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- Duo, writers share craft with one another 10:36 a.m. ET
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NIU gunman stopped taking medication
The man, 27-year-old former student Stephen Kazmierczak, was also wielding three handguns during Thursday's ambush inside a lecture hall.

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Mobile law office to help veterans

Monday, February 11, 2008

By **John S. Hausman**
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A law office on wheels is coming to Muskegon this week to offer free legal help to veterans.

The Mobile Law Office is a project of the University of Detroit Mercy. Its Muskegon stop is scheduled for 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Thursday outside the Muskegon County Department of Veterans Affairs, 165 E. Apple.

The focus is on lower-income veterans who are having trouble obtaining disability benefits, said Anita Scott-Meisel, an attorney with the Mobile Law Office. Other possible issues include consumer problems, housing and foreclosures.

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The office is a 27-foot recreation vehicle that's been traveling from city to city offering the same service. The veterans-law clinics began last year in the Detroit area and have expanded across the state, with other stops in Grand Rapids, Benton Harbor, Traverse City, Battle Creek, Lansing, Flint and Pontiac.

Staffing the office at the Muskegon stop will be attorney and law professor Joon Sung, along with several University of Detroit Mercy law students, Scott-Meisel said.

Following the veterans center stop, the visiting attorneys will roll to the Warner Norcross & Judd law offices to meet from 3:30 to 5 p.m. with any local attorneys who might be interested in offering "pro bono" -- free -- legal services to veterans. The university offers training in Lansing for interested lawyers, Scott-Meisel said.

David R. Eling said the office on wheels is welcome, although a few local attorneys already offer help with veterans' issues.

Michigan ranks 45th among states in federal health-care spending per veteran and 50th in veterans enrolled in Veterans Affairs health care, according to the college. Average disability payments for Michigan veterans are \$7,241, compared to the national average of nearly \$9,000.

Students from the Detroit Mercy School of Law and volunteer attorneys helped about 800 people during stops at senior centers, churches and other facilities last year.

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