



Public Safety takes on traffic

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by [Anna Sanders](#)

As a result of campus construction, some NYU Public Safety officers have been moved from their desks to the streets.

If you have class at 194 Mercer St., you've probably noticed Public Safety officers acting as crossing guards at the intersections of Mercer and West Fourth streets and of Mercer and Bleecker streets.

Over the past couple of weeks, these officers have been reassigned to direct pedestrian and car traffic around the construction of the combined heat and power plant, which will be located under the sidewalk and plaza along Mercer Street between Third and Fourth streets.

According to Public Safety Vice President Jules Martin, this reassignment of officers will promote a safer environment for pedestrians and drivers.

"There's blind spots at both intersections of West Fourth and Bleecker, which is somewhat of a hazard to the pedestrian traffic," said Martin, who is also the university's vice president of global security and crisis management.

GSAS graduate student Joseph Cohen said the intersection was chaotic before the implementation of the safety officers.

"It was more disorderly before they came," Cohen said. "Nobody really knew what to do; whether the cars should go or the students should walk."

The new CHP Electrical Plant, which will produce electricity and thermal energy simultaneously — reducing fuel use and emissions — has been under construction since 2007. Although it is expected to be completed this year, according to NYU's website about the project, Martin said it is still unclear how long the officers will remain assigned to patrol the intersections in the area.

While the entirety of pedestrian traffic around the area consists of more than just faculty and students, Martin is confident that the placement of the officers at the intersections will have a positive impact on the community.

"If they were not assigned there, they would be assigned to other locations around campus to ensure the safety of our community," Martin said. "This is just another assignment."

CAS sophomore Cassie Zhu, however, believes the reassignment is unnecessary.

"We don't run across the street when cars are trying to get across," Zhu said.

Mohamad Eladl, a street vendor on the corner of Mercer and West Fourth streets, believes having traffic directed by the public safety officers is safer. He said that before the reassignment, there were several instances in which pedestrians almost experienced accidents with drivers.

"It does help the students not to get involved in accidents," Eladl said.