



SCROUNGE

new organization
building computers,
participation

JEFFERY KNAPP
staff writer

While the organization's name might conjure the image of a gruff, unshaven man rooting through a dumpster, SCROUNGE is a different experience entirely.

The Students for Computer Recycling to Outfit Under-represented Nonprofit Groups in Education, or SCROUNGE, held their first meeting ever at Behrend last week.

The group's president, Anthony Torregosa, transferred to Behrend after his freshman year at York and brought with him an idea. He wanted to bring together computer lovers, engineers, and estranged students looking for something fun to do into a productive group.

"Students from all majors can come together, collect computers, help refurbish them, and donate them to groups for educational purposes," Torregosa said. "We even participate in a LAN party every now and then. We help local groups on campus with a variety of projects like the Trigon video and the video composed for the United Way."

Students in the group actively seek out companies and request old computers that the companies are looking to discard. However, SCROUNGE collects computers from more sources

than companies; a dumpster is not an unlikely place to find old machines.

SCROUNGE searches for computers from every location including students who have old computers.

"Anyone can donate a computer to SCROUNGE," Torregosa said. "Just drop them off at any meeting or call the Google Voice voicemail and tell us about your computer."

SCROUNGE originated in a basement of the commonwealth campus of Penn State York in 1996. The Behrend branch of SCROUNGE operates separately from their York counterparts, yet work towards the same goal of helping those who request computers needed for educational purposes.

At the first meeting of SCROUNGE last week, there were more boxes of pizza than people present. But Torregosa has high hopes, saying he wants to operate in more locations than just Behrend and York.

"We hope one day to operate on all the branch campuses," Torregosa said, citing THON as an example of a successful multi-campus organization.

Torregosa says that all students are welcome to join SCROUNGE - he himself is the president of the organization in only his sophomore year, and invites all interested students to join.

Photo by Andre di Lucca, community commons

WANT TO JOIN SCROUNGE?

- TELEPHONE: 814-314-9331
- WEB ADDRESS: behrendcomputers.tumblr.com
- Or join the organization on OrgSync!

Blue campus security towers rarely used in emergency situations

JENNA ABATE
staff writer

With cell phones now being a device found on every college student's person, are the code blue emergency phones really all that necessary?

The blue emergency towers scattered throughout campus provide a direct line to police. They are said to offer students a sense of security.

Since most students have cell phones with them at all times, however, they are rarely used.

"Here at Penn State Behrend, we really don't have a problem with campus security," said chief of campus police, Jim Aman, "and we pride ourselves on our safety."

Aman, who didn't have the numbers available for how much the system costs, said that he couldn't remember the last time the system needed to be used. It would seem that the towers are idle.

Despite the campus's record on safety, Kelly ShROUT, Co-Director of Judicial Affairs, said that these emergency phones are absolutely necessary.

"If ever in the event that a student is out on a run or quickly

taking out their trash, they may not have their phone on them and it would be an opportune time for an attacker to strike," ShROUT said.

If any of the towers were to be used, it would function simply as a telephone call.

In the event that a blue phone was ever activated, the button immediately dials PSU Erie Campus Police. In the office, the caller ID shows which tower was activated and after a brief conversation with an officer one will be dispatched to the location in question, even if there is no conversation.

If a tower is ever activated after campus police office hours, the phone call is directly transferred to the East County Communication Police Center.

There are exactly 51 emergency phones on campus and they are located on paths lesser traveled such as from REDC to Junker to protect students when they might feel removed from heavily trafficked areas.

Director of Operations Randy Geering, who also did not have numbers available on the system's cost, said that the lesser-traveled paths were chosen because they are areas in which more opportunity exists for a

situation to occur.

"The fact that these blue phones exist in those locations may deter a possible attacker," Geering said.

Geering also feels that the system and the towers are a necessary part of student safety, as well as the efforts of the campus police to be immediately notified in an emergency situation.

"In any emergency situation it may be easier to find a code blue phone and just press a button then to dig out a cell phone and dial 911," Geering said.

A quick survey of students at Dobbins one afternoon found that forty out of fifty students would use their cell phones in the case of an emergency. Most thought that the emergency towers were there only for the peace of mind.

"My friends and I typically travel in groups, and we never really feel like there's a safety issue," said one freshman, Heather Jenkins.

"We always have our cell phones on us in case there is a problem. I think people need to look out for themselves and keep in the back of their minds that the code blue emergency system is there."

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