

Father of Victim Says Son Had Dispute With Suspect

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The father of a victim in the Colorado shooting said Wednesday that his son had "had a conflict" with the presumed gunmen last year and believed that his son was a target of the rampage at Columbine High School.

Officials did not release the names of the 15 victims -- 14 students and 1 teacher -- or the wounded Wednesday. But a father, Michael A. Shoels of Littleton, Colo., said the local coroner's office had notified him that his son, Isaiah, was among those killed on Tuesday when two students carrying semiautomatic weapons stormed the school. The families of another student, Rachel Scott, 15, and of a teacher, William David Sanders, 48, also said they had died in the attack.

After the shootings, there were accounts that the gunmen had sought out black students and athletes. But Isaiah Shoels, who is black, may have been shot because of the old conflict, his father said.

Shoels said Isaiah, an 18-year-old senior whom he described as a jock with a passion for weightlifting, had "had a conflict" with the presumed gunmen last year. He did not elaborate on the dispute or why he believed that it had flared up again, this time in such a violent way.

But he said he believed, based on accounts from his son's classmates, that the two students who have been named as the gunmen, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, had been determined to track down his son.

"The kids that got away explained it to us," Shoels said. "They said he was one of the main targets because they hunted him down. He wasn't in the main area. He was in the library. They came through the cafeteria; they hunted him down."

Shoels said his son wanted to be a record-company executive like one of his role models, Master P, the rapper and recording executive whose No Limit label pumps out hit albums and direct-to-video movies.

"He took all of these artists and created an empire," Shoels said. "That was something Isaiah wanted to do in his lifetime. He most definitely had the smarts to do it. He was studying music contracts."

Miss Scott's grandfather, the Rev. Paul Cercle, told The Associated Press he believed that she was also among the dead. "It was a purely random shot," Cercle said.

Her stepbrother, Craig Scott, 16, was in the library and survived the massacre only because he played dead, The Associated Press said.

Miss Scott was on the school debate team and had recently acted in a play written, produced and directed by students, said Bonnie Baumgart, whose son Nick had gone to the prom with her last weekend.

Mrs. Baumgart said another member of the debating team was killed.

"The whole team was really close and they lost two," she said.

Sanders, the teacher, was said by students to have been shot twice in the chest as he tried to shepherd them to safety.

"He dedicated his entire life to teaching," said Rich Jarmon, Sanders's nephew, adding that Sanders had coached the school's track team and the women's basketball team. "Recently he had talked of retirement, but he said how hard it would be to leave the school."

Jarmon said Sanders, who was 48 and had been a teacher in schools in Jefferson County for 22 years, had four daughters.

Among the 24 people who were wounded, Anne Marie Hochhalter, 17, a senior who played the flute in the band and the wind symphony, remained in critical condition at Swedish Hospital Wednesday.

"She's a good kid," said David Maas, who lives down the block.

Valerie Schnurr, 18, was hit by shrapnel and was listed in fair condition Wednesday. A neighbor, Loretta Jay, said Miss Schnurr had had a job in a bank and had been excited about the school prom. And, Ms. Jay said, she was looking forward to attending the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley in the fall, where she wanted to study counseling to work with troubled people.

"She'd be good at that," Ms. Jay said.

A cousin of another wounded student, Jeanna Park, 15, said Miss Park was a senior with a grade-point average of 4.0. The cousin, who did not want to be identified, said Miss Park was born in Korea and grew up in Colorado. Miss Park's father, Andrew Park, is an accountant, the cousin said.

"She told her parents what happened, but the doctor wants her to rest and not speak much," the cousin said.

Among the victims who were treated and released was Joyce Jankowski, who taught English and journalism, said a former teacher.

Mrs. Jankowski's husband, Leo, said she was "pretty shaken up."

"It's a scary situation," Jankowski said.

Friends of another student at Columbine, Danny Steepleton, said he had been shot in the legs. A wrestler whose mother works in another local high school, Steepleton was in the library when the shooting began. His younger sister, Lisa, also a Columbine student, escaped unhurt.

A neighbor, Mary Tate, said: "He helps me all the time, cutting the grass and shoveling the walk. His parents said the first thing he asked for was a bite of pizza."

Another wounded student, Nicole Nowlen was released from the hospital Wednesday after being treated for a stomach wound, her grandmother said.

The grandmother, Linda Nowlen, said that Nicole Nowlen had moved to Littleton from South Dakota a couple of months ago to live with her father. She said Nicole was "into computers."

"She's doing well, but she's pretty sore, " the grandmother said, adding that Nicole Nowlen apparently did not see the students who shot her.

"From what we understand, Nicole was one of the early victims.

Even though she was badly injured, she was able to sneak out a back door with some other girls."

Corey DePooter, a junior, was also among the dead, his mother said last night. A friend from church, Michael Vendegnia, said DePooter was on the wrestling team and was "very bright and easy to get along with." Also among the dead was John Tomlin, 16, a sophomore who moved to Littleton from Wisconsin four years ago and worked after school at a nursery. His father, also named John, said that his son had saved his money and bought a truck recently.

"He was as close to a perfect son as you can have," Tomlin said.