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For Immediate Release:

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## **LOCAL DENTAL PROFESSIONALS BRIGHTEN SMILES OF OZONE HOUSE YOUTH**

Thanks to Liberty Dental and Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery of Ann Arbor, fifteen homeless and at-risk youth spent this Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in a dentist's chair. Liberty Dental donated their entire day to providing exams, cleanings, x-rays and fillings to fifteen Ozone House clients. Also, the staff at Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery of Ann Arbor provided extractions for five Ozone House clients.

It's certainly not the way most of us would choose to spend our holiday, but to a young person who does not receive regular dental care, it was a wonderful day. According to the HCH Clinicians' Network, limited access to dental care increases homeless people's high risk for oral pathologies, often resulting in loss of function, self-esteem and well-being. Lack of access to affordable dental care, along with education and awareness of oral health present the greatest barriers to oral health care for homeless youth.

Many of the young people treated this Monday had not seen a dentist for more than ten years. Dr. Kristin Johnson at Liberty Dental noted that some patients had several cavities, and significant problems with infections due to tooth decay. "There is so much unmet need in dental care for low income populations, and we thought it would be a great idea to give back," says Dr. Johnson.

This Monday, Dr. Johnson and her staff worked extra hours and completed more than \$6,500 worth of care – entirely free of charge. She plans to meet with Katie Doyle, longtime friend and Executive Director at Ozone House, to discuss making the day of service an annual event. Five teens were also referred to Dr. Rick Scott and Dr. Norbert Fernandez at Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery of Ann Arbor for wisdom teeth extractions.

*Ozone House is a community-based, nonprofit agency that helps young people lead safe, healthy, and productive lives.*

*Since 1969, Ozone House has actively developed unique, high-quality housing and support programs and services that provide support, intervention, training, and assistance to runaway, homeless, and high-risk youth and their families.*

*Through these support services, we help youth develop essential life skills, improve their relationships, and enhance their self-image so that they may realize their full potential for growth and happiness. All our services are completely free, voluntary & confidential.*

**For more information, please visit us at [www.ozonehouse.org](http://www.ozonehouse.org). ###**