Flats offer guests nearby lodging

The Flats at Loyola Station, located at 1216 W. Arthur Ave., offer lodging for guests who can rent rooms on a weekly or monthly basis.

by Hillary Kenyon
News Editor

Loyola students' families can now stay closer to the university at The Flats at Loyola Station, a student-run luxury guesthouse that opened in July.

Located at 1216 W. Arthur Ave., the 10-unit guesthouse is owned by Loyola University and offers long-term and short-term stays.

Senior and international business major John Adorno, co-president and founder of The Flats, is one of the eight students who operates the building.

Adorno said he has already begun to learn "how to start a business from the ground up" through the project.

"I've learned everything from managing funds to fixing water heaters," he said. "I've learned more here than I would the first few years in the 'real world.'"

All eight students are paid to manage The Flats as part of a three-credit hour internship. While The Flats is mostly student-run, the university's associate director of capital planning, Michael Brosko, advises a board that manages the building.

"I think it's really important for students to be exposed to this kind of experience," Adorno said. "This is a great opportunity the school has given to us and we just want to put that out there for all our students."

The modern, "state of the art" units include a kitchen, washer and dryer. Photography and artwork from students and local artists decorate the rooms and guests can choose rooms with Asian, cozy, industrial or other organic decors.

Guests can lease weekly or monthly, up to three months, in one of the four long-term units. The six short-term units can be reserved nightly.

Prices range from $125-$220 per night for a one-bedroom and $220-$350 for a two-bedroom. Parking is included in the cost.

The one-bedroom units sleep up to four adults while the two-bedroom units can sleep six adults. Unlike a hotel, there is no concierge front desk or lobby.

"(The guests) like the fact that they can be comfortable in what is an apartment essentially," Adorno said.

The idea for The Flats began as a semester project for an entrepreneurship MBA class in February 2010. Adorno came up with the idea to use the plot of land behind CVS. The design came from other student-run businesses at Georgetown University and the University of Dayton.

The holding company of The Flats, Loyola Ltd., took out a long-term loan that will be paid back to Loyola over 30 years.

Loyola students have mixed feelings about the building.

"I feel like they haven't been talking about this," said senior Caitlin Donato. "There's been a lack of communication and advertising [to Loyola students]. I would like to know where the profits go and there's a lot of questions about it still."

Senior Ellen Monohan's mother already rented a unit for her upcoming 2011 graduation ceremony.

"I think it is a really good idea because there are no hotels in this area and my mom always complained about that," Monohan said. "(The Flats) look fabulous with the kitchen and patio. There are only ten units, which is a bummer though."

Loyola Family Weekend and Graduation 2011 are two weekends when the student managers expect The Flats to be at full occupancy.

Local businesses have shown their support to The Flats by giving discounts on telecommunications, blinds and furniture for the units.

"You tell people you're a student-run business and they're thrilled about it because these students have come forward and want to learn," Adorno said. "They're more willing to give."

A university open house is taking place on Thursday, Sept. 9 from 3 to 7 p.m. for the public to ask questions and walk through select units.

"When you come to Loyola, you can stay in Evanston and be completely disconnected from the university," Adorno said. "Or you can stay at the Flats ... and all the way through your visit you're in constant contact with Loyola."