Purse thief hits campus

By Nathan Talaya
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A serial purse snatcher is making his rounds at the UA, police warned students and employees in a campus alert issued yesterday. UAPD released the alert after a second incident occurred Monday, at 5:38 p.m., near a bus stop on North Cherry Avenue and East University Boulevard.

The first incident occurred on the north side of the Sixth Street parking garage on Sept. 8 at 9 p.m. The Tucson Police Department said a suspect in two city incidents matches the description of the campus purse snatcher.

Joseph Mejia, said the UAPD and the Tucson Police Department believe the same person is responsible for the four crimes. Even though none of the victims have been harmed, Mejia said that as serial criminals continue their crime spree, they gain boldness and become more abusive with each incident.

"Until we identify the suspect, we fear that he will continue with his crime spree until he is caught. This is how these types of criminals work. They continue to commit their crimes until they are caught," he said.

The latest victim, a UA employee who asked not to be identified, said she was walking along the UA Mall to the bus stop at McKale Center, when the robbery occurred.

She said her purse was clawed on her left forearm when a man on a bike swooped past her.

"The thief just reached up and pulled the purse from my arm," she said. "He was obviously very skilled. He knew how to do it.

The woman said she screamed, which attracted the attention of several people, including a young woman who rushed into the street and tried to stop "the wretch" as he fled away.

Students are encouraged to hold their purses, briefcases or backpacks close to their bodies. Packs hanging from one shoulder are vulnerable to theft, Mejia said.

While wallets and pant pockets should be used to carry valuables, large amounts of cash and credit cards should be avoid-
ed.

UAPD is also reminding people to use See SNATCHER/15

Tuition break for research assistants causes concern

By Debra Hollander

Last year research assistants celebrate
ed the university’s decision to charge
graduate assistants for only half of their

Tuition.

However, because they pay less now, costs are rising for their departments, who are wondering how they will foot the bill.

Tuition remission - a reduction in the
amount graduate assistants pay to attend classes - is unlike a waiver in that it must be paid for by another source.

"Tuition remission is a reduction in the amount graduate assistants pay to attend classes - it is unlike a waiver in that it must be paid for by another source," said Gary Esham, associate director for finance and administration in Optical Sciences.

Last year, the Employee Related Expenses, or the cost of employee benefits, was $3.2 percent of a research assistant's wages. This year the cost is at 14.5 percent because there has been a 2.5 percent rise in health care costs and depart-
ments have to put 8.6 percent of the wages toward health care.

While the remission for teachers' assistants is covered by state funds, research assistants are usually covered by the grants for which they do research. In order to help out departments this year, the UA has offered close to half a million dollars in aid.

"The jump (in ERE) can be significant to existing grants. That's why we have offered to offset that jump," said Dorian Voorhees, assistant dean of the graduate college. "We don't plan to compromise any grant or any graduate student being hired."

This is the first year remission has covered research assistants, in the past only TAs were eligible for the remission. Last year, the remission for TAs was $25 percent.

"We want to keep RAs and TAs on an equal level," said Voorhees.

Esham, whose department asked for See FUNDS/10

University of Arizona, Tucson

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