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Maine border chief member of secret Facebook group notorious for racist posts

CARA DEROSE  JULY 16, 2019

Jason D. Owens, the chief border patrol agent at the Houlton Border Patrol Station in Maine, is one of three border patrol supervisors identified by journalists as having been a member of the “I’m 10-15” group that has come under fire for featuring overtly racist, violent and sexist images targeting Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) and mocking immigrants who died in government custody.

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Owens' involvement in the group was made public Saturday by *The Intercept* reporter [Ryan Devereaux](#), who archived hundreds of posts shared on the controversial site before it was purged by Facebook. The secret group drew scrutiny earlier this month when it was revealed that Carla Provost, the new head of U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, was a member of the site. It is now reportedly being investigated by CPB.

The Georgia-born Owens previously served as deputy chief patrol agent for the Laredo, Texas sector before being appointed as chief patrol agent in the Houlton sector early this year.

On Twitter, Owens has frequently defended the actions of CPB. In one [recent post](#), he categorized concerns over the treatment of migrants as “misguided sentiments.” He also has [strongly advocated](#) for President Donald Trump’s wall along the U.S.-Mexico border – often using the [#BuildTheWall hashtag](#) on his Twitter feed. However, he also was [recently quoted](#) commending Maine’s response to the recent arrival of asylum seekers.

According to *The Intercept*, before being exposed, “I’m 10-15” (which is Border Patrol code for “aliens in custody”) had 9,500 members.

Contacted for comment, the New England regional public affairs office for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency said the agency is unable to discuss individual involvement with the group at this time due to an ongoing internal investigation.

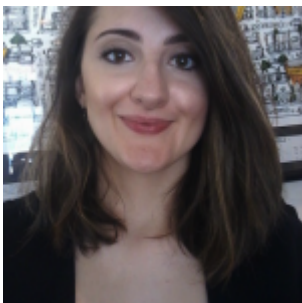
(Top photo: Owens with Sen. Susan Collins during a tour of Passamaquoddy Bay and Grand Manan Channel with other Border Patrol agents | [Official photo](#))



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ABOUT CARA DEROSE



Cara DeRose is a staff writer for Beacon. A graduate of the University of Southern Maine, she served as writer and copy editor for the USM Free Press and interned at the Portland Press Herald.



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