

# Arizona Man Sentenced for Threatening Harvard Black Commencement Attendees in 2017

An Arizona man was sentenced yesterday in connection with posting threats to bomb Harvard and shoot attendees at the Black Commencement event held in May 2017.

Nicholas Zuckerman, 25, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Indira Talwani to 15 months in prison and three years of supervised release. In February 2019, Zuckerman pleaded guilty to two counts of transmitting in interstate and foreign commerce a threat to injure the person of another.

“The divisiveness of our public discourse does not excuse making any group of people feel unsafe,” said United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling. “We will investigate all threats that cross the line of free speech and infringe on the safety and security of members of our community, especially when those threats are based on race or other immutable characteristics.”

“It’s sadly ironic that Nicholas Zuckerman would turn his chilling threats of mass destruction and vile words against graduates at Harvard University, an institution that has molded some of our greatest orators. Let today’s sentence serve as a lesson to all that no hate monger hiding behind a social-media pseudonym can stop others from celebrating the diversity of some of our area’s best and brightest minds,” said Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Boston Division.

On or about May 13, 2017, Zuckerman commented on a post published to Harvard University’s Instagram account, saying:

"If the blacks only ceremony happens, then I encourage violence and death at it. I'm thinking two automatics with extendo clips. Just so no n\*\*\*\*\* gets away." It is further alleged that on that same date, Zuckerman posted a comment to another Harvard Instagram post, saying: "#bombharvard and end their pro-black agenda." Several minutes later, Zuckerman commented "#bombharvard" on other users' posts approximately 11 times over a span of four minutes.

A concerned citizen who saw the posts reported them to the Harvard University Police, who ultimately referred the case to federal authorities.

U.S. Attorney Lelling, FBI SAC Bonavolonta, and Harvard University Chief of Police Francis D. Riley made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Anne Paruti and Scott Garland of Lelling's Civil Rights Enforcement Team prosecuted the case.