

# Non-profit organizations reuse thousands of phones

Recycle for Breast Cancer and CollectiveGood are collecting cell phones to raise money for charities

By **Caron Alarab**  
News Reporter

To help decrease the world's overabundance of cell phone garbage, some non-profit organizations have made recycling cell phones a quick and easy process through Web sites, pre-paid postage labels and drop-off locations.

"There are billions of phones in peoples' kitchen drawers and office desks," said Larry Behrens, program director of Recycle for Breast Cancer. "Now they have no excuses."

More than 128 million Americans use cell phones, and on average they are replaced every 18 months, according to INFORM Inc., an environmental research organization.

Consequently, more than one million cell phones are tossed out each week in the United States, according to the Sierra Club, the largest grassroots environmental organization in the country.

Nathaniel NT, co-director of the University Survival Center, has spent the last two years working with the University to create a recycling infrastructure for mobile electronics.

And although he has never owned a cell phone, he said he would never throw one away to end up in a landfill.

"Cell phone contaminants don't get broken down in landfills," he said. "Those toxins end up in the water we drink and the air we breathe." But organizations like Recycle for Breast Cancer and CollectiveGood are doing more than just reducing cell phone waste in American landfills. They also donate phones and proceeds to good causes, such as developing communities and



Adam Amato Photo Editor

Staples, located on West 11th Avenue, is collecting cell phones and PDAs to be recycled.

breast cancer research.

Recycle for Breast Cancer makes a donation to breast cancer research for every phone recycled or reused through the program.

Behrens, 39, started the non-profit program to provide a way for people to donate to a good cause without reaching into their wallets or paychecks.

"We don't just recycle these items for the sake of recycling," he said. "We recycle them to raise money."

Having known many friends and family affected by breast cancer, Behrens chose to donate all proceeds to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. For more information about the foundation, visit [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org).

Although the "meat" of the program lies in cell phone and printer cartridge recycling, Behrens said the company may soon consider different products.

"As the program grows, we are considering other items, like pagers," he said.

Through Recycle for Breast Cancer's Web site, [www.recycleforbreastcancer.com](http://www.recycleforbreastcancer.com), the program sends tiny mailing boxes to donors, along with

packing material and a pre-paid postage sticker, making it easy for anyone in the United States to participate.

"It's the best method of collection we've been able to come up with," he said. "And it's something people can do all year round."

Atlanta, Ga., native Seth Heine had a similar idea in 1999 when he established CollectiveGood, an Internet collection program that reuses and recycles old cell phones.

Heine, 35, had been working for a cell phone carrier in Latin America when he realized the majority of the population couldn't afford a cell phone or even a land line. After talking to friends in the United States, he also found that everyone he knew had an old phone somewhere at home.

When he learned that cell phones contain the same toxic components as computers, everything clicked.

"CollectiveGood is a really cool opportunity to take this huge environmental problem and turn it on

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The Classified Staff of the University of Oregon and the six other public institutions represented by SEIU 503 recently reached a two-year Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Oregon University System.

Congratulations to classified workers for bringing intelligence, passion and action to the bargaining process and for standing firm on workers' rights to accessible health care, to work site organizing, to a safe and healthy workplace, and to future job security. Thank you also to the community partners who loudly and clearly supported our bargaining issues, including the GTFF, GCIU, the Eugene-Springfield Solidarity Network, the Teamsters union, and concerned UO faculty, students and Oregon state legislators.

### Looking towards the future...

- We remain concerned that state employees face a two-year wage freeze and continued attacks on earned retirement benefits.
- We remain troubled by the anti-worker proposals of OUS representatives during bargaining.
- We will continue to advocate for employer-paid family health benefits for all workers in the university system.
- We recognize the need to create sustainable funding for higher education while preventing tuition increases beyond students' and parents' means.

The classified workers at the University of Oregon are the people you see every day cleaning, mowing, computing, advising, reviewing, cooking, washing, monitoring, planning and implementing to sustain the academic mission of students, faculty members and administrators. Thank you for your support!



SAVE THE DATE: December 10 | **Right to Organize Day of Action**