

## **New life ahead for former ZBT house**

5/05/05

Alfred University will soon convert an abandoned fraternity house on Main Street into retail space and add new studio space behind the existing structure. The University is acquiring the former Zeta Beta Tau fraternity house, which has been vacant since February 2002, and plans to restore the two-and-half story Victorian house to lease for retail operations. It will also build an 8,000-square-foot studio building behind the main house to provide the School of Art & Design with additional space for its Freshman Foundation program. The project is made possible by a gift from Martin and Michele Cohen, whose son, Adam, received a BFA degree from AU in 2003. "We wanted to do something to show our appreciation for the wonderful education our son received at Alfred University," said Michele Cohen, who has served on the AU Board of Trustees since 2001. "Right now, one of the most pressing needs the University has is for additional and better space for the Freshman Foundation program in the School of Art & Design. Our Foundation program really distinguishes us from other art schools, but it requires open spaces that give teams of students room to work on large projects," said AU President Charles M. Edmondson. "Our facilities are excellent, and we didn't want to compromise the experience students have at Alfred University by overcrowding the Freshman Foundation space. Thanks to the generosity of the Cohen family, that will not be necessary and we could even enroll more art students," said Edmondson. The announcement of expanded space for Freshman Foundation follows other exciting news for the School of Art & Design, noted Joseph S. Lewis III, dean. "In February, we learned that Marlin and Ginger Miller had created a \$25 million endowment for fine and performing arts at Alfred," Lewis said. "With the proceeds from the endowment, we will be able to offer additional scholarship assistance to the most talented art students, and we will also be able to create six endowed professorships that will allow us to both expand our offerings and to attract the caliber of faculty members our students have come to expect at Alfred." As a match to the Miller gift, the State Senate allocated \$10 million for facilities for the art school. Work is just beginning to determine how best to use those funds. Additionally, the Kyocera Corporation created a \$10 million endowment for the School of Engineering, which will be renamed the Kazuo Inamori School of Engineering in honor of Kyocera's founder. That gift will allow the University to hire four new researchers to create a nanotechnology research center. The former ZBT house itself, which fronts on Main Street and is located in the Village of Alfred's historical district will be restored to its original exterior appearance, but inside will be remodeled for commercial use. (more) New life for former fraternity house at AU 3-3-3 The University is now seeking business people who are interested in owning and operating a gallery for the exhibition and sale of student artwork. "We will have 3,400 square feet of space available on two floors," said Michael Hyde, vice president for University Relations. "We want to do what we can to boost the downtown business district, so we are looking for an aspiring entrepreneur. We would like to see a student art gallery in at least part of the space, and we're willing to lease it at a very attractive rate to the right person to make sure that happens." The School of Art & Design at Alfred University is recognized world-wide for its ceramic art program, and the goal is to make all disciplines within the school as well-known as ceramic art.