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# Welcome, home

University of Dayton

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# NEWS



*Friday December 11, 2015*

## Welcome, home

The University of Dayton has reached another step in its growth as a top-tier, national Catholic research university with the board of trustees' decision that the University should purchase property near campus to serve as the official residence of the president and an attractive venue for small special events.

The property, located at 1477 Ridgeway Road in Oakwood, sits on a 1.3-acre wooded lot less than two

miles from campus. It includes a two-story house with a basement and a small guest house. It was purchased for \$1.55 million.

“The board views this as a long-term asset and an important step for the University,” said Steve Cobb, chair of the board of trustees. “The house will include a private space for University presidents and their families to live and a space for events ranging from special dinners with faculty and students to small gatherings with donors and community leaders.”

The board’s move reflects a growing national trend. More and more Catholic universities with lay leaders are providing houses for their presidents and families rather than a housing allowance.

About 40 percent of presidents at Catholic institutions now reside in a home provided by the school, compared to 56 percent of presidents at public and other private schools, according to an Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities’ analysis of a 2013 American Council on Education study. Other major Catholic universities that provide presidential residences include Georgetown University, Catholic University of America and Saint Louis University.

“We view this as an investment for the future. It expresses the importance of the leadership position at the University of Dayton, which has grown in reach, stature and global importance,” said the Rev. Martin Solma, S.M., provincial of the Marianist province of the United States and vice chair of the board of trustees.

When the trustees launched a search for a new president earlier this year, they followed the advice of an external compensation consultant, who recommended the purchase of a residence for future presidents.

The University entered into negotiations for the property before Eric F. Spina was named president-designate in September.

Spina, who becomes president on July 1, 2016, said the house will be a University resource for many decades to come and an extension of the University’s leadership role in the community.

Beyond hosting community leaders and important visitors to campus, Spina envisions using the house to “celebrate students, faculty, staff and alumni” — from dinners with student leaders and accreditation teams to receptions for faculty who achieved special recognitions and major donors who funded academic initiatives.

“My wife Karen and I will want student and faculty art throughout the home. We will want to

incorporate all the talents of our University community into the space and its functions to make it a warm and supportive environment — a house that reflects the University’s welcoming, hospitable character and showcases both our Flyer spirit and the tremendous talent we have among our students,” he said.

The purchase is funded out of the University’s capital budget. Each year, the University spends an average of \$40 million for improvements to, or new construction of, academic buildings and student housing. The capital budget also has funded the purchase of private homes in the surrounding student neighborhoods and investments, such as the NCR land acquisitions.

The University will take possession of the property in March.

The University of Dayton is Ohio’s largest private university and ranks among the best Catholic research universities in the nation.

For more information, contact Cilla Shindell, director of media relations, at 937-229-3257 or [shindell@udayton.edu](mailto:shindell@udayton.edu).

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