

# 'Substance-free' dorms more popular

By COLLEEN DEBAISE

Think late Saturday night at the dorm. Think smoke-filled halls, raised voices belting out the words to "Mony, Mony," and drunken students playing hall sports.

But the proverbial "college scene" is fading on some campuses, as a growing number of students eschew keg blasts for a cleaner, quieter place to live.

In the last three years, substance-free halls, dorms, and even fraternity houses have surged in popularity.

Colleges and universities that offer substance-free housing include Arizona State University, State University of New York-Binghamton, Colorado State University, Connecticut College, Dartmouth College, Denison University, Iowa State University, Michigan State University, Ohio State University, Pennsylvania State University, Purdue University, Rice University, University of California-Los Angeles, University of Colorado, University of Nebraska, University of Wisconsin-Madison and numerous others.

The national headquarters of Sigma Nu Fraternity has helped 12 of its 214 chapters become

## Dunn Center to host state dance group

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Patricia McBride and Jerri Kumery.

Bonnefoux joined the Paris Opera Ballet at age 14 and was named Danseur Etoile at the age of 21. He has danced with the Bolshoi and Kirov Ballets and in 1970 became a principal dancer with the New York City Ballet under the direction of George Balanchine.

The Dance Theatre was founded by Robert Lundgren in 1970 and inspired by ten years of leadership under the creative genius of Salvatore Aiello.

The company's reputation is based on strong dancers, high energy, and a versatile repertoire that ranges from stunning interpretations of full-length classical ballets to bold, witty, and deeply moving contemporary works.

For tickets, call the Dunn Center Box Office at 985-5197. The box office is open Friday from noon to 5 p.m. and one hour before Friday's performance.

substance-free.

At the University of Maryland, the number of students living in substance-free dorms has risen from 120 in 1993 to about 1,000 today.

"Basically it's an extra nice environment to live in. It's great," says J.R. Rosenberg, 19, a sophomore at Maryland.

"You don't have people throwing up all over the stalls and leaving it," he explains. "You don't have drunk people coming in an urinating all over. Stupid things like that do go on [elsewhere]."

He lives on the sixth floor of Denton Hall, which has been designated as substance-free: no alcohol, drugs, or tobacco allowed. But what you choose to do outside the hall is your business, Rosenberg stresses.

"I am in a fraternity, so I see both sides of the world on campus," he says. "A lot of people who live in the substance-free dorms don't see all of what goes on, so they don't appreciate the environment they live in."

At Maryland, substance-free housing was launched three years ago with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, says Karla Shepherd, coordinator of programs and orientation. The idea, she says, is to prevent drug and alcohol abuse on campus.

Students have latched onto it because "they want more choices," she explains. "They might not abstain from alcohol and drugs, but they still want to live in a substance-free [residence hall]. Others are committed to a substance-free lifestyle."

Many students just want to avoid temptation by keeping away from the party, she adds.

"They're here for an educa-

## Wampler to leave Wellness Center

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ences with the college and Wellness team, Wampler said, "I have enjoyed working here at North Carolina Wesleyan College these past four years and will remember fondly the friendships I've made with students, fellow staff members, and faculty. I will certainly carry these fond memories with me to Tennessee."

Jane, a mother of two boys, (Eric, 19, and Jason, 12) will accompany them and her husband in relocating to Fast Food Merchandiser's plant in Cookeville, Tenn. Her very own occupational prospects include making her services available at Tennessee Tech University,

tion," she says. "You could basically blow it by abusing alcohol and drugs."

At many colleges, students say the temptation to get "toxxed," "zoned," "blotto" or otherwise "unsober" is definitely there. According to a study released last year by Harvard University's School of Public Health and Social Behavior, a survey of more than 17,500 students at 140 colleges and universities showed that 44 percent of students report binge drinking. Forty-one percent of entering freshmen who reported not binge drinking in high school began bingeing shortly after arriving at college.

The same researchers showed that widespread binge drinking on America's college campuses had serious "secondhand" effects on students who do not binge. Eighty-seven percent of college students reported secondary binge effects from drunk students, ranging from insults to lost sleep to cases of sexual assault.

Binge drinking is defined as consumption of five or more drinks in a row for men or four or more drinks in a row for women on one or more occasions during a two-week period.

"Heavy drinking can cause or contribute to a number of problems for youth," says Steven A. Schroeder, president of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, "such as poor academic performance and school failure, assault, automobile accidents and resulting fatalities, recreational injuries, violence, and risky behavior like early and unprotected sex."

So whether students are searching for quieter living quarters or want to avoid the potential pitfalls of partying, campuses report greater number of students are choosing substance-free living. Maryland's program is based on the first substance-free housing program started in 1989 at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. There, the number of students living in substance-free housing has jumped from 500 to 2,600 today.

"Substance-free housing is really a lifestyle choice," says Alan Levy, director of housing at Michigan. "[Students] think it will be the most academic-supportive life in a residence hall that they can obtain."

When surveyed, students also say they chose to live in a substance-free environment because "in high school, they knew someone who paid a serious consequence for alcohol abuse," Levy says.

The soaring cost of tuition has played an important factor too. With more students taking out larger loans to pay for college, "they better use the time efficiently," he says.

According to Maryland's J.R. Rosenberg, an added bonus to the substance-free hall is that residents often are more courteous to their neighbors.

"It's very quiet. If you want to study and someone's playing their radio low, they'll lower it for you," he says. "On other floors, it doesn't happen."

Substance-free housing, however, has yet to gain universal acceptance, he says. Outsiders tend to stereotype hall residents as "people who don't go out, people who study all the time," he says. "The main word that comes out is 'dorks.' Or 'nerds.'"

That's been a national concern for fraternity members, who worry that shedding the "Animal House" image might drive members away. But at the University of California-Berkeley, the first fraternity to go substance-free, Sigma Nu, has attracted 30 pledges this rush season, among the best turnout on campus for a Greek house.

Starting this year, no alcohol, smoking, or illegal drugs will be allowed at the Sigma Nu house. Instead, the 104-year-old chapter has sought out a new crop of recruits who are interested in "a fraternity for the '90s — a clean, well-lighted place to study and make friends," says Bob Tuck, a Sigma Nu alumnus who is president of the fraternity's governing board.

In addition to being substance-free, the new Sigma Nu offers rooms that are wired for modems and an online study area.

"We're looking for serious students who would like to have the additional experience of a living group," says Tuck. "They'll have the fraternity experience that they've heard about without the noise, disruption, and peer pressure that exists in many houses."

"This doesn't mean the members are teetotalers," he adds. "It just means that any parties at the chapter house cannot serve alcohol. If they want to have a party with alcohol, they can have someone else, an insured entity, cater the event at a location than handles the sale of liquor and checks for I.D."

Theta Chi fraternity at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is adopting a similar substance-free policy, after years of trouble with alcohol and hazing violations.

The substance-free policy applies only to events at the fraternity house itself. "Members can go out somewhere and have an event and have alcohol or tobacco there," says Dave Westol, executive director of Theta Chi's national headquarters.

The policies are catching on across the nation for a number of reasons, including lower insurance rates, better living conditions, and academic improvement of members, Westol says.

The programs already have met with success at the Utah State University and University of Colorado, among other schools, he said.

Often, fraternities turn to substance-free houses as a way to fight dwindling membership. That was the case with Sigma Nu at Berkeley, according to Bob Tuck.

"There had been a gradual decline in the fraternity during the past several years," said Tuck, "both in the way members conducted their social activities and in the physical condition of the house."

Last September, the board discussed its concerns with the fraternity members and hired an alumnus as a full-time adviser. But by the end of December, not enough progress had been made, and the board in early January dismissed all active members from the house. The students were given alumni status in Sigma Nu.

Sigma Nu's international headquarters encouraged the change.

"We considered closing the chapter because of the lack of fraternal values, but what we really wanted to do was build a new, positive group," said Kelly Phillips, regional director of Sigma Nu Fraternity. "All our new or reorganized chapters now are substance-free."

To give the Sigma Nu house an updated look, the inside was refurbished and the traditional ivy growing outside on the brick walls was removed.

"We wanted not only substantive organization change," said Tuck, "but symbolic change as well."

Tuck said he isn't sure whether the architects of the transformed Sigma Nu chapter will be considered "pariahs or progressive." But one thing is certain: new traditions are starting with these pledges who chug water, milk, and soda instead of alcohol.

"We're going to serve the community, the university, and the serious student," he said. "What we're not going to serve is alcohol."