

When high school drop-outs are motivated to study for their GED and learn construction skills, it's news. When those former drop-outs learn to build a house from the ground up and present the keys to a grateful owner, it's wonderful news!

Twenty-six young people, ages 16 to 24, in IRD US's CLIMB YouthBuild program built a three-bedroom home for a family devastated by Hurricane Katrina, learning construction skills as they worked. They came from disadvantaged backgrounds. Many are from low income families. Others are high school drop-outs.

"It's a way for me to get a head start in my life," said 17-year-old Carole Coxe of Gulfport. "I was really excited because...I'd be getting my GED, working in construction, and doing demolitions."

With the house completed, her classmate Crystal Gaston said, "It helped a lot, because it shows I can achieve and succeed."

CLIMB YouthBuild is IRD US's nine-month program for committed, drug free, hard-working young people looking for a second chance to learn a trade and become self-sufficient members of their community.



IRD is a charitable, non-profit, non-governmental organization that focuses its operations in regions of the world that present social, political, and technical challenges, and is a specialist in conflict and post-conflict settings. IRD's mission is to reduce the suffering of the world's most vulnerable groups and provide tools and resources needed to increase their self-sufficiency. IRD has current operations in 30 countries in six core sectors: democracy, governance, and community development; economic growth and public-private partnerships; sustainable food and agriculture systems; health; infrastructure; and relief.

IRD US will continue to search for new and creative ways to apply its international experience in our home on the central Gulf Coast. This will include scaling up our work in housing and case management, and also vocational development programs for youths and adults.



www.ird-us.org

International Relief & Development U.S.

1223 30th Avenue, Suite A
Gulfport, MS 39501

P: 228.864.6677
F: 228.864.6979



Gulf Coast Community Resource Center



From Relief to Recovery: Providing Opportunities and Tools to Build Livelihoods

Recovery Services Expand Beyond Relief

IRD's initial emergency services in 2005 prompted the creation of IRD US and its Gulf Coast Community Resource Center (GCCRC) in Gulfport, Mississippi. GCCRC now provides a comprehensive set of services to low and middle income residents of the Gulf Coast including:

- Over \$850,000 in relief, medical supplies, hygiene goods, and household items provided to Hurricane Katrina survivors on the Mississippi Gulf Coast;
- Over \$4 million in recovery assistance provided in the past three years;
- Home repair and rebuilding;
- Housing and financial counseling;
- Individualized case management that has helped over 2,500 individuals;
- Job training and placement through the federally funded CLIMB YouthBuild program;
- Micro business training and start-up loans; and
- Mental health programs for crisis and trauma detection.

Housing Resource Centers

For more than a year, IRD US, working with long term recovery groups in the Mississippi Coast's three counties, has made housing counseling, financial counseling, and credit remediation an essential part of our case management. The affiliated Housing Resource Centers are:

- Gulf Coast Housing Resource Center, Gulfport, serving Harrison County and
- Jackson County Housing Resource Center, Moss Point.

They provide comprehensive services, in partnership with faith-based construction agencies, to repair and rebuild the homes of Hurricane Katrina survivors. Staff members at the Housing Resource Centers also provide services related to the purchase or rental of affordable housing in the area.

Access to Affordable Housing

Case managers with IRD US have advanced training in financial counseling to help low to middle income clients seeking to purchase or rebuild homes learn how to improve their credit and become mortgage ready. This process not only prepares people for homeownership, but it gives them tools for long-term financial security.

Individualized Case Management

IRD US is a leading organization in providing critical case management services to survivors of Hurricane Katrina along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Through our case management program, we have helped over 2,500 individuals. We are also developing an advanced case management program as a resource to other social service providers in the region.

Youth Development Programs

Creating Livelihood for Individuals through Micro Business (CLIMB) Youth Build is a comprehensive program for committed, drug free, hard working young people seeking a second chance in life. Youths between the ages of 16 and 24 work to earn their GED and learn construction—at trade to help rebuild the Coast community while they rebuild their lives. This federally funded program fulfills a vital part of IRD's mission "to reduce the suffering of the world's most vulnerable groups and provide tools and resources needed to increase their self-sufficiency."

Training for Future Business Owners

Through CLIMB people interested in business ownership attend a nine-week business training program at the IRD US Gulf Coast Housing Resource Center. There they learn how to set realistic goals

and develop a business plan. The course includes basic record-keeping and bookkeeping, and it offers ideas on marketing a business. Small start-up loans are available to those successfully completing the training program.

Restaurant Workforce Training

At IRD US, plans are under way for Café CLIMB, a restaurant/tourism workforce training program. At-risk young people will be able to study for their GED while getting hands-on experience in a restaurant classroom environment. Learning restaurant operations will prepare Café CLIMB's graduates for positions in tourism, a major Gulf Coast industry.

Mental Health Recovery

As resources dwindle and recovery time increases, survivors of Hurricane Katrina continue to experience stress, depression, and mental trauma. The Crisis Detection Program of IRD US trains case managers to identify clients in crisis. It also teaches agencies and people working with the public where readily available services can be found to help their clients' mental health needs.

How You Can Help

IRD US donors can have confidence that their contributions will be used effectively. IRD US not only provides immediate relief in the wake of disasters, but focuses on building productive lives in the future. Your donation is crucial to helping IRD US maintain high quality programs in the central Gulf Coast region.

Individual Contributions

To donate, please visit www.ird.org or mail a check to:
IRD US
1223 30th Avenue, Suite A
Gulfport, MS 39501

Bequests and Planned Gifts

For donors wishing to designate IRD in their wills, bequests can help reduce estate taxes for their survivors. IRD also is grateful to receive charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, and the transfer of appreciated securities, real estate, or life insurance policies that allow donors to support IRD while providing donors the opportunity for tax savings.

Foundation and Corporate Support

IRD US welcomes foundation and corporate support through financial contributions for general operating purposes, as well as in-kind donations such as computers, other information systems hardware, construction materials, and equipment for specific programs.

