

Why a wealthy Michigan frat boy unleashed an expletive-laden rant against his Uber driver

By **Lindsey Bever** March 29

Days after a University of Michigan student unleashed on an Uber driver who apparently canceled his trip, the student has spoken out, saying his profanity-laced rant was prompted by the driver's anti-Semitic remarks.

The driver, who denies the accusation, said he has now been suspended from his job.

Jake Croman, the son of a wealthy Manhattan real-estate mogul, is shown in a YouTube post berating Uber driver Artur Zawada in a video posted last week.

"I see you. You're canceling on us again," he said. "Why? For what? They don't give a s— about you. They don't give two f—-. There's 50 of you and there's one of me here, who spends the most money here, you little f—?"

"F— you Artur, you little f— f—. You want to kick me off, kick me off, you little piece of s—. You're an Uber driver, go f—— drive, you little f—. Minimum wage f——. Got f— yourself. See you later. Go pick up another f—.

As Croman and others were walking away, Croman turned back around and addressed the driver again.

"You're working all day?" he said. "Guess what? I'm going to go sit on my a— and watch TV. F— you."

Zawada [posted the video](#) online March 23 and, since then, it has been viewed some 6,000 times.

"My rating is 4.8 after 2,600 rides," he wrote in the comments, "what is yours abusive rider?"

Zawada said the most recent incident was the fourth time he had been harassed by the rider.

"I told him on 3rd occasion that I requested Uber to banned him but he is/was using friends accounts. Told him and his friends that I will not take them and that he/they need to get out of my car," he wrote.

This time, Zawada said, the rider could see from the Uber app that Zawada was the driver.

"He had option to cancel to avoid any issues," he said, "but he/they proceeded to abuse, harrase (sic), belittle and

provoke like kindergarten thugs.”

Since the incident, however, Croman and some other riders have started to tell another side to the story.

Croman — whose father is Steven Croman, a New York multimillionaire and landlord who [has been under investigation](#) for illegal tactics to force rent-stabilized tenants from their homes, [according to the New York Daily News](#) — is Jewish.

He told The Washington Post he was provoked when Zawada made anti-Semitic remarks.

“This video shows one side of an argument I had with an Uber driver two weeks ago after he refused to pick me up on the basis of my religion,” he said in a statement. “What you don’t see in the video is that the driver had made a number of offensive anti-Semitic remarks that provoked my response.

“I am not proud of my reaction to his discrimination and I regret my choice of words.”

Others have opened up about similar experiences, [telling the Michigan Review](#) that some have reported Zawada to Uber for anti-Semitic statements in the past.

One person said in an email to the journal that the driver “has a reputation of sudden outburst an extreme anti-Semitism as he is on file calling Jews ‘k—’ numerous times.”

Zawada could not immediately be reached for comment by The Post; however, [he told the Michigan Review](#) in an interview that the anti-Semitic accusations were not true. Still, he said, he is now paying the price for it.

“They do whatever they want,” he said, claiming Uber has dropped him. “No call, no email, no legal doc. I’m losing money every day, and I did nothing wrong.”

Zawada, who said he is an immigrant from Poland, told the Michigan Review that “half the Jewish people who founded Israel were Polish citizens.”

“I have Jewish friends,” he told the journal. “I have professors I know at the University of Michigan who are Jewish. I worked for my boss and he was Jewish.”

Uber said both the rider and driver’s accounts have been suspended pending an investigation.

University of Michigan spokesman Rick Fitzgerald told The Post that the dean of students has met with both the driver and the students about the incident and that it has been reported to Ann Arbor Police.

“We find the actions depicted in this video to be reprehensible and completely inconsistent with our community’s closely held values,” he said in a statement. “We expect more from members of the U-M community.

“Regardless of the circumstances, no one deserves to be treated that way.”

Fitzgerald said school officials are waiting for the police report to decide on an appropriate action.

Ann Arbor police did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

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Tau Kappa Epsilon has also addressed the issue, as Croman is a member.

“Tau Kappa Epsilon has begun our investigation into the video which allegedly contains one of our members,” spokesman Alex Baker said in a statement. “We are extremely disappointed by the individual’s demeaning words. As an organization founded on the personal worth and character of the individual, our members come from a wide range of diverse backgrounds of race, creed, and orientation.

“At the conclusion of our swift, thorough investigation, we will handle the situation with appropriate action. Depending on the details of the investigation, this could include the expulsion of membership.”

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