

# The Daily Pennsylvanian

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## **Fighting crime, creatively - Drexel guards patrol campus with high-tech tools**

**Elaine Wong**

While Penn is spending an extra \$5 million cut campus crime, Drexel University is testing out a different approach to law enforcement.

Drexel security personnel are being provided with a hand-held PDA-like device which will keep track of their colleagues' whereabouts by displaying the information on a digital map.

The technology -- dubbed DragonForce after the school's mascot -- draws and transmits map directions and has the results appear in real time on guards' PDAs.

Drexel is the first campus in the United States to use the technology.

Penn Vice President for Public Safety Maureen Rush said that the University currently has no plans to invest in the technology but will be looking at the results of Drexel's experiment with interest.

DragonForce was developed by Drexel engineering professors Moshe Kam and William Regli. The two approached Camden, N.J.-based software company Drakontas LLC to market their invention.

Kam said that one of the factors limiting the technology of DragonForce is the need to constantly change the hand-held devices' batteries.

But, he added, the devices offer the advantage of real-time communication between security guards without intermediaries or walkie-talkie systems.

The technology isn't limited to college campuses, either.

Drakontas President James Sim, a 1988 Drexel graduate, said that the firm plans to market the product to the U.S. military as well.

Drakontas is currently testing the technology at Virginia Commonwealth University -- located in Richmond, Va. --and Saint Francis University in Loretto, Pa.

One of the challenges of the project, Sim said, is considering how to best adapt to a site's existing infrastructure.

"We're not looking for people to just buy technology," he said, adding that Drakontas customizes the system to suit the needs of each site.

Gollotti said that Drexel patrol officers presently use a handheld radio and a phone with a global positioning system in tandem to communicate and locate each other. Yesterday, the university equipped 12 officers with the DragonForce devices, which may eventually replace both. The technology will be phased in gradually with more and more officers receiving DragonForce in the coming weeks.

Future enhancements planned for the system include "the ability to transmit text messages, file incident reports from the scene and view photos of criminal suspects and security videos of incidents only minutes old," according to a Drexel press release.