



County of Ottawa

Press Release



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For Immediate Release

Media Contact:

Joan Grillo, Victim Advocate-Ottawa County Prosecuting Attorney's Office 616- 846-8368, jgrillo@miottawa.org

Katty Shack 5K: The Face Behind the Race



Grand Haven, MI--Natalie Kik-Brown, co-director for the Katty Shack 5K is an avid runner and triathlon participant. Her goal is to run a marathon in every state in the country—and she is well on her way with only 14 states to go. What sets this race director apart is that she is also the mother of Katherine Brown. Katherine Brown along with Sharmaine, Jeremy and Tyler Zimmer were brutally murdered in the Zimmer home in Wright Township in 2008. The assailant, Troy Brake, shot Sharmaine, Jeremy and Tyler and then sexually assaulted Katherine Brown and bludgeoned her to death. He then set fire to Katherine's body and the Zimmer home in an effort to destroy evidence of the murders and the sexual assault. Katherine, nicknamed "Katty Shack" by her running teammates in high school, was a freshman at Michigan State University at the time of the murder.

Tragically, this was not Natalie's first loss of a loved one. In 2006, Natalie's husband Jim was killed in an automobile accident as he was transporting Natalie to a medial appointment to treat her breast cancer. Natalie beat breast cancer but was emotionally devastated by the heartbreaking loss of her husband and daughter.

After each of these traumatic events in Natalie's life, she was offered services by Victim Advocate, Joan Grillo, from the Prosecuting Attorney's Office in Ottawa County. Eventually the two conjured up the Katty Shack 5K to benefit The Crime Victim Foundation. The Crime Victim Foundation provides mini-grants to victims of crime of \$500 or less where restitution cannot otherwise be made.

Natalie and Joan have worked tirelessly as race directors for Katty Shack 5K. Running and fund-raising for Katty Shack have provided tremendous solace to Natalie as she has worked through her grief. To date, the Katty Shack 5K has raised \$40,000 for crime victims.

The Fifth Annual Katty Shack 5K will be held on Saturday, April 26th at 9am in Grand Haven. Register online at <http://kattysackrace.webs.com/>. If you prefer not to walk or run the race, you can support the event as volunteer or a purchaser of a course sponsorship sign. Deadline to purchase a \$20 sign is April 18. If you are interested in volunteering or sponsoring a sign, please contact Heather at 616-786-4139.

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