

Students warned to be careful of scams

BY KELLY ROMANSKI
Staff Reporter

A few weeks ago, students strapped for cash may have found their dream job offered on posters around campus.

"Work just 10 to 15 hours a week and make lots of money doing it!" was scribbled on a homemade poster-board flier.

No company name was listed, just a toll-free telephone number. When called, an enthusiastic male voice rattled off wonderful "facts" about America's "32nd fastest-growing company."

"Make \$30,000 to 60,000!"
"Eventually make \$100,000 ... working just 10 to 15 hours a week!"

During the answering machine message, someone picked up the phone and the sound of dishes clanging together echoed over the phone line for a brief second.

No one spoke. Phone calls from the Daily Nebraskan were not returned.

Many similar scams recently have targeted students nationwide, according to the national Better Business Bureau Web site, <http://www.bbb.org/>. Because of their poor economic condition, students are common targets for scams, the Web site said.

Such scams lurk at the University of

Nebraska-Lincoln, said Scott Meacham, president of the Lincoln Better Business Bureau.

And one of the most prevalent scams hits students where they can be hurt the hardest — tuition payments.

Several scholarship and grant scams promise big returns on investment in the form of tuition scholarships and financial aid. But the scams take students' money in exchange for information they could easily look up themselves, according to the National Fraud Information Center.

Meacham said students should be wary of any scholarship-finding companies that charge \$100 to \$200 for a registration fee or for locating scholar-

ships and guarantee scholarship money in return.

Most of these guarantees are worded so that unsatisfied students cannot get their money back, he said.

"Some companies will provide lists of hundreds of scholarship offers ranging from \$500 to \$5,000, and for the victims to get their money back, they will have to document that they applied to each and every offer and have been turned down," Meacham said.

Other scholarship-finding companies will provide nothing for the fee — not even a printout of scholarship sources, according to the Federal Trade Commission. On its Web site, <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/al>

[erts/ouchalrt.htm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/al), the commission states students can protect themselves from fraudulent scholarship companies by being wary of the following hook lines:

- "The scholarship is guaranteed or your money back."
- "You can't get this information anywhere else."
- "I just need your credit card or bank account number to hold this scholarship."
- "We'll do all the work."
- "The scholarship will cost some money."
- "You've been selected by a

Please see SCAMS on 8



Fred Drasner

Chief Executive Officer

An Open Letter to Students Planning to Attend Law School from U.S. News & World Report

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Kindest Regards.

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