‘Suspicious’ package at Cabrillo was student project

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APTOS — A “suspicious” package that shut down the upper campus at Cabrillo College’s Aptos location Thursday was determined to be a class project accidentally left behind by a student, the Santa Cruz County Sheriff’s Office said Friday.

The package was destroyed by the Santa Cruz County Bomb Squad.

According to Kristin Fabos, campus spokeswoman, an unidentified person saw a suspicious package near recycling containers next to the 400 building, which is next to the parking structure near Porter Gulch Road.

Students were asked to evacuate across the street to the other side of campus on Soquel Drive. The campus eventually reopened at 2 p.m.

For teachers on campus, it was a shock.

“A man showed up at our door and said you’re being evacuated,” said Cabrillo English instructor Dr. Ekua Omosope. “So all of us in one single motion stood up and started gathering our things. We were told to get out quickly and leave our things if we had to.”

Omosope is shaky about the future days at the college.

“I still feel scared,” she said. “I feel scared about coming into work tomorrow, because I don’t know what’s going on it’s frightening. Especially when you think about the recent bombings in Boston.”

Students like 19-year-old biology major Stephanie Cardinali said she believed that none of this would have happened if not for the bombings in Boston.

“T’m not worried,” Cardinali said. “I think it’s a hoax after the Boston situation. It’s something that’s relevant. I don’t think this would’ve happened it that didn’t happen.”

For other students like Adriana Zavala, recent violence only magnified the fear in this situation.

“I felt scared because of all the shootings and stabbings that have been happening around town, so I didn’t ask any questions, I just got my stuff and left the library,” she said.

The 19-year-old, along with many other students, believed that there was no bomb.

“I don’t think it’s a bomb,” Zavala said. “Maybe it was just something that someone left behind on accident maybe.”

The scare on campus forced faculty and other staff to be the first responders on campus.

Maintenance worker Martin Sandoval said he was just doing his job in the 900 building of campus when he heard the announcement over his radio.

“It’s an emergency right? I’m just doing everything I can just in case there is a potential event,” he said.