

YOUTH ON THEIR OWN

# NEWSLETTER



YOUTH ON THEIR OWN

Educating homeless teens. Investing in Tucson's future.



## SUCCESS STORY!

This issue's "Success Story" is as much about the courage and life achievement of the 137\* YOTO graduates of The Class of 2009 as it is about your belief in them and in the value of a high school education. In particular, your investment in homeless unaccompanied YOTO students who, through no fault of their own, do not have the benefit of a strong family unit or a stable home environment: Two proven essentials for successful school performance.

Without a diploma it is nearly impossible to earn a living wage, which frequently leads to an increased reliance on social services, incarceration, substance abuse and emotional problems throughout adulthood. High school drop out statistics are frightening, and the implication on the overall health of our community even more so. But these graduates, while on their own . . . are on their way . . . because of you.

In a survey of YOTO 2009 exiting seniors, these motivated young men and women told us that they will serve their communities as future teachers, healthcare providers, firefighters, soldiers, mechanics, hair stylists and plumbers, among other professions.

As one student wrote, **"Thank you to all YOTO contributors because your donations really help us out. What I needed to remain in school and graduate, I received thanks to you and YOTO. I really, really appreciate it. God bless you."**

Here's what else graduates had to say:

Over and over again grads voiced gratitude for the monthly stipend and access to clothing, food and a caring, friendly staff. Some were surprised at the number of services offered on-site and the availability of added services through agency partnerships, strengthened over the last three years, that could assist them with housing, healthcare, personal counseling, and low cost public transportation. The monthly stipend and special needs assistance – hands down – were the most helpful in keeping students in school, easing financial burdens, as well as creating a sense of accountability and responsibility.

**"YOTO helped me so much. The check I received monthly helped me stay on my feet so I could finish school."**

**"YOTO is very helpful for us teens who feel no one is there for us. It offers many services to us that are very appreciated."**

**"Once again, thank you for the uplifting support. I have learned to better myself. YOTO helped me mature and provided me with the responsibilities I need for a life after high school."**

YOTO graduates also stated that they learned to trust and that someone cared about them; they gained self-esteem and confidence in their abilities.

-continued on page 3

## SAVE THE DATE!

*Top of the Town '10*  
for the benefit of YOUTH ON THEIR OWN

**Youth On Their Own's 15th Annual Fundraising Gala**

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 at 5:30 PM**

**The Westin La Paloma Resort & Spa**

Event details and ticket/table online purchase will be available by logging onto [www.yoto.org](http://www.yoto.org) beginning in mid-November 2009.

## Upcoming Events To Benefit YOTO Students

**Pima Rotary Club's First Ever  
City Slicker Rodeo!**

**Saturday, November 7, 2009 • 4:00 PM – 9:00 PM**  
**Old Tucson Studios**

**A Fun Family Event**

For ticket purchase and more information log onto [www.pimarotary.org/rodeo](http://www.pimarotary.org/rodeo). Hee Haw!!!

## YOTO Annual Student Holiday Party '09

**Friday, December 11, 2009 • 5:00 PM – 7:30 PM**  
**Son Life Chapel • 2955 W. Ironwood Hill Drive**

Turn to page 15 to find out how you can become involved in a YOTO annual tradition.



## INSIDE

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- The 2009/10 Academic Year: What's New? page 13





## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Although one can hardly say that “fall is in the air” in Tucson these days, the Fall Semester of 2009 has begun for thousands of students throughout the Metro Tucson area. A new school year brings with it a new energy and, for those of us at YOTO, a renewed commitment to identify and to serve the homeless unaccompanied students in the area’s traditional, alternative and charter schools. We seek to enroll new and returning students as early as possible, so each student receives the full benefit of the agency’s services and support as they strive for the goal of high school graduation.

YOTO’s program staff is connecting with nearly 100 school liaisons who serve as conduits between their homeless students and YOTO and is reviewing hundreds of applications for services from needy students. Each year we are overwhelmed by the number of students who have no safe and permanent residence or adult guiding force in their lives. We are saddened by their situations – domestic violence, abandonment, parental incarceration or deportation, alcohol and drug abuse and, increasingly, the effects of the economy on families that were previously stable, but have experienced job loss and foreclosure.

As we cope with the rise in student need, we are challenged to do more with less. The economic downturn took its toll most significantly on grants from foundations and corporate sponsorships. On the positive side, YOTO’s largest source of support, charitable gifts from individuals like you, dipped only 4%. We are indebted to each of you who continued to support YOTO’s students during this difficult time. Even if you had to pull back on the amount or frequency of your support, your commitment to YOTO made a huge difference in our ability to serve. No students went without the financial assistance, basic needs and guidance that they needed to succeed in school. That is a tremendous accomplishment in today’s economy!

As the new school year presents challenges, the joys and opportunities are many. For example:

- Through the generosity of the Women’s Foundation of Southern Arizona and Resurrection Lutheran Church of Oro Valley, the “Teenage Mothers Moving Forward” program will be launched to provide goal-oriented assistance to our pregnant and parenting teens (page 6).
- We welcome new staff members Angela Daniels-Valenzuela (Program Director) and Archie White (Clerical Receptionist) and are delighted to introduce three energetic new additions to our team for the next year, courtesy of the AmeriCorps network of community service programs (page 13).
- We are grateful for the ongoing presence of new volunteers in our office and Mini-Mall (page 14).

I have been privileged to serve the youth of our community as YOTO’s executive director for three years now. I am proud of our team of staff, school liaisons and volunteers and humbled by the tenacity and determination of our students. I remain grateful to all who make it possible for these courageous youth to succeed. As I prepare to move on to other opportunities, please join me in welcoming Edna Meza Aguirre, who will serve as YOTO’s Interim Executive Director. As I will certainly do, I encourage you to remain involved with and supportive of YOTO. I am convinced that there is no better “investment” of our time, talent, and treasure than the youth of our community through supporting Youth On Their Own.

In service to Tucson’s youth,

**Mary Gruensfelder-Cox**

Executive Director

### FOOTHILLS ROTARY CLUB OF TUCSON PRESENTS

#### “A Flavor of Tequila”

Fundraiser Party

Friday, September 25, 2009

6:30 pm – 10:00 pm

Chinese Cultural Center

1288 West River Road

Partake in Southwestern food and drinks, exclusive European wines, beer and a sampling of fine Senior Rio Tequila. Enjoy live entertainment and an auction featuring fine art, antique furniture, musical instruments and more!

For ticket purchase and more information, call **520.229.0536** or email [mailservice@clubrunner.ca](mailto:mailservice@clubrunner.ca).

The YOTO newsletter often promotes fundraising events conducted by external groups for the benefit of Youth On Their Own. Such announcements might include references to alcohol (as does the one above) or other activities suitable for adults (such as a casino-night event). These events are important revenue sources for YOTO and our adult constituencies are encouraged to support them. YOTO, however, is consistent in its messages to student clients about the need for them to refrain from behaviors that could inhibit their ability to succeed, including alcohol consumption. Student clients receive an entirely different newsletter dedicated to them, which does not promote any activities designed to engage our adult supporters.





# ANNUAL REPORT

2008 - 2009

## Who Did YOTO Serve?

### Program Student Client Eligibility

#### I. AGE

Thirteen (13) years of age, or enrolled in the 8th grade, until the age of twenty-one (21), as long as a student turns twenty (20) during their senior year. This increases by one year for students who are identified as Special/Exceptional Education.

#### II. LIVING SITUATION

BOTH of these situations must be present to be considered for Youth On Their Own:

- Youth who are unaccompanied through no fault/choice of their own
  - Not in the physical custody of a parent or long-term (more than 12 months) legal guardian, **AND**
- Homeless per the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Definition
  - Living with a friend, relative or someone else because they lost their home or can't afford a home
  - Living in a homeless youth shelter
  - Staying in a motel or hotel, car, park, or other public place not meant for habitation
  - Awaiting Foster Care placement

YOTO will also consider students in the following living situations with caseworker approval:

- Group Home placements
- Temporary Foster Care placement

#### Non-Eligible Students

- Students living with a parent – in this case, a student may be eligible for McKinney-Vento services if the parent and student meet the definition of homeless as described above, but the student would not be eligible for YOTO services because s/he is not unaccompanied.
- Married students
- Students who choose to live apart from their parents or outside of their otherwise- safe and permanent homes because of typical teenage-parent conflicts, they do not like the household rules, they want to “be independent,” etc.
- Students who live with a boyfriend/girlfriend by choice, but could still live at home
- Students whose family moved and allowed the student to remain in Tucson in order to attend school
- Students whose family sent them to Tucson to remove them from negative influences of peers or trouble with the law at home

- Students who moved in with others in order to play sports at a particular school
- Students from other countries who are in this country solely to get an education
- Immigrants who, while having the appearance of being homeless by virtue of being doubled up with friends or relatives, actually immigrated with those friends and relatives
- Students who have lived with a guardian for more than 12 months



#### III. SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Student must be in enrolled in school with the intention to graduate. The student is required to comply with YOTO contract with regard to attendance and performance standards. Students may be dropped from the program for failure to comply.

- Students must achieve a “C” or better in all classes\*
  - Funds will be deducted from the stipend for every grade below a “C.”
  - Funds will be deducted from the stipend for every grade of “Incomplete” unless there are special circumstances.
- Students’ attendance must be acceptable by school standards. Students must have no more than five (5) excused/unexcused absences per quarter, even if doing so is acceptable by school standards.

\* Some alternative and charter schools do not give “D” or “F” grades. In general, YOTO works with those schools to provide stipends based on an alternative measure that is tangible, regularly assessed, and applicable to all students, such as the attainment of a certain numbers of credits for a certain period of time. Stipends provided under these conditions are usually provided quarterly or by “block” as designated by the school, rather than monthly.





# ANNUAL REPORT

2008 - 2009, cont.

## Grant Awards Received July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009

A major source of annual agency revenue is received from grant awards. The following awards were solicited by a written proposal to seek funding for a particular program, such as the Stipend Program and Special Needs Funds, to launch a new program initiative or granted toward supporting core services deemed most needed by YOTO's executive director and board finance committee members.

Cox Charities	Stipend Program	\$10,000
The Wings Like Eagles Foundation	Program Development	1,250
Tucson Foothills Sertoma Club	Special Needs Funds	500
Country Fair White Elephant, Inc.	Stipend Program	9,000
	Special Needs Funds	500
Foundation Cariñoso	General Operating	5,000
O'Rielly Family Foundation	Stipend Program	15,000
Southern Arizona Sports Foundation	Stipend Program	7,500
Stone Canyon Community Foundation	Stipend Program	18,000
Nancy and Bob Clark (Gross Foundation)	Stipend Program	4,500
The McCortney Foundation	General Operating	2,500
Walmart Foundation	Stipend Program	1,000
William & Doris Rubin Endowment Fund at the Jewish Community Foundation of Southern Arizona	Stipend Program	6,750
Marilyn Haas Community Youth Fund & the William & Doris Rubin Endowment Fund at the Jewish Community Foundation of Southern Arizona	Special Needs Program	4,000
Resurrection Lutheran Church of Oro Valley	Teenage Mothers Moving Forward	2,500
Women's Foundation of Southern Arizona	Teenage Mothers Moving Forward	14,461.90
<b>Government Grant Awards</b>		
City of Tucson Grant	Special Needs	\$35,775
Pima County Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	Stipends	50,000
Pima County Outside Agency	Stipends	63,915

### OPERATIONAL STATS (UNAUDITED)

- 14 board members
- 4.5 full-time equivalent staff (FTEs)
- 15% administrative expense
- 146 on-site and off-site volunteers worked a total of 1,1616.5 hours, which saved YOTO \$23,993.50 in program/administrative costs
- \$832,940.00 cost of agency operation
- 14 cents was spent to raise each dollar

## TEENAGE MOTHERS MOVING FORWARD PROGRAM

This pilot program works with the most vulnerable of YOTO Students – “Teen Moms” – to assist them in completing a written “Life Plan” that includes their current year in school through two years post high school graduation. Our experience is that many of these young women have no idea what they will do after graduating high school. To be in this situation as an unaccompanied youth as well as an expecting or new parent places each at greater risk to cope with future life challenges. It is our hope that the pilot program will be a great success and lead to more opportunities like this for the rest of YOTO student clients.



Resurrection  
Lutheran Church



★ YOUTH ON THEIR OWN VISION: to empower young people on their own to  
★ become positive and productive citizens of our community.





# YOUTH ON THEIR OWN CONTRIBUTORS

## CASH CONTRIBUTIONS JANUARY 1, 2009 – JUNE 30, 2009

To respect the confidentiality of those donors who wish to remain anonymous, this is a partial listing of contributors to Youth On Their Own. If your name is omitted or in error, please accept our deepest apology and contact us so we may correct our records. Contributions made July 1, 2009 – December 31, 2009 will be recognized in the Winter 2010 issue.

### Individuals & Family Foundations

Craig & Joy Abbott	Brenda Bernal	Helen P. Cowles	Lisa Ford
Connie Acuna	Tracy Bissell	Bill & Cheryl Cox	Susan Fosdick
Marjorie & Barry Adler	Mitch Blum	Kent & Arlene Crawford	Dr. Bryan & Sara Foulk
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Sharon & Mo Barkan	Ashley Carrillo & Garrett Monroe	Bob Driscoll	Philip Grant
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Nathan C. Bell	Shirley J. Chann	Bonnie Sedlmayr-Emerson & Randy Emerson	Beverly Gunderman
Lance & Phyllis Bement	Amy Chapman	Dr. Michael S. & Sidney Engs	Bob & Mary Lou Gunderson
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Paul Bennett	Alex Chavez	Lisa & Bill Eryl	Arizona Department of Corrections Inmates at the Manzanita Unit
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Gene & Barbara Berlanti	Mark Christensen	Martin & Margaret Falkowski	Tamar & Abigail Halpern
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	Claire S. Coon	Dorothy H. Finley	George Harlow
	William Boruff & Patricia A. Cooper	Mr. & Ms. Nicholas Fiore	Jeremy A. Harkin through the Interfaith Coalition for the Homeless
	Kristina Corbin	Randy Fisher	Susan Harper
	Lorena Cordova	Yolanda Fisher	Dr. Wallace & Nila Haworth
	Doris & Len Coris	Rhoda Flint	Jacquelin Berner Hayes
	Robert O. Couchman		





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 Susan Ziegler  
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### Businesses, Churches, Organizations & Service Clubs

ACES Senior Group  
 All Over Media  
 Arizona B Chapter, T.T.T. Society  
 Auto Mall Resale  
 AZ Laureate Alpha Upsilon  
 Bank of America Matching Gifts Program  
 Bank of Tucson  
 BBVA Compass  
 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona  
 Bright Future Business Consultants  
 CSC-Raytheon Golf Tournament  
 Canyon Cabinetry & Design  
 Canyon Community Bank  
 Cardinal Health Foundation, Inc.  
 Casa Adobes Congregational Church, UCC  
 Cata Vinos Wine Shoppe  
 Catalina Sams  
 Clifton Gunderson, LLP  
 Commerce Bank of Arizona  
 Community Church at SaddleBrooke  
 Community Partnership of Southern Arizona  
 DeConcini McDonald Yetwin & Lacy, PC  
 Don Mackey Cadillac Charity 3  
 DoubleTree Hotel at Reid Park  
 E. J. Birmingham, LLC  
 Elks Auxiliary of Green Valley, Lodge #2592  
 EMS Realty, Inc.  
 Epsilon Sigma Alpha Gamma Iota Chapter #3682  
 Freeport-McMoRan Foundation  
 Green Valley Lions Club  
 Los Descendientes del Presidio de Tucson  
 Manheim Tucson  
 Marana High School Students  
 OB-GYN Nurse Practitioners  
 Our Lady of the Valley Parish  
 Pastiche Modern Eatery

PDC Homes  
 Philoptochos Society of Tucson  
 Pima Community College  
 Resurrection Lutheran Church of Oro Valley  
 Ridgetop Group, Inc.  
 SAP Matching Gift Program  
 Saguario Tucson Rotary Club Foundation  
 Slosser, Hudgins, Struse & Freund, PLC  
 Southern AZ Retired Coaches & Officials  
 Southern Arizona Community Bank  
 St. Francis In The Valley Episcopal Church  
 St. Mark's United Methodist Women's Association  
 Sun Mechanical Contracting, Inc.  
 The Bablove Agency, Inc.  
 The Catholic Foundation  
 The Temp Connection  
 The Tucson Woman's Club  
 Towers Perrin / Pittsburg Office  
 Transformations by MD, PLC  
 Tucson Corvette Club  
 United Methodist Women of Sanctuary United Methodist Fellowship  
 Valley Presbyterian Church  
 Welcome Wagon Tucson Club Northeast  
 Wells Fargo Bank

### Tributes

January 1, 2009 – June 30, 2009

#### In Honor of

##### Michael Bolchalk

Mr. & Mrs. Jay Buck  
 April & Jon Fenton  
 Mark Irvin

##### Cathleen's Birthday

Bob  
 David & Joan  
 Jack  
 John & Moira  
 Karen  
 Katharine  
 Nancy  
 Pat  
 Ray & Meaghan  
 Ryan & Lilly  
 Tom & Dana

##### Janis Compton's Birthday

Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Fiore

##### Michael & Sidney Engs

Dr. & Mrs. Mark McCabe

##### Nathan Hannah

Wendy & P. Clayton Gough

##### Elsa Liebowitz's Birthday

Francine & Morton Shafton

##### Katy Lichtsind's High School Graduation

Carol A. Cole

##### Anne Quinones

Bruce C. & Patricia Flanagan

##### Preston & Cameron Smith

Rhoda Flint

##### Shera Stropko

Jean P. Workman

##### Bob Tennison

Suzanne Tennison

##### Diane Tweedy

Elizabeth Krejci

##### Beth Walkup

CWO Bertram Lee, USMCR

#### In Memory of

##### Shirley Allen

Ed & Lynn Kelley

##### Victor Herbert Arida

Craig & Joy Abbott  
 Vicki & Jerry Alpert  
 Gerald H. & Judith  
 Mary B. Barrett  
 Deanna & Robert Bates  
 Colonel Marlin & Mrs. Helen Boruff  
 Donna & Bill Brammer  
 The Catholic Foundation  
 Esther N. Capin & Jack Marks  
 Shirley J. Chann  
 Jan P. Clements  
 Nancy Conlin  
 William Boruff & Patricia A. Cooper  
 Robert O. Couchman  
 Bill & Cheryl Cox  
 George & Marjorie Cunningham  
 Richard & Shirley "Dean" Danis  
 Bonnie C. Day  
 Betty Jo Drachman  
 Bonnie Sedlmayr-Emerson & Randy Emerson  
 Lisa & Bill Ery  
 Dorothy H. Finley  
 Lynette S. & Frederic L. Gordon





## The 2009 – 2010 Academic Year Begins . . . ARCA Bowling Tournament Raises \$19,000 for YOTO Students!

Over 300 bowled to benefit YOTO students at the 6th Annual Arizona Roofing Contractors Association's Charity Bowling Tournament held on July 11, 2009 at Golden Pin Lanes. This year's theme was a colorful "Mardi Gras". Kudos, cheers and bows to Chair Martin Headlee (Headlee Roofing) and Co-chair Scott Eckstrom (Ralph Hays Roofing), ARCA – Tucson members, ARCA, volunteers, partners, sponsors and host Golden Pin Lanes for their continued support. Proceeds from event sponsorships, lane and raffle ticket sales, "jailed" guests, and the purchase of auction items will provide core services for YOTO youth during the 2009 – 2010 academic year.

### ARCA Charity Bowling Committee Volunteers

Nora Archuleta, Oscislowski Family  
Scott Aguilar, Westile  
Gina Babunovic, YOTO  
Sam Brush, Roofing Supply Group  
Caryn Bustos, Golden Pin Lanes  
Cassandra Coombs, ARCA  
Rick D'Alessio, Allied Building Products  
Rene Lujan, APOC  
Steve Mink, E-Las-Tek  
Ruben Morales, Raintek  
Frank Ortiz, Arizona Sun Roofing  
Harless Oscislowski, E-Las-Tek  
Joe Simms, JBS Product Development  
Jim Viberg, JEV Roofing

### ARCA Event Sponsors

**Gold Partners**  
Alan Bradley Roofing  
E-Las-Tek  
Headlee Roofing  
Ralph Hays Roofing  
Lee Hoffman Roofing  
Tucson Custom Sheet Metal

**Silver Partners**  
4-L Construction  
Staco Architectural Roof Tile

**Copper Partner**  
Joel Steinfeld



### Bronze Partners

Arizona Lottery  
Arizona Sun Roofing  
Giles Construction  
Eagle Roofing Products  
Finley Distributing  
Golden Pin Lanes  
Pepsi  
Raintek  
Tamko Building Products

## PROGRAM NOTES

The atmosphere at YOTO is filled with tremendous energy and enthusiasm as we begin the year with new staff and new programs to serve our youth and to support our School Liaisons. YOTO program staff is passionate about working with the new and returning YOTO students! The office conference table is hidden under the many student applications – over 180 to date with more received each day. Each application is meticulously reviewed and as such, The Class of 2010 takes shape, consisting of motivated students with varied interests and unique needs.

As the new Program Director, I am delighted that for the first time YOTO has AmeriCorp and AmeriCorp\*VISTA members on staff. Sarah Castelhana, School Liaison Coordinator, will work directly with the liaisons to offer support and training so that our students receive the best possible services. Sarah Green-Golan, Transitions Coordinator, will assist in the development and implementation of our new "Teenage Mothers Moving Forward" program.

**Angela Daniels-Valenzuela, Program Director**





AmeriCorps is the national service network of programs in which thousands of people of all ages commit to volunteering full-time or part-time for a year-long term to the benefit of communities throughout the country. VISTA, founded as Volunteers in Service to America in 1965, was incorporated into the AmeriCorps network of programs created by President Clinton in 1993. AmeriCorps\*VISTA members focus on organizational capacity-building activities; AmeriCorps members provide direct services to clients of the organization.

AmeriCorps and VISTA members are paid a stipend by the Federal government for their service. Thank you to our project hosts, The Volunteer Center of Southern Arizona and University of Arizona Graduate College, for facilitating the interview and hiring process of YOTO's AmeriCorps and VISTA members and their ongoing support.

## INTRODUCING...



### VISTA Member Heidi Reynolds-Stenson, Volunteer/Development Coordinator

"I chose to serve at YOTO because I feel strongly that every young person should be given the opportunity to reach their full potential, regardless of their background or the circumstances they find themselves in," says Heidi. Armed with a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, MI, Heidi's former positions include an internship at a transitional family shelter in Grand Rapids, a caseworker for families in crisis and at risk of homelessness in rural Colorado, and JobCorps teacher. Her role as YOTO's Volunteer/Development Coordinator is to expand the service capacity and sustainability of the agency by implementing best practices for the volunteer program along with assisting with resource development and community relations.

### VISTA Member Sarah Castelhana, School Liaison Coordinator

Sarah, a native Arizonan who grew up in Tucson, graduated from the University of Arizona with a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Nursing. For a number of years, this diehard Wildcat fan focused her skills on long-term care of the elderly, working at the Arizona Baptist Retirement Center (ABRC) at the Cook Health Care in Youngstown, AZ. She joined VISTA to explore other options in the field of human services that would benefit from her talent and caring nature. Sarah notes, "My view of life as a beautiful cycle brought me here to YOTO. While caring for and comforting the elderly, they gave me wisdom and inspiration. I feel that it is now my turn to pass that along. There could be no better way than by serving the youth of my hometown."



### AmeriCorps Member Sarah Green-Golan, Transition Coordinator

Sarah Green-Golan joined YOTO specifically to help YOTO's Program Director Angela Daniels-Valenzuela develop and implement the Teenage Mothers Moving Forward program. Sarah graduated from the College of Wooster in Wooster, OH with a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology. Originally from Boston, MA, she worked at a long-standing homeless shelter called the St. Francis House, which lies in the heart of this historic city. While interning at Massachusetts General Hospital, Sarah interviewed pregnant and parenting teens to assess their medical needs. "Working at YOTO is both challenging and rewarding. These teens have all the potential and drive in the world, and I feel fortunate to be one of the many who gets to help them realize it."



## New YOTO Office and Mini-Mall Volunteers:

Jeana Butler, Susan Eastman, Julia Futrell, Jim Hohman, Kristine Kim, Charles Kocher, Lynda Menis and Tiffany Tyner.

**WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!**

★ **YOUTH ON THEIR OWN MISSION STATEMENT:** We are dedicated to support the high school graduation and continued success of homeless youth by providing financial assistance, basic human needs and guidance.





A non-profit 501 (c) (3) Organization  
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yoto.org

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Sarah Castelhana, School Liaison Coordinator  
Sarah Green-Golan, Transition Coordinator



**YOTO Qualifies for the  
2009 AZ Charitable Tax Credit**

Youth On Their Own is a qualifying 501(c)(3) charity Tax ID #86-0644388. You may be eligible to contribute up to \$200 if single/\$400 for a couple, earn an AZ Charitable Tax Credit, and make a difference in the lives of YOTO’s students by doing so. Contributions must be postmarked no later than December 31, 2009 or hand delivered to the YOTO office by 5:00 pm on December 31, 2009.

A charitable donation designated for the AZ Charitable Tax Credit, termed the AZ Charitable Tax Credit for the Working Poor, is not the same as the AZ School Tax Credit. Speak to your financial advisor as you may be eligible to take advantage of both tax credits. For more in-depth information on the AZ Charitable Tax Credit, access the following website:

[www.revenue.state.az.us](http://www.revenue.state.az.us).

**Editor’s Corner**

Each academic year brings a time of renewal and reflection on the achievements of YOTO students and agency accomplishments. The Fall issue features the 2008/09 Annual Report and a “Success Story” that celebrates and recognizes a combined effort of fortitude – YOTO students’ and our supporters’ – during unsettling times. The latter half of the newsletter focuses on current student needs, involvement opportunities, and the introduction of exciting program initiatives and innovative staffing to increase services and resources that support the high school graduation of YOTO students today and in the future.

**ENJOY!**

**Gina Babunovic**  
**Communications & Development Director**  
**520.293.1136 x 208**  
**gbabunovic@yoto.org**