



Jose's First Day



Jose's Induction Day



Jose's Graduation Day



Jose **Today!**

November 2023

Jose enrolled in YouthBuild when he was almost 24 years old.



Before YouthBuild I considered myself, like, a degenerate. I was trying to get off drugs. I had a pill problem; I was trying to get off pills for so long. I remember I just needed to do something because I was **feeling stuck in life**.

When I think back to 2019, I can't believe I thought twice about calling YouthBuild. I was working at a radio station and a guest talked on-air about YouthBuild. Then she gave me her card and talked with me one-on-one after the show and told me I should check it out. I should have told myself not to be stupid and to call right now. That I was going to be OK. I needed an excuse from myself just to TRY. Yeah, to try something else. **I'm so glad I checked it out.**

YouthBuild was an escape. It was a way to get away from where I was. Going there day after day, being committed just kept making more sense. It was good for me: mental toughness, being accountable for myself, being transparent with myself. It was **everything I needed** at the time to get myself right. To get my head space right and change my mentality.

I'm most proud of being off the drugs. I barely even drink now. I thought I would never get there. I want to say that it was easy, but it wasn't easy. But I was able to do it.

YouthBuild helped me get into college. I didn't see that coming at all. I did not know that was going to be an outcome. I thought YouthBuild was just going to help me sharpen my construction skills and then slowly I realized that I hate construction. YouthBuild had more to offer someone like me.

Now, I have an associate degree in Multimedia Communications from College of Lake County. I got accepted into DePaul. I got a job. I'm way more in tune with myself, like what I want. Things are much clearer for my life. **I feel better about myself.** This year, my friends and I started a media agency. We want to help other companies with their social media, their music production, and their online presence, basically building their brand.

YouthBuild was like a catalyst to the direction of my life. That's how important it was for my growth, my evolution as a person. **I owe everything to YouthBuild.**



Jose – 2020 Graduate

YouthBuild Lake County has helped over 1,000 young adults, just like Jose, since opening our doors 20 years ago. Our mission is ongoing and your gift is vital to our success.

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Tameka M. Wilson
Executive Director

Tear Here

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