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Renovations and amenities improve OU's Community House

By Eric Reikowski, media relations assistant

Oakland University's campus life is growing more vibrant thanks to some recent developments in the community house located in Building 4000 USA of the University Student Apartments. The renovations began in fall 2007 and saw the addition of a new pool table, 50-inch LCD television, computer lab, aquarium and display case.

These amenities have helped create a more enjoyable experience for campus residents, according to University Apartments Manager Claude Huddleston, who said he has noticed a dramatic uptick in usage of the community house among a broad cross-section of the campus community.

"We went from virtually no one booking our lounge to people reserving that space regularly," Huddleston said, noting that various campus-based organizations utilize the area to hold meetings, study sessions, game nights and other events.

Among the organizations that frequently reserve the space is the Waterford Autism Spectrum Disorder Transitions Group, a university-sponsored program that helps children with autism participate in a variety of learning activities. Additionally, the room serves as a gathering place for the International Village, a group comprised of both foreign and domestic students dedicated to promoting diversity and cultural exchange through events such as the International Thanksgiving.

Recalling a conversation he had nearly three years ago with a former director of University Housing, Huddleston said that tight budgets posed a significant challenge to any potential enhancements. However, prospects brightened when the OU Student Congress approved funding for a computer lab, which was completed by fall 2008.

Additionally, Huddleston said the display case will be used to showcase awards for the Sustaining Our Planet Earth (SOPE) program, a student-driven initiative designed to promote environmental awareness, campus recycling and community outreach. SOPE awards are given to campus residents who contribute to environmental sustainability at Oakland. Huddleston added that University Housing recently donated a total of \$114.30 in returnable containers to support relief efforts in Haiti.

According to Huddleston, the University Student Apartments currently house 457 campus residents.

"The University Student Apartment community has been very fortunate with the additions to the community house," Huddleston said. "I believe that when students enjoy the environment they live in, it helps improve their quality of life and aides in retention efforts."

Campus groups who wish to reserve the Community House can contact University Housing at (248) 370-2581.



Renovations made to the Community House have seen an increased amount of traffic and use by students.



Campus organizations are able to make reservations to use the recently renovated Community House area.

SUMMARY

Renovations made to the Community House have improve the area and made it a more frequently used addition to campus life.

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