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CU-Boulder's 'Gun Dorms' Attract Zero Students... Again

The Boulder Daily Camera | By BRITTANY ANAS

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A year ago and in the aftermath of the state Supreme Court striking down the University of Colorado's gun ban, the campus announced it had set aside a limited number of family housing units for students who have concealed-carry permits.

There were no takers last year. And, as the university nears the start of the upcoming school year, once again, no students have asked to live in any of the units where weapons are allowed.

"The demand for housing probably isn't an indicator of the number of students with concealed-carry permits," said Bronson Hilliard, spokesman for the Boulder campus.

The reason? Colorado law requires concealed-carry permit holders to be at least 21 years of age. The majority of students who live in the dorms are younger than that.

In March 2012, the state Supreme Court ruled that CU cannot ban concealed-weapon permit holders from bringing their guns to the university's campuses, prompting officials at the Boulder campus to review contractual agreements for students who live in the dorms and family housing units.

While guns are banned in CU's dorms, there are a dozen university-owned, standalone family housing cottages that CU will allow for students with concealed weapons permits to keep guns in their residences. CU has also said it has a limited number of units in the Athens North family housing unit.

CU reserves the units for those with permits, but fills them if they see no demand.

Students, should they ever reserve the units, must sign contracts stating that they will lock their guns in safes when they leave their cottages or apartments.

Hilliard said that in the future the university will not reveal to the media whether the university has any requests for the units. The decision is intended to protect students' privacy so that people can't deduce who might hold concealed-carry permits.

The new privacy rules please James Manley, the attorney from the Mountain States Legal Foundation, who represented the student gun-rights group that brought the original lawsuit against CU's gun ban.

"It's called concealed carry for a reason," he said. "People don't want to go around broadcasting that they have permits."

Paul Chinowsky, an engineering professor and new chairman of the Boulder Faculty Assembly, said he does not intend to bring up the issue of guns this year with the faculty assembly.

"I think the lack of students wanting to live in specific dorms highlights that this is an issue that did not warrant the level of attention it got," Chinowsky said. "If a group of faculty believe this is something that needs revisiting, then the appropriate stance would be a joint town hall with the administration to hear all opinions. But I think the university has many more issues to focus on right now rather than revisiting the gun issue."

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