

SIU charges civilian in beating of teen

Const. Michael Theriault was the first one charged, but the SIU now say they have probable reason to believe he didn't act alone



Dafonte Miller in a photo (left) from before his altercation with off duty Toronto police officer Michael Theriault and in hospital (right).

Leisa Lewis, mother Dafonte Miller, spoke out about her son's assault. (BERNARD WEIL / TORONTO STAR) | [ORDER THIS PHOTO](#)

Dafonte Miller in a photo (left) from before his altercation with off duty Toronto police officer Michael Theriault and in hospital (right).



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By **ALEXANDRA JONES** Staff Reporter
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The Special Investigations Unit has charged a second man after a black man was beat with a metal pipe in Whitby in December 2016.

In a news release Friday, the SIU revealed that they had laid additional charges against Const. Michael Theriault and also charged a civilian, Christian Theriault, who they say assisted in the assault.

“The allegation in this case is that Const. Michael Theriault and Christian Theriault acted together and were parties to the same assault upon the 19-year-old man on December 28, 2016,” Tony Loparco said, the Director of the SIU.

[The incident in December resulted in “serious injuries”](#) that took an emotional toll on Dafonte Miller. The SIU did not name the victim, but Leisa Lewis has told the Star that the young man is her son.

It was the family’s lawyer, Julian Falconer, who contacted the SIU about the assault.

Falconer said Michael Theriault identified himself as a police officer and questioned a group of young men that included Miller after he saw them walking on the street in Whitby. He allegedly chased them down when they didn’t respond, and attacked Miller. When Durham police arrived, Miller was charged with assault, the charges were eventually dropped.

Falconer said Miller suffered a broken nose, broken orbital bone, fractured right wrist and an eye so badly damaged that it will have to be removed.

“Dafonte wasn’t doing anything wrong,” said Falconer. “There was no basis for this individual to be in any way confronted by the off-duty officer.”

Christian Theriault was arrested Friday by the SIU and will appear before court on August 10. He and Michael Theriault have been charged jointly with aggravated assault, assault with a weapon, and individually with public mischief.

With files from Peter Goffin