



## ROOMMATES CLICK THROUGH ONLINE MATCH

By Alicia Duplessis

Kaitlin Splett and Katelyn Smalley have a lot in common. They share the same initials, they both love theater, and during Saturday's residence hall move-in day, they were issued keys to the same room.

Their arrival at the same spot in the Lallage Feazel Wall Residential College on the uptown campus of Tulane University was no coincidence as Splett and Smalley were among hundreds of new students who went online to browse, view and select their roommates using the Tulane RoommateClick service — an online roommate pairing website offered by the Division of Student Affairs' Office Housing and Residence Life.

Beginning this summer, students planning to live on campus had the opportunity to log on to the site and create a profile for other on-campus roommate seekers to view. In keeping with popular networking sites like MySpace and Facebook, RoommateClick allows each user to create a profile, upload pictures and publicize what they are looking for in a roommate. Students also may communicate via e-mail.

"RoommateClick made choosing a roommate a lot less terrifying," says Splett of St. Louis, who is beginning her first year at Tulane. "I received a letter stating that I was one of 1,600 new students and I was a little intimidated by having to choose someone to live with out of such a large number."



Kaitlin Splett, left, of Missouri and Katelyn Smalley, right, of Maryland are among the first to utilize Tulane RoommateClick.com, which allows incoming students to eliminate the anxiety of being paired randomly with another student.

Smalley, who is a native of Ellicott City, Md., and also a freshman, has the same sentiment as her new roommate.

"It's great because I know that I'm going to be with someone I get along with," says Smalley. "My roommate put in her profile a lot about her views on life and her expectations of college, and I realized that we share a lot in common."

Veronica Marquez, senior assignments coordinator for the Office of Housing and Residence Life, says her office received 970 mutual roommate requests — an increase from the 500 or 600 requests submitted in previous years. Of those requests, 40 percent said they found their roommates using RoommateClick, 25 percent used Facebook, MySpace or another networking site, and 16 percent found their roommates in person during summer orientation.

"We are providing this platform for students to meet and present themselves as potential roommates, and it has definitely been very successful," Marquez says. "This helps to relieve a lot of anxiety for parents and students because there is one less unknown."

According to Marquez, a few students preferred the old-fashioned method of randomly pairing roommates.

"Some students just didn't look [for a roommate] and are really okay with getting a random roommate," says Marquez. "But having this systematic approach to finding a roommate is just one more amenity that we can offer to our students."

RoommateClick is based out of New York and powers the service used by several leading colleges and universities. The service is available free of charge to Tulane students.