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## Flash mobs at UA less than epic Stunts by groups of students still draw attention

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It was a flash, but it wasn't much of a mob.

About 20 University of Arizona students tried to keep the campus's fledgling flash mob movement going Wednesday when they did a freeze-frame flash in the center of the Memorial Union food court.

It was the third flash mob at UA in two weeks.

A flash mob is an event in which a group of people, having been given instructions in advance, converge upon a place, do something odd, then leave as if nothing unusual had happened.

At UA on Wednesday, students were signaled to freeze in the middle of whatever they were doing by two students who greeted each other with a high-five and then "froze" in that position for about three minutes. Other students froze in the middle of conversations, handshakes and drinking water.

Much of the lunch crowd was underwhelmed. But Jermaine Ramsey, a freshman psychology major, was intrigued.

"To be honest, I just want to know what's motivating them," Ramsey said. "I like how when they finished, they went off their separate way like everything was normal. I kind of felt left out."

Stephen Adamo, 20, was one of the participants in the flash.

"It's a harmless way to have fun," Adamo said. "It gets your attention."

That's what UA journalism senior Chris Riegert-Waters, who organized Wednesday's event, said he's going for: attention and fun.

"The point is to shake things up," Waters said. "A lot of people's lives are really monotonous. The idea of a flash mob is to add something to a normal day so you can go back to your dorm and say, 'Dude, guess what I saw today?'"

Waters said there are two other UA students "who are trying to put a good flash mob forward." He said he's trying to join forces so the next flash mob will reach the critical mass of at least 100 participants.

"The problem with Facebook is you send out these invitations and everyone knows it's happening and they show up to watch, but not participate," he said.

In fact, 140 people had signed up on Waters' Facebook page for Wednesday's flash mob. A skivvies flash on

Tuesday had more than 700 people sign up on Facebook, but only about 40 students actually stripped for the three-minute jaunt on UA Mall.

"The problem with these things is it takes a decent amount of faith that people will show up to participate," Waters said. "The idea is to make them really epic."

Wednesday's mob wasn't epic, but it was still great, said Josh Wolf, a freshman pre-business major who watched it.

"People take life too seriously," said Wolf, who participated in Tuesday's run-in-your-underwear event. "Flash mobs give people something to think about."

Freshman Liliana Lopera said Wednesday's frozen figures made her think about "how we really don't ever look at each other. We don't really pay attention."

Originally, Waters' flash mob was supposed to feature bloodied-up zombies in the Union, but Wednesday's campuswide blackout spurred talk of the year anniversary of the Virginia Tech shootings.

"We thought maybe having a bunch of people covered in fake blood walking through the Union wasn't the best idea," he said.

Flash mobs began in Manhattan in 2003, according to reports from CNN, with messages about them sent by e-mail. Now, notifications are spread through the Facebook and improveverywhere.com.

**Caption:** Jermaine Ramsey freshman, psychology major. UA freshman Liliana Lopera.

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