New UC Housing Aims to Prevent Dropouts

Kathrine Nero  
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Staying in school could be as easy as living in the right place. That's the hope of a new housing facility at UC.

It's a new 26-bed, off-campus facility called the Gen-1 Theme House. It's located in the UC-affiliated Stratford Heights Community and will open this month to first-generation, Pell-eligible University of Cincinnati students.

The living and learning community, which officially opens its doors on Sept. 19, is designed to provide support programs and services for students to make a successful transition from high school to college, says Stephanie Cappel, executive director of UC’s Partner for Achieving School Success (PASS) Center in the College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services (CECH), which developed the Gen-1 Theme House initiative.

The off-campus housing will provide residents with an orderly, highly-structured environment in which to live, learn and work. Mentoring, tutoring and study sessions, as well as family programming are among the support systems that will be included in this housing community, says program coordinator Judy Mause.

First-generation college students, students struggling financially, new students and undecided majors are all among those most at risk for dropping out of college. “We are targeting a unique group of students who are the first to live in this housing community, with the intention of guiding them to be successful in their freshman year so that they’ll be able to complete the remaining years of their studies,” Mause says.

Cappel says PASS will be hiring a UC graduate assistant per every seven students who join the community to monitor each resident’s academic performance. She says that individualized support programs will be tailored to help ensure academic success.

The Gen-1 Theme House, located at 2647 Stratford Ave., holds single and double suites along with a study room, living room, recreation room, dining area and kitchen and laundry room. Cappel says the Enquirer/Newspapers in Education program is donating a computer for the study room and donating a newspaper subscription for the house, as well as offsetting a small portion of the rent for one of the students.