



**YOUTH ON THEIR OWN**

2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Imagine...



## your impact

**275**

high school graduates

**1,611**

homeless students served

**46,811**

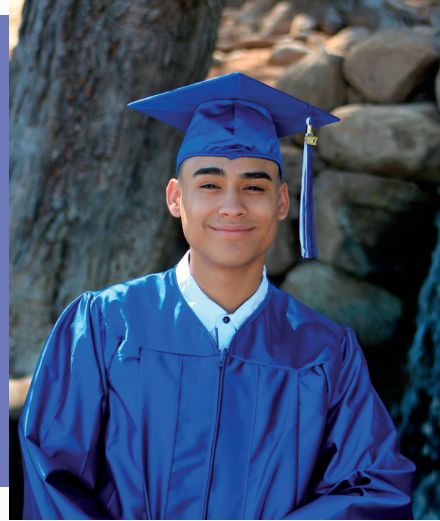
lbs. of food, toiletries, and school supplies provided

“ Staying in school is important to me, and I don't want to drop out in order to survive. My life would be over if this was it. ”

-Jonathan

## our mission

Youth On Their Own supports the high school graduation and continued success of homeless youth by providing financial assistance, basic human needs, and guidance.



The pictures you see throughout this annual report would not be possible without the time and energy of many volunteer photographers. Through their kindness and generosity, they took graduation photos for 74 YOTO students at the end of the 2016-2017 school year!

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# A Message from our CEO



Nicola

Chief Executive Officer

Want to receive future copies of the Youth On Their Own materials in a digital format?

Email Kristyn Conner at [kconner@yoto.org](mailto:kconner@yoto.org) with your complete name and email address.

If you prefer not to receive future publications or have received duplicate copies of this publication, please let us know by contacting Kristyn Conner.

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on my first year as CEO of this amazing organization, what stands out is your generosity. I am in awe of your kindness and grateful to you for allowing me to say yes to thousands of youth who are experiencing homelessness. Yes, you can have food to eat, supplies to be successful at school, a new mattress, emergency support to help pay the rent, assistance putting together a resume, money for your cap and gown at graduation... you make all of this possible.

Within these pages, you'll read about the students you help. These young people, most barely old enough to drive a car, are juggling unfair obstacles that life has thrown their way: homelessness, abandonment, neglect, and devastating poverty. Feeling hopeless and burdened, many are fearful that they only have one option: to drop out of high school and get a job.

**But your support continues to remind them that their hopes and dreams matter.**

This past school year was an exciting one for our organization. It was also a year of growth and exploration – both for us and for the 1,611 youth we served. We completed a three-year strategic plan with a focus on how to improve our programs, expand our services and better communicate with all of the people invested in YOTO's mission. (Read more on pg. 11)

With these achievements, however, also came challenges. You may recall the thievery we experienced this past spring when more than 1,000 pounds of food was stolen from our storage facility. Despite this devastating blow, you stepped in to help... turning a misfortune into one of the kindest and most inspirational moments of my entire year.

Recently we moved Jose, a YOTO alum from the class of 2017, into his dorm room at the University of Arizona. As he surveyed the room he remarked,

*"This is MY bed? Just for me? I've never had a bed of my own before."*

It put it all into perspective for me. The youth we serve have so little, yet they never complain. It's a fact of life for them. As you read the annual report, I hope you are inspired and confident that we are properly stewarding your investment in YOTO's mission. We take our responsibility to you -- to be transparent, fiscally responsible and efficient -- very seriously. Thank you again.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicola".

Nicola Hartmann

## Imagining a better future...



As a child, I was in and out of different homes because of how irresponsible my parents were. I felt lonely and like I was a bother in life. My mother didn't have enough money to support us, so one day she decided it was best for her to move to Canada and leave me and my brothers with different family members. I never even had the chance to tell my mom about my first kiss, or to have someone to turn to for advice and protection.

I saw my mother struggle in ways a mother shouldn't need to. The older I get, the more I have grown to understand the difficulties

my mother faced in putting food on the table, paying the bills, and supplying our family with other necessities.

I believe my past has shaped me into the person I am today. People might expect me to already have a child, never go to college, and never even make it out of high school. I'm proud to say I turned out to be the total opposite, now about to graduate and attend the University of Arizona! What I want most is to become a pediatrician to help others and to start a family with someone I love. I want to give my future children everything I never received.



*"I now realize how much I don't want to live the same life my (mother) lived."*

### Jailene

Desert View High School,  
Class of 2017

Jailene graduated from Desert View High School in the spring of 2017 with a 3.09 GPA and began attending the University of Arizona in the fall of 2017.

### Inspiring Fact:

Of the 275 graduates in 2016-2017, over 75% of them are currently attending or have plans to attend college.

# YOUR support provides homeless youth with:

- ★ Financial assistance (up to \$140 per month) based on good school attendance and passing grades (A's, B's, or C's)
- ★ Weekly access to basic human needs items (including food, toiletries, school supplies, bus passes, and more)
- ★ Emergency financial assistance for rent, utilities, health bills, etc.
- ★ Guidance, encouragement, college and career assistance, workforce readiness preparation, and connections to other services in the community



“  
*YOTO was an enormous help because without our parents, my siblings and I never had any money to buy what we needed for school. Without the help you have given us, who knows where we would be today?*  
”

-Jose



**Did you know that YOTO also provides bicycles to students in the program?** And thanks to the generosity of the Greater Tucson Leadership Class of 2017, we now have a fully renovated multipurpose room (for meetings and student activities) and these wonderful bike racks!

54.7%

FEMALES

44.9%

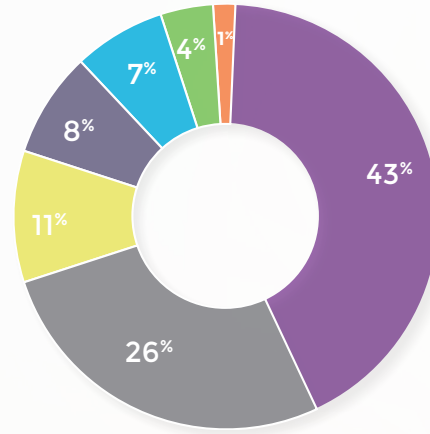
MALES

.4%

TRANSGENDER

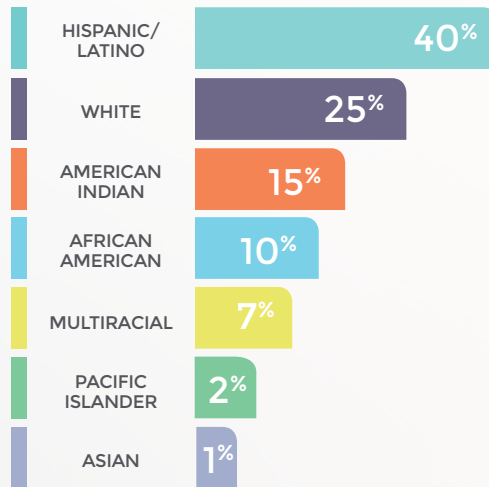
## Where are students living?

- RELATIVE
- FRIEND
- GROUP HOME
- COUCH HOPPING
- FOSTER HOME
- ALONE
- SHELTER



Thanks to you, every youth in our program received a blanket last holiday season... providing them warmth and comfort when they lack a stable place to live.

## Race / Ethnicity



52%

AGES 11-17

48%

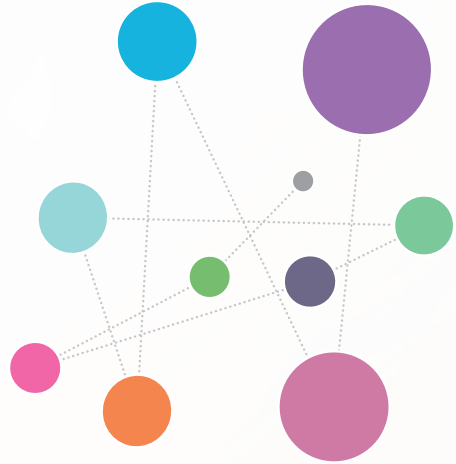
AGES 18-21

## Of students who apply to YOTO



YOTO, with support from the community, provides beds and bedding to students.

# Primary reasons leading to homelessness



- 21% ● Parental abandonment or neglect
- 17% ● Conflict with parent/stepparent (abuse/neglect from parent's significant other)
- 12% ● DCS/court-ordered removal
- 10% ● Parental substance abuse
- 10% ● Physical/sexual/verbal emotional abuse
- 7% ● Parental death or illness
- 7% ● Poverty
- 7% ● Parental disapproval of lifestyle (pregnant/LGBTQ)
- 6% ● Parental deportation (immigration/deportation issues)
- 3% ● Parental incarceration



**10,033**

Mini-Mall visits or service requests



**\$204.18**

Average \$ amount of emergency needs requests

**396**

emergency needs requests fulfilled

**478**

monthly bus passes issued

**24**

bicycles distributed

**22**

refurbished computers distributed

Volunteers saved YOTO  
**\$280,260**



**We love our volunteers!**

Youth On Their Own volunteers are the heart of our organization, providing critical in-house assistance and caring guidance to the youth in our program. Without these individuals, we simply would not be able to reach 1,600+ homeless teens in Southern Arizona each school year.

Total volunteer hours  
**11,890+**

# Why I Give

“

*We've chosen to support Youth On Their Own because we believe strongly in the mission. Throughout the years, we've met many YOTO students and have observed the positive influence and the invaluable guidance that counselors and staff members have offered them.*

”

-Len & Doris Coris

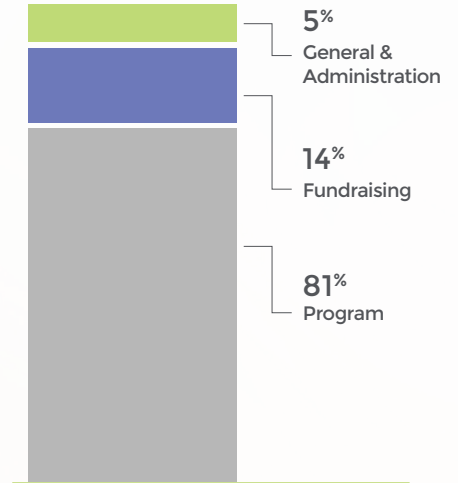


## Sources of Support

Individuals, Corporations, Civic Groups & Churches	\$1,397,948.00
Bequests	\$143,468.00
Grants & Foundation Gifts	\$1,021,694.00
In-Kind Donations	\$72,690.00
Events Hosted by YOTO	\$202,908.28
Events Hosted by Others to Benefit YOTO Students	\$129,454.00
Pima County & City of Tucson	\$180,500.00
Resale Home Store Sales	\$46,982.00
Interest/Dividends	\$66,230.00

\*Youth On Their Own receives no federal funding.

Net assets beginning 7/1/2016:	\$1,896,836.00
Net assets ending 6/30/2017:	\$3,191,006.00



## Where Your Dollars Go

Note: The figures outlined above include unaudited numbers. For a copy of the audited financials, please contact Kristyn Conner at [kconner@yoto.org](mailto:kconner@yoto.org).

**Match Met! Special thanks to the Connie Hillman Family Foundation!** Last year, they challenged you to double your impact -- for every new or increased gift you gave to Youth On Their Own, the foundation matched it. Altogether, the challenge brought in an additional \$325,000 to our organization... making possible the dreams of so more students in the YOTO program.

**Thank You!**



## Imagine an even **bigger** impact...

Thanks to your dedication and support, Youth On Their Own is reaching more homeless youth than ever before. As we continue to grow and evolve to support the needs of our students, there are many more opportunities for you to make a HUGE impact!



“  
*We enthusiastically support YOTO because its students are the future. Not only are the students getting much needed support in completing high school, but they are also getting valuable life skills which will serve them well in their careers.*  
”

-Peter & Patricia Kollar,  
Monthly Giving Club members

### Monthly Giving Club

With your first gift to YOTO, you become a friend to a young person in need. With a monthly gift, you show them the care and commitment of a family member – something they lack, but desperately need. It’s easy to donate \$15, \$25, or \$50 per month – or any amount of your choosing – and support a homeless teen in need. To sign up or learn more, visit [YOTO.org](http://YOTO.org) or call (520) 295-4767.

**Did You Know?** Every gift made to Youth On Their Own qualifies for the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit! You can make easy, monthly gifts that add up to the maximum tax credit amount (\$400 for individuals or \$800 for married couples) by the tax deadline of April 15. Call (520) 545-0689 to learn more.

### Leave a Legacy

Planned giving is a powerful way to help Youth On Their Own continue to serve the community for years to come. Find out how easy it is to include YOTO in your will and empower future generations of homeless students! For more information, please contact Daniel Armenta at (520) 295-4767.



40% of YOTO students have needed to change schools 3+ times – some as many as 10 times – due to instability and their unique circumstances.

## Imagining the possibilities...



### Marcos

Tucson High,  
Class of 2015

Marcos is an Arizona Assurance scholar, receiving financial aid and other supportive services with his enrollment at the UofA. This past summer, he interned in the lab of Dr. Gerardo Lopez at the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences.

“

When I was in middle school, my mother lived a wild, party lifestyle and allowed that to get in the way of her relationships with her family and children. The summer before my 8th grade year, she was on the verge of death because she overdosed on painkillers and one of her heart valves busted. Department of Child Safety quickly got involved, and I had to make one of the toughest decisions of my life at the age of 13. I ultimately made the decision to move in with my tia ("aunt") who cared for me when no one else was around to do so.

***"My mother meant a lot to me... but so did my future."***

I was in the Youth On Their Own program all four years of high school. I learned about YOTO because one of my science teachers at Tucson High listened... and to this day, I am glad she cared enough

for students just like me in order to reach out and help them. I met with my YOTO School Liaison and she told me about the program. Both my Liaison and the YOTO staff were always there for me, offering not only financial support, but also emotional support. They always made sure I had everything from food to clothes to hygiene products... even school supplies. During the winter break of my junior year, my mother passed away.

My senior year in high school took a turn for the better, as I was offered an amazing opportunity to intern at the YOTO Resale Home Store. This opportunity provided more financial stability on top of the stipend I earned every month for my good grades. I graduated from Tucson High in 2015 and today attend the University of Arizona where I have been accepted into the Engineering Program. My dream is to get a job at Raytheon or in chemical waste treatment so that I can give back to the community that lifted me up in my time of need.

”



## Generosity on the Go!

To allow staff more time to work one-on-one with students, YOTO's new program "Caring Couriers" gives volunteers the opportunity to deliver requested supplies – such as food, toiletries, and school supplies – directly to students at their schools. The program has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from students, School Liaisons, and volunteers alike. In 2016-2017 alone, over 100 students across 38 schools received services because of the generosity of Caring Couriers.

To learn more or sign up to volunteer, visit our website or call Kristin Ohman at (520) 545-0560.

“

*The real inspiration...  
has been meeting the students  
and hearing reports of  
the odds they face  
and overcome.*

”

-Jim and Pat Bowen,  
Caring Couriers volunteers



## YOTO's 2017-2020 Strategic Plan

Providing new, meaningful volunteer opportunities is just one facet of our strategic plan. Here are all 5 of our goals for the next few years:

### GOAL I

Improve, clarify and streamline service delivery to provide the maximum benefit for youth.

### GOAL II

Develop and invest in a robust volunteer program with meaningful opportunities.

### GOAL III

Nurture and strengthen relationships with YOTO donors.

### GOAL IV

Implement open and 360-degree communication with YOTO constituencies.

### GOAL V

Expand facilities to accommodate programmatic growth and improve service delivery.

To learn more about our strategic plan, please call Daniel Armenta at (520) 295-4767.



“  
 With YOTO's help, I have learned to do things on my own – like applying for college financial aid, filing my taxes, finding scholarships and even scheduling doctor's appointments. Thank you for helping me get to where I am now!  
 ”

-Evangelina

Connect with Us!



*Specializing in items for the home!*

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Youth On Their Own supports the high school graduation and continued success of homeless youth.