

# Students find substance-free dorms to their liking

BY TIM CARVELL  
STAFF WRITER

They may have been created simply to pacify lawmakers, but drug- and alcohol-free dorm rooms at state-funded universities in Michigan have taken on a life of their own.

In 1989, David Honigman, then a state representative, at the request of some concerned Birmingham and West Bloomfield residents, introduced a proposal which would have required state-funded universities to provide special housing for those who don't want alcohol use in their room.

Nervous about the new bill, universities quickly created their own "substance-free" housing to comply with the bill, and figured that was the end of the issue. But it wasn't.

Now, many universities that initially set aside a small percentage of rooms for substance-free housing are finding that demand for the rooms is quickly outpacing supply.

At the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, for example, housing administrators started with 500 substance-free undergraduate room assignments, which were quickly filled. The following year, the uni-

**Only one school reported a lack of interest in alcohol-free housing: East Lansing's Michigan State University, the state's largest and the last to implement the option. Only 2 percent of students choose to have an alcohol-free room.**

versity offered 1,400 such slots — and received 2,100 applications for them. This fall, U-M has set aside room for 2,000 students in substance-free housing, 20 percent of the university's total undergrad enrollment.

Under most universities' programs, students who opt for the special housing are expected to refrain from drug and alcohol use while in the room; they are not, however, required to abstain once they have left the dorm.

**Not just teetotalers**

"It's not a contract of teeto-

talers," said Alan Levy, director of public affairs for U-M's housing division.

Still, some schools do take the ideal of physical well-being fairly seriously. At Oakland University in Rochester, the substance-free dorm of Anibal House is known as Wellness House for its attention to overall health.

The dorm, which has been filled to capacity since it was declared substance-free, offers a weight room, healthy food and developmental programs.

"It's a lifestyle choice for the students," said Jenn Ann Miller, assistant director for student development at OU.

More and more students are making that choice; at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, the number of alcohol-free rooms leaped from 50 to 500 in three years.

Most university representatives offered two explanations for the demand. The optimistic view is that students are becoming more aware of the hazards of substance abuse.

"My gut feeling is, students are getting more education about alco-

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Walk-in registration for fall term Oakland Community College classes continues 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekdays through Wednesday, Sept. 2.

New and returning students may register, according to alphabetical schedule, at the campus closest to them. Alphabetical schedules are published in the current schedule of

classes.

Schedules are available by calling the campus admissions office. Registration is being conducted at these campuses:

- Auburn Hills, 2900 Featherstone, 340-6572.
- Highland Lakes, 7350 Cooley

Lake Road, Union Lake, 360-3069.

• Orchard Ridge, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills, 471-7628.

• Royal Oak, 739 S. Washington, 544-5574. Southfield campus students are encouraged to register at this site.



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