

THE QUEENS COURIER**QUEENS COLLEGE RESIDENCE HALL OPENS TO RAVE REVIEWS**

By Pete Davis

With the start of the fall semester at Queens College, nearly 500 students will have a pretty easy commute to class. That's because those students are living on campus and are residents of the college's first-ever campus residence hall, named the Summit, which officially opened on Wednesday, August 26.

The \$72 million project, which was financed in tax-exempt bonds issued by the city's Housing Development Corporation and did not use public funds, was completed on time and on budget, and brings a new component to Queens College.

"I think one of the reasons we knew we wanted to pursue the idea of a residence hall was because many of our students who live in Queens or Nassau County wanted to have the residential experience," said Sue Henderson, Vice President for Advancement at Queens College.

The Summit contains 506 beds – 489 for students and 17 for resident assistants and staff – and 481 of the 489 student beds were already filled, according to Joe Bertolino, Vice President for Student Affairs at Queens College, who is living in the Summit himself. Most of the rooms in the five-story building are fully-furnished, two-and-four-bedroom suites that were built to a silver rating in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. Pricing for single bedrooms are \$6,250 per semester while doubles are \$4,250.

Currently, 123 students who live in Nassau County are living in the dorm, 75 from Queens and 58 from Suffolk. In addition, 60 students living in the Summit hail from upstate New York, 81 students from out of state and 29 students come from other countries.

"It provides first-year students who otherwise would have not considered Queens College with an option to attend Queens," Bertolino said.

Henderson recalled a conversation with a student from Suffolk County who made the nearly two-hour commute every day to attend classes at Queens College. Instead of commuting four hours each day to school, the student could use that time to get involved in different aspects of campus life.

"I think it's going to be a very enriching experience for our students who are currently here," Henderson said.

Many students who had been at the new residence hall for less than a week already have given it rave reviews.



“I’m really happy that we’re here; I love it,” said freshman Daniela Celi, who came from Orlando, FL to attend Queens College and is living in the Summit with three other girls on the tennis team. “I did not expect it to be so nice.”

Erika Goldsmith, a freshman from Edison, NJ, who lives on the fourth floor of the Summit with Celi, remembered visiting some of the tennis players last year when she was looking at a school. The students were living in an off-campus apartment, which Goldsmith said paled in comparison to their accommodations at the Summit.

“It’s pretty luxurious compared to what they had before,” said Goldsmith, who lives with three other girls, but they each have their own bedroom and share two bathrooms, a small living room and kitchen with a full-size refrigerator, stove and microwave. “It’s pretty good privacy with the single room.”

In addition, the Summit has wireless Internet throughout the building, a state-of-the art fitness center, a laundry facility and quiet rooms for students to use for studying or seminars. “There isn’t much more that a student would need – except to go to class,” Bertolino joked.