred on campus, such as sexual assault cases and discrimination and the university police either did nothing about it, or had zero sympathy whatsoever. The administration never did anything to acknowledge it,” commented Katie Paniccia, who graduated from Potsdam University in 2021.

“Many students were also scared from the fact that the victim was also left dead on the side of the road for a long time in broad daylight before she was found. But yes, a lot of people have never really felt safe on campus, especially now after the shooting,” she said.

Howell was described as a star student and a cellist in the Crane Symphony Orchestra. Philip T. Neisser, the officer-in-charge, told the NNY360 newspaper that “she was an aspiring educator with a bright future ahead of her. Together, we — as one united campus community — honor her life and mourn her loss.”

The recent act of violence brings another point to the debate on guns, especially relating to the aspect of school shootings and mass shootings.

After the Sandy Hook mass shooting in 2012, gun violence in relation to school shootings started gaining attention. According to [Statista](#), the Sandy Hook shooting is the second deadliest school shooting in America, based on fatalities, behind the Virginia Tech Massacre of 2007. Gun use on school grounds began to be logged into a database by [Everytown for](#)



Home News Features A&E Op-Ed Sports
Staff

according to [Education Weekly](#).

The Gun Violence Archive defines a mass shooting as “a shooting in which at least four people are injured or killed excluding the shooter.” Both 2020 and 2021 were awful record breaking years with 611 in 2020 and 693 in 2021. In total, there were 20,726 gun deaths in 2020.

Now, look at the gun sales in 2021, there were 18.8 million guns sold. That is a number that is way too high for the number of acts of gun violence. The number of sales was higher in 2020, but they are the highest number of sales since 2000, according to the Trace, a non-profit journalism outlet devoted to gun-related news in the United States. The Trace states, “Americans are the most heavily armed citizenry in the world, and this estimate from the 2021 National Firearms Survey shows that about one-third of U.S. adults own a gun.”

This survey does not include ghost guns or guns purchased illegally. Ghost guns are homemade guns made with supplies anyone can purchase. Janet Portman, an attorney in California, says it is also legal to purchase a ghost gun kit without any federal regulation as long as it is intended for personal use – that won’t stop people from using it for other reasons. Another thing to note is that ghost guns are untraceable.

The National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL) states there are restrictions to legally purchasing a firearm like a buyer can’t be convicted of certain crimes or involuntarily committed to a mental institution in Pennsylvania. A buyer can pass all of the background checks but it does not stop someone in their household from using their gun, like what happened in the Parkland school shooting, where a 15-year-old used his parent’s gun.

School shootings have become shockingly common. Something needs to change. The numbers are only increasing and this is a trend that should not be doing so. With the number of gun violence acts and the number of firearms purchased both increasing, there is little room for coincidence. There needs to be more restrictions, more education, and more gun safety in this country before more people lose their lives.

Alexander Beatty, Staff Writer | @EdinboroNow



[Home](#) [News](#) [Features](#) [A&E](#) [Op-Ed](#) [Sports](#)

[Staff](#)



VOICES: A step in the wrong direction, 'Don't Say Gay' Bill signed into action by Florida Governor DeSantis

THE LIST: How to help the people of Ukraine

