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Jessica

# Scams target students

Three new money scams have hit Oregon students, including fake lottery notices and an Internet auction scam

**Caron Alarab**  
Safety/Crime/Transportation Reporter

Oregon's high school seniors and college students are the second most targeted group when it comes to three new money scams, according to Attorney General Hardy Myers' office.

The new scams are based on sympathy for a rich Christian Iraqi, fake international lottery notices and phony checks for high ticket items from Internet auction sites.

But considering their general tendency to sell items like computers and cars online when short of money, students in Oregon are most likely to encounter the third crime, which involves counterfeit checks of such high quality that banks initially accept them and then eventually go after the seller for the due amount after finding them counterfeit.

"Everybody gets scammed in that one," Oregon attorney general's office spokeswoman Jan Margosian said.

Department of Public Safety Associate Director Tom Hicks said the department has information of Internet scams occurring on campus, prompting officers to look into new reporting and investigating techniques.

"This is a crime that we can expect to involve the campus community with an increasing frequency," he said. "Public Safety will have to become more familiar with the extent of the problem."

The first of the three scams involves the story of Brameem Anu, who wants to give \$20 million to a U.S. account holder for temporarily holding \$120 million after his wealthy father was killed for supporting America. The victim's account gets emptied once the Iraqi is given access.

The second scam involves phony winners' notices via e-mail in the multimillion dollar International Lottery, which encourages winners to invest invisible winnings in a larger lottery and wire "good faith" money before any cash is received. Money is untraceable when it's wired and the "winnings" are never seen.

## Three new money scams in Oregon

Attorney General Hardy Myers has warned Oregonians of three new money transfer schemes to hit victims of all ages:

- A Christian Iraqi claims he is the son of a successful Baghdad businessman who was killed for supporting Americans. He wants to place \$120 million into a U.S. account and offers \$20 million to whoever will help him out, eventually emptying the victim's account.

- The "final winners" notice of the multimillion dollar International Lottery appears in e-mail accounts and claims a lump sum of \$1 million has been won. Before the winnings are sent, the winner

is asked to wire "good faith" money to be entered in a larger lottery. The victim wires the untraceable amount and never receives any winnings.

- Oregonians selling high-ticket items on Internet sites like eBay are receiving high-quality counterfeit cashiers checks issued for more than the selling amount for apparent shipping and handling costs. The buyer asks that extra money be wired to a Nigerian account after the check is received and deposited. The bank accepts the check, and weeks later, discovers it is fake and goes after the seller for the value.

SOURCE: Oregon attorney general

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The third scam, based on counterfeit cashiers' checks, involves an Internet auction purchaser who sends a check for more than the amount — claiming the rest is for shipping costs — to the seller and requests for the rest to be wired to an account in Nigeria. The check is deposited and cleared, the victim wires the rest of the money. The

ey scammers," Margosian said. "Seniors age 50 and older are No. 1."

Myers' office is currently investigating about 10 money scam cases, but Margosian said that doesn't necessarily reflect the true number of Oregonians who are being duped.

"I'm sure there are plenty of victims who I won't hear from because they are embarrassed for being so trusting," she said.

Since the biggest problem for officers is finding Internet crime suspects, Hicks said the best advice to students is to try and avoid becoming a victim in the first place.

"When dealing with money without having it in your hands, you're taking a risk no matter what," he said.

In order to avoid being scammed, Margosian advises students never to wire money to people they don't know personally. For those who have already lost money to one of these schemes, there are a variety of resources and organizations to contact, including the Attorney General's Financial Fraud/Consumer Protection section toll-free at (877) 877-9392.

For more detailed information on the Nigerian advance fee scam and "copy cat" schemes, visit the U.S. Secret Service Web site at [www.secretservice.gov/alert419.shtml](http://www.secretservice.gov/alert419.shtml).

Contact the reporter at [caronalarab@dailyemerald.com](mailto:caronalarab@dailyemerald.com).

**"Students are the No. 2 most targeted age group in Oregon by money scammers. Seniors age 50 and older are No. 1."**

**Jan Margosian**  
office spokeswoman  
Oregon attorney general

bank goes after the seller, the person who deposited the money, a few weeks later.

According to federal law enforcement officials, money transfer con artists appear to target middle and upper income individuals in the United States, but statistics from Myers' office say students and seniors are the groups that should be most wary.

"Students are the No. 2 most targeted age group in Oregon by mon-

## Venus

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many women's issues concern everyone.

"It's also a good way (for men) to learn about issues and get our perspectives," she said.

Aguilar said an important aspect of the festival is that it will enable groups of women from different walks of life to come together.

"They're all women, and they're all strong leaders on campus," she said.

Free child care will be provided on Saturday and Sunday from

11 a.m. to 5 p.m. through the EMU Child Care and Development Center.

"Usually, I think parents are less accessible in campus resources and events," said Sayaka Mimura, a member of the ASUO Women's Center, who helped organize the child care services.

The festival, co-sponsored by organizations including the National Organization for Women, EMU Club Sports and the YWCA, will conclude Sunday evening with a banquet. The banquet will feature a performance by the Jazz Quartet, among others. Keynote speakers

include Office of Multicultural Affairs Director Carla Gary and Kitty Piercy of Planned Parenthood.

The price for registration, which includes access to all events throughout the weekend, is \$5 for students, staff and faculty and \$10 for general admission.

Pilliod said the money raised from registration fees will help offset the cost of the festival.

"Overall, there will be a sense of empowerment, and that's what this is all about," Pilliod said.

Chelsea Duncan is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

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