

For many students, a huge part of the college experience is based around where they live. The perfect housing can make all the difference—but the hunt to find it can be quite daunting. Today, Rent College Pads, a site that launched in 2013 based out of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is a service that seeks to ease that struggle.

The app helps college students find off-campus housing in a more convenient way.

The idea for Rent College Pads spawned out of a situation many college students know all too well. It started when the founder, Dominic Anzalone, was looking for off-campus housing during his time in college and it proved to be a very difficult experience. From looking on Craigslist to walking past yard signs with no luck, Anzalone had the burgeoning idea to create a marketplace for students.

Anzalone first took this idea to Marquette University. “[Anzalone] basically got all the landlords to sign up within the first year there and it really took off from there,” says Chief Marketing Officer Jeremy Schmidt.

“We created a marketplace for students, and work with different landlords in the town and then students are able to prepare all of their different options right on our website, reach out to landlords, see how far everybody is from campus ... it’s a very college-orientated experience and it’s really taken off.”

So how does this service work? Well, it’s easily accessible on the website. Students are able to come to Rent College Pads and view the many different properties from landlords around town and contact the landlords directly through the site. This is helpful to many college students who may come across a property they like and not know who directly to contact.

This apartment service stands out in certain ways from others in that it is designed solely to help students. Websites like Craigslist or Apartments.com may show apartments all over the city, but with no map feature from the residences to campus, it can be difficult to figure out if it’s a good location for prospective renters.

“Everything that we do is very focused on students. So we only work with properties that are going to be interested in renting to college students,” says Schmidt.

A service like Rent College Pads benefits college students in that it takes off the extra added stress of trying to find safe, reputable student housing- something other websites don't necessarily offer.

Rent College Pads has recently added new features in the goal to make apartment hunting easier for students. Now, on every apartment property listed on the service, it shows the walk time to campus, as well as the distance by car and public transportation. This gives students the ability to see which apartment is best for them based on their personal transportation needs.

Other perks of this service include a roommate finder, and students are even able to put up and view sublease postings – a struggle that many college students are familiar with.

Rent College Pads is now available in Greensboro, having launched here in February of this year. “We chose Greensboro because we've had success at other UNC schools, we're also at UNC Wilmington and Appalachian State,” says Schmidt. Another reason for Rent College Pads launching in Greensboro is the number of college students who now live in apartments.

“At some schools, the majority of [students] live in houses, whereas in Greensboro, a lot of them are living in apartments and there's really only a couple of landlords in town with a lot of houses. Those houses are a very hot commodity and go very quickly.”

Between UNC Greensboro and North Carolina A&T, about 6500 students have used Rent College Pads so far.

To begin using this service, visit www.rentcollegepads.com or visit the app Rent College Pads.