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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Youthbuild Recruits New Participants

Youthbuild of Southeastern Ohio, a program of Sojourners, is recruiting young men and women from southeastern Ohio between the ages of 16 and 21 who have not received a high school diploma. Participants spend one half of their time learning employment readiness skills leading to paid work on construction projects in the Vinton County area. The other half of their 40-hour week is spent in the Sojourners classroom receiving leadership and educational support leading to a GED.

The Youthbuild model of hands-on vocational training, coupled with experiential and innovative education techniques provides a unique opportunity to young women and men who require additional support and a flexible learning environment. After careful evaluation, each participant receives an individualized education plan which builds on the student's strengths and incorporates strategies to increase competencies in areas which need improvement. Youthbuild students are also assisted with college exploration, including school visits, financial aid and college application assistance, academic and career exploration.

Through a 3-tiered curriculum the Job Readiness and Training Program offers participants individualized job readiness training, including appropriate dress, resume building, interview skills, workplace etiquette, communication skills, and conflict management. As pledges (tier one), participants learn the philosophy of Youthbuild and the rules and policies of the program. As trainees (tier two) participants experience hands-on training in the use of construction and woodworking tools, and develop employability skills. After passing a work readiness test, Youthbuild members become apprentices (tier three) where they are paid to work on supervised Sojourners construction sites.

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“I joined the Youthbuild program in May, 2004. It offered me as well as others a chance to make up for our past mistakes and pave a new road for our lives. Through the staff I had a great support system, I learned a new trade in construction, and I was provided with a great education. This organization has done a lot for this community and its been a pleasure to be part of such a great thing. Sojourners and Youthbuild are here to help those who want to make a positive difference in their lives. People need to realize that good stories come out of this place” said Dametrius Conn, past Youthbuild participant.

As members of Youthbuild, young men and women also have a unique opportunity to provide valuable service to their community. Participants in the Youthbuild program have taken part in several service projects during the six years of the program, including construction of the gazebo at the Vinton County Courthouse and new benches in the amphitheater in McArthur Park, renovation of the Cox and Bay/Tinker covered bridges, restoration of Hope Furnace in Lake Hope State Park, signage for the Vinton County Fairgrounds, and development of Hope Park on the site of the Lake Hope Dining Lodge.

Recruitment for the Youthbuild program is ongoing until all participant slots are full. Transportation to and from Sojourners is available to participants who live in counties adjacent to Vinton County. Form more information contact Joy Dickerson, recruitment and outreach coordinator of Sojourners at 740.591.6279, or jdickerson@sojournerscare.net.
