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Qwest issues \$450,000 refund to OUS

■ Oregon universities receive a refund after arguing they were overbilled for multiple-line service

By Eric Martin
Oregon Daily Emerald

Qwest Communications will give the Oregon University System \$450,000 in May for overbilling and "shortchanging" schools that use an elaborate telephone service to consolidate phone lines.

Qwest, a multimedia network and telephone company, originally gave a \$60,000 refund to the University in September 2000 because the company overbilled the school for using a multiple-line circuit, ISDN PRI. But \$60,000 was well short of the refund estimate Qwest marketers had calculated for OUS representatives by phone just months before the refunds were issued, said Dave Barta, manager of telecommunications services for the University of Oregon.

"We caught this because we were being vigilant," Barta said. "We have learned over the years that big corporations make mistakes, and that's really all this was — boneheaded, but not evil."

The University will use its share of the additional refund, about \$72,000, to bolster telephone service and the campus network facility, Barta said. The refund also covers OUS schools that weren't compensated after they also were overbilled for using ISDN PRI circuits, including Portland State University, Oregon State University and Oregon Health & Science University. By May, Qwest will have issued \$510,000 in refunds to OUS schools.

Qwest spokeswoman Mary Healy said the company didn't miscalculate refunds for ISDN PRI customers — the company adhered to Federal Communications Commission guidelines.

"Basically, we used methodology for determining basic lines, and others," Healy said. "We submitted that to the PUC, and PUC accepted it. So we started making refunds. But some ISDN PRI customers disagreed with our methodology for determining the rate of refunds."

Those customers included Barta and two other OUS telecommunications directors, Tim Johnston and Shay Dakan. They told the association that represents OUS in its use of large telephone services that Qwest wasn't counting ISDN PRI lines correctly. ISDN PRI circuits enable customers to integrate the

equivalent of 23 analog lines into one digital line that transmits voice and data information. Qwest was suggesting a refund of \$1,710.90 for each ISDN PRI device, according to case records. But the directors said the refund should be \$7,700 per ISDN PRI.

"We filed testimony very precisely describing how the calculations should be made and describing ISDN PRI lines," said Lisa Rackner, a Portland attorney for Ater Wynne LLP who represented the Telecommunications Ratepayers Association for Cost-based and Equitable Rates, or TRACER, in the case. "Both PUC and Qwest

agreed that was right."

TRACER represents users of large telephone services in Oregon and intervenes in PUC proceedings when its customers are affected by rate changes. The OUS refund, agreed to by Qwest and PUC on Oct. 12, 2001, is about 70 percent of what TRACER wanted from Qwest, Barta said. But he said it is a victory nonetheless.

"It was a long fight, and it feels like the good guys actually won one," he said. "That doesn't happen often in this arena."

E-mail reporter Eric Martin at ericmartin@dailyemerald.com.



Refund Redial

- Qwest will pay the Oregon University System an additional \$450,000 in May
- The University of Oregon to receive \$72,000 — its second refund
- Oregon State University, Portland State University and Oregon Health & Science University to receive their first refunds
- Qwest will have issued a total of \$510,000 in refunds to OUS

SOURCE: Dave Barta,
University telecommunications manager

Scott Abts Emerald

Frohnmayer gives awards to professors

■ Three University professors are surprised with distinguished teaching awards, which include a crystal apple and \$2,000 dollar raise

By Eric Martin
Oregon Daily Emerald

University President Dave Frohnmayer made surprise visits to the classrooms and offices of three professors Tuesday to present them with distinguished teaching awards.

The awards are presented annually to faculty who show auspicious beginnings in their careers and to experienced professors with an illustrious teaching record. The chosen professors also get a \$2,000 raise.

"I was sitting in my office, tapping away at my computer," said Joanna Lambert, an assistant anthropology professor who received a 2002 Ersted Award for Distinguished Teaching. "They knocked on my door and came in. And President Frohnmayer had a nice little speech that he gave, and he presented me with a crystal apple. It was very cool."

Lambert said she heard through the grapevine she might be up for an award but "thought it was a huge long shot and had to put it out of my mind entirely." The three-year assistant professor said she is preparing for a trip to Africa on Friday to study the behavior of primates.

Assistant history professor Carlos Aguirre was delivering a lecture to his 10 a.m. Latin American history class when Frohnmayer and other Johnson Hall administrators entered to present the award to Aguirre.

"My students started paying more attention than before," said Aguirre, who has taught Latin American studies at the University since 1996. "They seemed to be very happy, and they applauded."

"I think this shows to a certain extent beyond my merits that students are interested in Latin America," he added. "I take it as a recognition of the presence of Latin American studies and faculty here at our university."

Associate chemistry professor Michael Haley received the 2002 Thomas F. Herman Faculty Achievement Award for Distinguished Teaching, an award given to an educator with a long-standing record of solid teaching. Haley has taught chemistry courses at the University for nine years.

Provost John Moseley said students nominated professors for the awards, and a committee of students and faculty selected the recipients several weeks ago. Moseley went with Frohnmayer and others to present the awards.

"It's not a lot of money, but it's a really nice recognition that we value quality teaching," Moseley said.

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Candidate wants to increase student scholarships, faculty pay



SAXTON

■ Ron Saxton wants to make education a priority in Oregon by keeping quality students in-state and recruiting faculty

By Brook Reinhard
Oregon Daily Emerald

Ron Saxton draws his experience from 23 years as a lawyer and two years serving as the chairman of the Portland Public School Board. He graduated from Willamette University in 1976 and received his law degree from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1979. Saxton founded the Ater Wynne law firm in 1988 and was elected in 1997 to serve on the Portland Public School Board. He and his wife Lynne live in Portland.

Q: Why should students take an interest in this primary election?

A: The person elected governor this year, if they're re-elected, will be governor until 2011. The window in which students are going to both be finishing their education and entering the workforce is going to be under the leadership of the next governor. So I can't think of anybody who should care more about it than current students.

Q: Would you back initiatives to raise tuition at Oregon universities beyond the 3 percent a year cap?

A: I don't have a yes-or-no answer to that because the challenge is that we want to keep the university system as affordable as we can for students — I'm the first in my family to ever have a college education, and I understand how critical it is to succeed in life, and I don't want to do anything that interferes with access to it. On the other hand, we have

to find ways to finance the education system. I don't want to first look at raising tuition. I want to look at how we can have a better investment of state funds in higher education and how we can deal with some of the cost issues. So, I don't start out saying, "Let's raise tuition," but I also can't completely rule it out.

Q: Do you support higher pay for university faculty?

A: Yes. I think this is a matter of being competitive. Oregon needs to be attracting and keeping the best faculty. A lot of wonderful faculty members stay in our system because they like being in Oregon, but you can't build a system based on people who take less pay because they like it here. We have to make our pay scale for our university employees at all levels competitive with other states.

Turn to Saxton, page 8.

GOVERNOR RACE

This is the last in a six-part series featuring the leading gubernatorial candidates in Oregon's May 21 primary election.

Democrats

April 29: Jim Hill

April 30: Ted Kulongoski

May 1: Bev Stein

Republicans

Monday: Kevin L. Mannix

Tuesday: Jack Roberts

Today: Ron Saxton