

**\*\*\* MEDIA ADVISORY \*\*\***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Contact:      Katie Doyle**  
**Ozone House YouthBuild**  
**734.662.2265**  
**[kdoyle@ozonehouse.org](mailto:kdoyle@ozonehouse.org)**

**Ozone House Opens its Doors to Youth Displaced by Hurricane Katrina**

Ypsilanti – Ozone House is ready to welcome 4 young adults who have been displaced by Hurricane Katrina into its program immediately.

In YouthBuild, homeless and at-risk youth ages 18-22 work toward their GED while learning job skills by building affordable housing for homeless and low-income people in their community. Strong emphasis is placed on leadership development, community service, and the creation of a community of adults and youth working in partnership and committed to success.

Ozone House YouthBuild will provide displaced youth with comprehensive services – leadership development, education, construction training, housing, and counseling – for 8 months, and then send them back home trained and ready to join the rebuilding efforts in their own communities.

Ozone House YouthBuild is working in a unique partnership that draws on the expertise of local agencies to meet the comprehensive needs of the youth enrolled in YouthBuild. Ozone House will provide staffing to ensure a quality leadership experience, social and emotional supports, and identify housing options. The young people will build affordable housing in Ypsilanti with *Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley* and the *Gateway Community and Economic Development Corporation*. Additionally, during the program, they will obtain GED Instruction and earn 2 college credits from *Washtenaw Community College's* Adult Transitions and Residential Construction programs. Participants will also receive hourly wages while enrolled in Ozone House YouthBuild.

Overall, YouthBuild sites in 13 states are ready to welcome 200 young adults who have been displaced by Hurricane Katrina into their programs **immediately**. These YouthBuild programs are located in Arkansas, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Vermont, Washington, and West Virginia. YouthBuild sites in 22 other states are eager to welcome an additional 1,800 participants into their programs if additional federal funding can be obtained.