

Opinion

UCSD professor works to make border-crossing safer

by Travis Wireback
Editor in Chief

The road to hell may be paved with good intentions, however, it seems in the case of the creation of a recent cell phone application, the road to jail may also be paved with good intentions.

Over the past few years, deaths among illegal immigrants crossing the Mexican-American border have increased exponentially. This prompted a UCSD professor, Ricardo Dominguez and his partner, Micha Cardenas to develop a cell phone application which would provide people illegally crossing the border with directions to safe locations. Such safe locations would provide treatment for injuries, water, food and other humanitarian aid.

Dominguez, Cardenas, and the advocacy groups with whom they are working plan to distribute cell phones with this application installed on them around Mexico by this coming summer.

While these advocacy groups and creators appear to have the highest of intentions, that of saving lives, the question remains, is this legal and is this ethical?

In regards to the question of legality, what they are doing is aiding people who are ILLEGALLY entering the country; and who are thereby breaking international and domestic laws. Key word in that sentence: illegally.

Ethics is a whole new argument. I recognize that some people will see this as being a laudable humanitarian effort. Unfortunately, however, how do Cardenas and Dominguez plan to guarantee that this application will not be abused?

As one border patrol agent points out, this application could easily fall into the wrong hands. It could conceivably allow terrorists, gang members, and anyone else to have safe passage into our country.

I do recognize that crossing into the United States is a treacherous ordeal and recent numbers show that it is becoming more and more dangerous. However, the people who are crossing the border

must be cognizant of the danger posed by exposure, border patrol, and the potential consequences of their actions should they be caught.

What is sad is that the condition of their homelands is so poor that they are willing to risk their lives just to be able to provide for their families and themselves.

If these professors really want to help Mexico and its people, wouldn't it be more productive to work within communities in Mexico/Central America/South America to increase the quality of life there?

If we were able to increase their quality of life, immigrants wouldn't have to risk their lives to find work just to be able to support themselves and their families.

While this application is still in the production phases and faces numerous obstacles, such as making it user friendly for people unfamiliar with cell phones, the goal of distribution this summer stands.

The Clarion would like to hear your opinions on the matter. E-mail Clarion@brevard.edu with your opinions to be printed in next week's paper.

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