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Police release images of man believed involved in most recent robbery

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Oak Park Police today released images of a man believed to be involved in the most recent nighttime robbery of a lone female resident, the latest of five similar crimes.

The images were taken from a bank surveillance camera on the west side of Chicago where the man used an ATM card within minutes of it being taken from the victim in a robbery at about 8 p.m., Thurs., April 28, in the 300 block of North Oak Park Avenue.

Police are asking anyone who may recognize the man to call 708.386.3800 or e-mail police@oak-park.us. Information also can be provided anonymously via telephone to 708.434.1636 or online at www.oak-park.us/police. The photos may be viewed from a link on the Village web site at www.oak-park.us/news.

In the meantime, experts at the FBI's Regional Computer Forensic Laboratory are working to enhance the digital files to create a clearer image that may help to positively identify the man.

Five Oak Park women have been robbed under similar circumstances since March 30. In each incident, the women were alone in somewhat secluded areas where the offender approached from behind, grabbed the victim around the neck and took or demanded their valuables. All five incidents occurred near Lake Street, between Austin Boulevard and Oak Park Avenue.

Even though each of the incidents had similarities, Police have not ruled out the possibility of multiple offenders or even a pair working together. In the most recent robbery, Police were on the scene in less than two minutes of when the incident was reported and the victim's ATM card was used within 10 minutes of the crime.

These images also do not closely match the computer-generated sketch created with the help of the second victim, the only one of the five women to get a close look at her assailant, further suggesting a pair of robbers.

In each incident, the suspect is described as an African-American male in his 20s, about five feet 10 inches to six feet tall with a medium build. In the latest two incidents, the offender was described similarly, but with short hair, facial stubble and wearing a dark, possibly hooded sweatshirt and dark pants, a description more in line with the ATM video surveillance images.

The victim in the April 28 incident, a woman in her early 20s, had parked her car on a nearby street and was robbed as she walked down the alley approaching the rear door of a building. Other incidents occurred on March 30 in the 200 block of Lake Street, April 2 near Lake Street and Austin Boulevard, April 4 in the 200 block of North Oak Park Avenue and April 19, in the 200 block of South Harvey Avenue. No serious injuries were reported and no weapon was seen or implied in any of the incidents.

Stepped up patrols in the area remain as the investigation continues and until the offender is apprehended. In the meantime, Police are urging residents, especially females, to avoid being out alone after dark. Residents also can call 708.386.3800 from dusk to dawn and request a Police escort.

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