

# CAA honors first class of YouthBuild Academy graduates | [www.thecincinnatiherald.com](http://www.thecincinnatiherald.com) | Cincinnati Herald

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**More than 150 friends and family members** attended the commencement of the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency's first YouthBuild Academy class at the agency's Jordan Crossing facility. For many of the 40 graduating youth, this was their first time donning a cap and gown. Serving Cincinnati's at-risk young men and women from low-income communities, CAA's YouthBuild Academy is a construction training program for youth who have dropped out of high school or are unemployed.

YouthBuild students underwent rigorous training and development through the nine month program. CAA's staff worked with the students, challenging them to rise above their current situations and overcome negative attitudes that have prevented them from meeting their full potential. While the students worked side-by-side with construction industry professionals, gaining hands-on experience building affordable housing, staff provided leadership development, life and job skills training, and prepared the youth to earn their GED.

CAA's first class of YouthBuild Academy graduates are leaving the program on a promising note: 27 of the graduates earned construction certifications, two landed employment with local construction companies, six earned their GED, one earned a high school diploma, four are now enrolled at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, and two will head off to Central State University in the fall.

CAA is currently taking applications for its next YouthBuild Academy class. Applicants must be Hamilton County residents between the ages of 16-24, have dropped out of high school or be unemployed, and be interested in gaining the tools necessary to build a promising future. Interested individuals can download the application at [www.cincy-caa.org](http://www.cincy-caa.org) or pick up an application at CAA's Jordan Crossing facility at 1740 Langdon Farm Road.