



2019-2020
Annual
Report



YOUTH ON THEIR OWN™



Board of Directors from July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Deb Salaiz
Treasurer @ President from 03/19-06/20

Jay Peskoe
President Elect

Eva Murzaite
Secretary

Tony Cazzato
Treasurer

Elaine Babcock
Maria Cuadra
Sean Denlinger
Mike Hanson
Tom Hoyt
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Linda Montes-Cota
Sean Murray
Julie Stevenson
Kristina Scott
Michelle Singer
William Stoffers

Staff from July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Executive Staff

Tom Hoyt
CEO until 7/14/19

Elizabeth Slater
CEO beg. 7/15/19

Deb Ramsey
Executive Coordinator

Administrative Staff

Matthew Palmer
Director of Finance, HR @ Operations

Candice Treftz
Finance @ Operations Coordinator

Douglas Plecity
IT @ Facilities Specialist

Bill Miller
Facilities Specialist

Development Staff

Bethany Neumann
Director of Development

Katrina Calderon
Marketing @ Outreach Manager

Nita Choonsingh
Development Manager, Annual Giving

Avery Lane
Database Coordinator

Kristin Ohman
Volunteer Manager

Rachel Pollack
Development @ Marketing Coordinator

Marissa Washington
Development Manager, Grants

Program Staff

Daniela Figueroa
Director of Programs

Kim Flores
College @ Career Program Manager

Matthew Schmidgall
Program Operations Manager

Ashley Silvain
School Programs Manager

Jessica Cornidez
Program Coordinator, Bilingual

Diego Coronado
Lead Program Coordinator, Bilingual

Allyssa Del Rosario
Senior Program Data Specialist

Kimberly Garcia
Program Coordinator, Bilingual

Nida Hasan
Program Coordinator

Justin Hopkins
Program Coordinator

Rachel Kahn
Program Coordinator, Bilingual

Adriana Mohammed
Program Specialist, Data @ Communications

Daniel Olson
Program Assistant

Brian Peel
Program Data Specialist

Sal Ramos
Program Coordinator, Bilingual

Antonio Philippe
Program Coordinator

Karolina Reyes
Program Coordinator

Daphne Soules
Senior Program Assistant

Victoria Tullercash
Youth Engagement Coordinator



Our Mission

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

Our Vision

Young people on their own are empowered and engaged community members.

YOTO's Federal Tax ID# 86-0644388

YOTO's Qualifying Charitable Organization Code
for the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit 20365



YOTO Data:

2,176
homeless youth served

6%
increase over the
previous year

377
high school graduates

84%
graduation rate for
YOTO seniors



Elizabeth Slater
Chief Executive Officer

Jay Peskoe
Board President

A message from YOTO's CEO Elizabeth Slater and Board President Jay Peskoe

Dear Supporters,

Youth On Their Own started the 2019-2020 academic year like any other: with enthusiasm and dedication to helping our students thrive in school. Yet by March, the world had turned upside down. Of the many difficulties placed on us by COVID-19, the most challenging for YOTO was the transition of schools to remote learning. Without a physical connection to the youth in our program, we faced significant obstacles to service delivery.

What came next was a magnificent transformation.

The YOTO Staff and Board of Directors worked quickly to completely reimagine our program model. We launched our new online student portal to keep avenues for service delivery open. We re-trained Program Coordinators to provide all-virtual support to their student cohorts. We increased direct financial aid to students through COVID supplements and an additional summer stipend. We distributed laptops and helped students maintain consistent internet access.

YOTO rose to the challenge when our students needed us most.

We're incredibly proud of the support we provided last year. Eighty-four percent of our enrolled seniors graduated high school despite the pressures and challenges of completing

their studies online. We provided more direct aid to students than ever before. And most importantly, we remained a steadfast source of support for our students during a year marked by chaos, fear, and instability.

Of course, the pandemic isn't over yet. This modified program is costly, and it is only possible because of the breathtakingly generous support of the individuals, foundations, organizations, and businesses who have reached out to help. YOTO's achievements in 2019-2020 are collective successes. Our entire community of supporters - the YOTO Family - ensured that we were able to stand tall and serve as a beacon for our students in the rough storm of COVID.

If you're reading this report, you are part of that YOTO Family. You supported us with your financial contributions, you helped us re-stock the Mini Mall, you wrote encouraging notes to our students, and so much more. You make it possible for our students to rise to the incredible challenges they face today! We're extremely grateful for everything you do for YOTO and the students we serve. Thank you.

Elizabeth Slater, CEO
Jay Peskoe, Board President

How YOTO helps

When I was in high school, oftentimes I felt alone and whenever I felt alone I hid away and put myself in a dark hole. Being able to get support and assistance from Youth On Their Own definitely helped a lot. For other students in situations like mine (youth experiencing homelessness) I just want them to know that YOTO is willing to help, you just have to be willing to work hard for it. Stay positive – it will get you to the end goal that you want. If you want to succeed, you can always ask YOTO for help and they will provide you with the help you need.

(Alfred Swen, YOTO Alumnus and Ambassador)

Introducing YOTO's Alumni Program

This year, we are excited to announce the establishment of the Donna M. Rich College and Career Program at Youth On Their Own! Also referred to as the Alumni Program, this new endeavor will support YOTO's high school graduates for up to four years after graduation, with the goal of helping them to gain more stability over time as they transition to the next phase of their lives. In order to participate in the Alumni Program, an individual must live in Pima County and have graduated from high school while enrolled in the YOTO program. The YOTO Alumni Program supports young adults pursuing their post-secondary education in college or vocational-technical schools, working, or doing both. The Program allows these individuals to access YOTO services such as basic needs, financial support, and guidance from our staff so they can continue to work toward their goals and achieve their dreams!

YOTO's program focuses on **three components** to ensure homeless youth have the resources they need to stay in school and graduate:

- **Financial assistance** (up to \$160 per month) based on good attendance and passing grades in all classes (A's, B's, or C's)
- Weekly access to **basic human needs** items, including food, toiletries, clothing, school supplies, bus passes, and more
- **Guidance**, encouragement, college and career assistance, emergency bill assistance, workforce readiness preparation, and connections to other services in the community

YOTO has helped me from my freshman year to my senior year at Sunnyside. They helped motivate me to maintain my grades and eased the stress of my financial situation. Even now, YOTO has helped open the door for my future at the University of Arizona with their guidance. It's thanks to them that I'm on a steady path for my future.

(Vanessa, 2020 Graduate)



COVID-19 Grant

CFSA began awarding COVID-19 relief funding to nonprofits that faced significant resource challenges as a result of the pandemic. Thanks to a **\$20,000 COVID-19 Community Support Funding grant from the CFSA** that YOTO received in May, 100 YOTO students received \$200 in direct financial assistance in the form of summer stipends.

Catchafire Licensing Grant

CFSA partnered with Catchafire to grant 100 licenses to nonprofits throughout the region. Catchafire is a skills-based volunteer matching platform that connects nonprofits with professionals who want to donate their time. YOTO received one of these licenses and has already used it for several program projects and staff trainings valued at over \$70,000.

“Catchafire has helped us kick-start YOTO’s student Instagram account to better connect with the youth we serve, helped us edit a video to introduce students to our Mini Mall, and provided leadership coaching to our management staff.”

(Matt Schmidgall, Program Operations Manager)

Youth On Their Own Endowment

Established at the CFSA in 2008, the Youth On Their Own endowment helps YOTO build a reserve in order to ensure our services are available for youth experiencing homelessness in the future. Donors can contribute any amount to the general YOTO Endowment or create a named fund in the YOTO Endowment in honor of an individual or group.

Within YOTO’s endowment is a named fund in memory of Juliana Redding, a young woman whose untimely death occurred in March of 2008. This endowment – which started with an initial value of \$14,000 – is currently valued over \$120,000. According to Greg Redding, Juliana’s father, *“Juliana loved children and volunteered her services at many charity organizations around Tucson. I know her heart would be filled with joy to see how many people in our community support Youth On Their Own and how it helps teens survive and prosper!”*

Spotlight on the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona (CFSA)

This year, the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona provided integral support to YOTO in three ways!

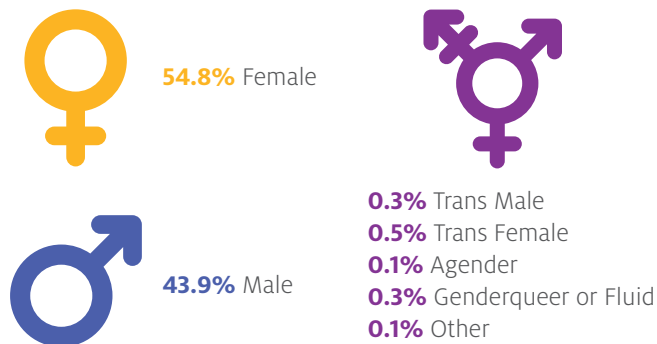


Juliana Redding

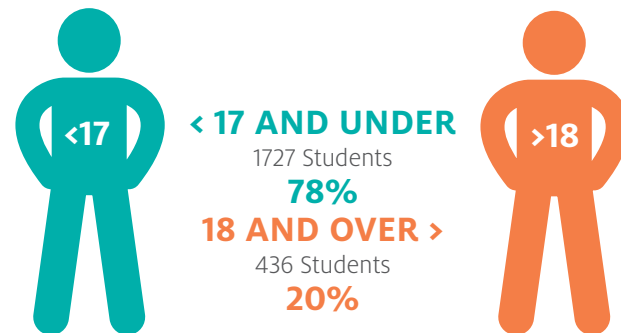
Who YOTO Served (2019-2020)

\$2,500
The amount
it costs to serve
one YOTO student
for a full year

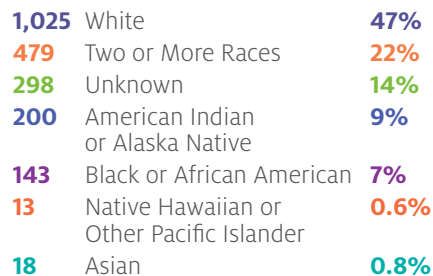
Gender



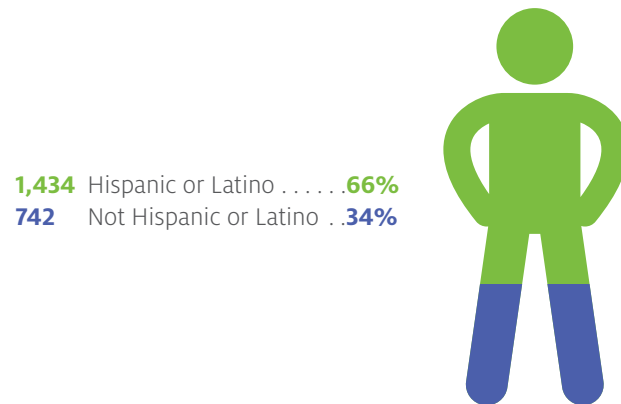
Age



Self-Reported Race



Self-Reported Ethnicity



YOTO's COVID-19 Response To Support Our Students

Financial Assistance

From March 1 – June 30, 2020, YOTO distributed more emergency financial assistance to students through gift cards, stipends, and bill assistance than in previous years.

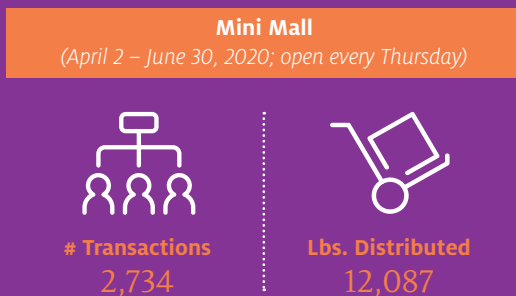
	# Transactions	\$ Amount
Gift Cards	776	\$15,118.17
Stipend (March & April)	1514	\$337,073
Stipend Summer (May/June)	955	\$191,000
Bill Assistance	218	\$29,020.58
TOTAL	3,463	\$572,211.75

“YOTO was able to help me when I needed it most. When I was out of a job temporarily, the stipend helped me cover my rent. I wouldn't have been able to graduate if it wasn't for YOTO!”

(Cade, 2020 Graduate)

Basic Needs

During the pandemic, YOTO continued to provide free basic needs items such as food, hygiene supplies, and household products to students in a safe manner.



“At one point, I was not doing well as I didn't have food and hygiene items. YOTO helped by providing me with all the things I needed.”

(Lizandro, 2020 Graduate)

Guidance

YOTO's Program Team worked tirelessly following school closures to communicate with and support YOTO students through the remainder of the school year.

Task	Total
Program Coordinator Contacts Per Week	600
Emails Sent Per Week	1550
Instagram @yotogram Messages	15
Mini Mall Visits Per Week	50
Senior Meetings Per Week	6
College and Career Contacts Per Week	40
Program Specialist Contacts Per Week	350
Total Contacts Per Month	10,444
Total Contacts Over Four Months	41,776

“I was also able to have a good support system when talking to my Program Coordinator. She was the sweetest and kindest person and she really helped me overcome a lot of obstacles!”

(Sarahi, 2020 Graduate)



\$1,335,787

in direct financial assistance
given to students



72

Computers



\$59,285

in emergency bill
assistance



786

bus passes issued
and/or recharged

YOTO's 2019-2020 Impact By The Numbers

YOTO has helped me realize that I'm not the only one going through things. They made me realize that there are people here to help me and see me prosper. They helped me pay for bills when I knew I would not be able to afford it.

(Melany, 2020 Graduate)



1,683

blankets given out



3,726

pounds of school
supplies distributed



341

new backpacks
distributed



36,027

pounds of food
distributed



11,890

pounds of toiletries
distributed



30

Vision referrals



YOTO Student Stories

18%

of YOTO students
reported sleeping on a
couch or sofa during the
2019-20 school year

Dulce

2020 YOTO Graduate

Before I joined YOTO, my nana had passed away. She was my permanent care taker. After her death, I was in a different home each year. I didn't really have a stable home. My junior and senior years, it seemed like I possibly found a stable home, but it wasn't, and I was kicked out and bounced from couch to couch for a few months. YOTO helped by offering their resources when I had nowhere to stay. The stipends really helped me during that time, too. I needed to stay in contact with my brother, and with my check I could pay for my phone bill. Being a part of YOTO helped me realize that I needed to be more appreciative about my education and never take it for granted. There were times when I almost gave up. I wanted to drop out, but before I could even make that decision, I received my monthly check with a motivational message. Those quotes inspired me to continue on with my schooling. It has been a rough senior year but I can happily say I did it! I graduated! If it wasn't for YOTO, I most likely would've dropped out of high school because I never saw myself graduating, but they encouraged me to continue. I'm glad they did!

Rhiannon

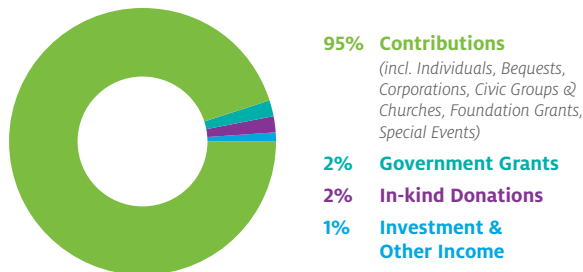
2020 YOTO Graduate

The beginning of 2019, my mom dropped everything and just decided not to take care of me anymore. She kicked me out so I was then homeless and couch hopping. It was very hard for me to attend school under these circumstances. I couldn't get any help from my dad because he was doing drugs and was in a really bad position. A family friend took me in and decided to take care of me, but after I turned 18 and I started my senior year, this family friend kicked me out. I was then homeless again and had to couch hop until I finally reached out to my school. They told me about YOTO. My school liaison helped me apply to the program, and by September 2019, I got my own apartment with YOTO's help. YOTO even helped me get kitchen and bathroom supplies. Being a senior and living on your own is hard, but YOTO definitely made it a lot easier for me and pushed me in the right direction. I am now a 2020 graduate and plan on going to Pima Community College to study Psychology.

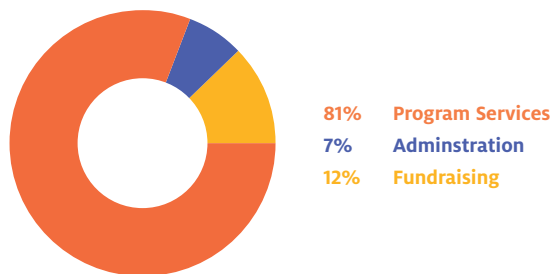
What Makes YOTO Work?

81%
of YOTO's
Expenses go
Directly to
Program
Services

YOTO Income



YOTO Expenses



<... 5% Business ...>

< 22% Foundations >



The Fred & Christine Armstrong Foundation

Tucson Subaru Share the Love

For the sixth year in a row, YOTO was selected by Tucson Subaru as the hometown chosen charity for their Share The Love Event!

This nationwide campaign by Subaru of America donates \$250 from every new Subaru vehicle sold or leased to the local hometown charity. Tucson Subaru also went the extra mile hosting a benefit concert in conjunction with iHeart Media with proceeds going to YOTO. Thanks to their efforts, this year, Tucson Subaru donated almost \$80,000 to support local youth experiencing homelessness!

The Fred & Christine Armstrong Foundation

The Fred & Christine Armstrong Foundation has graciously supported Youth On Their Own for over 15 years.

In FY2019-2020, the foundation's grant funding directly supported 106 YOTO students with earned monthly stipends. We are grateful for the Armstrong Foundation's enduring support to the education of Pima County's youth experiencing homelessness!

< 5% Institutions >

<..... 68% Individuals



SaddleBrooke Women's Golf Association (SBWGA)

The SaddleBrooke Women's Golf Association (SBWGA) is new to the YOTO Family, but they've already made a huge impact!

When YOTO first launched the COVID-19 Emergency Fund to support students, the SBWGA organized a golf tournament with a \$1,000 match raising \$2,650 in just ten days for YOTO youth! In addition to their fundraising, the SBWGA also participates in various YOTO volunteer projects like *Piece of Cake! Birthday Club*, *Socktober*, and *Code Red*.



Employee Giving – Southwest Gas

Through their employee giving program, *Fuel For Life*, Southwest Gas employees in Southern Arizona have committed to supporting Youth On Their Own for the next two years.

This charitable giving program offers employees an opportunity to contribute to local non-profit organizations by making one-time donations or ongoing payroll deductions. Incredibly, 92% of Southwest Gas employees in Southern Arizona contribute to *Fuel For Life*. This year, through *Fuel For Life*, Southwest Gas has pledged over \$38,000 to Youth on Their Own.



Monthly Giving Club – Deb Salaiz

In addition to being a board member and former Board President, Deb Salaiz and her life partner, Twyla Salaiz, have been avid supporters and donors since 2007.

"The impact we can make by helping YOTO students is important. You can see the positive and long lasting impact through each of their unique stories of hope and inspiration. We feel especially fortunate to be able to work with YOTO and contribute our time and donate through both the monthly giving club and our employer's charitable giving program. It's important to be good members of the Tucson community and help these amazing students graduate high school and possibly go on to college."



Major Donor – Julie Stevenson

Julie Stevenson has generously supported YOTO youth since 2014 through financial donations and recently by offering her time on our Board of Directors.

"One of our earliest milestones in life is high school graduation and once that hurdle has been conquered all future hurdles or milestones seem more attainable. I've seen classmates that did not graduate with their class and saw the lasting effects of that missed opportunity and I want to do everything possible to help any student achieve that crucial milestone. That's why YOTO's mission is so critical!"



Legacy Gift – Donna M. Litscher Trust

Donna M. Litscher-Rich's legacy gift to YOTO will have a truly transformational impact in the lives of the young people we serve for many years to come.

The Donna M. Rich College and Career Program at Youth On Their Own is funded by a \$1.2 million legacy gift from the Donna M. Litscher Trust. The Program allows YOTO graduates who qualify to continue accessing YOTO services from our staff so they can continue to work toward their college and career goals!

What Makes YOTO Work?



8,683
total volunteer hours
donated



\$220,814
saved with
volunteer help

Thank You to Our Volunteers

Youth On Their Own volunteers go above and beyond every single day! Our dedicated volunteers provide essential in-house assistance to make all of YOTO's programs run smoothly. Before the pandemic forced us to work remotely, YOTO volunteers staffed our reception area, stocked the Mini Mall, made weekly deliveries to schools (*Caring Couriers*), and prepared students' stipend checks, among many other duties.

In addition to our "regular" volunteers, we also host volunteer groups. Usually, these are members of a school, club, religious organization, or company who would like to give a few hours of their time to help YOTO youth. These groups assemble packages, write inspirational notes to students, hold food or school supply drives, and more! Even during the pandemic, several volunteer groups continued to participate in safe, socially distant special projects to support YOTO students, such as Code RED (collecting donations of feminine hygiene products for female youth) and *Piece of Cake Birthday Club* (creating handmade birthday cards for students).



Volunteer
Dan Dickman
receiving the Volunteer
of the Month award

Pre-COVID
Caring Couriers
Joan and Tom Gardner



Wells Fargo
Wilmot - Employees
volunteering at YOTO



The Quail Creek Community

The members of the Quail Creek community have been true champions of YOTO youth for years through their volunteering and generosity. They regularly hold donation drives to collect food and hygiene items for YOTO's Mini Mall including a school supply drive this summer to provide students with all the supplies they need in school. During the holidays, these wonderful folks helped "Spread the Warmth" in a big way by donating blankets and gift cards for YOTO students. In fact, there were so many blankets donated in one day, volunteers from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base joined in to help unload the truck in a beautiful team effort! We are so grateful to have the support of the residents of Quail Creek!



Volunteer Spotlight:

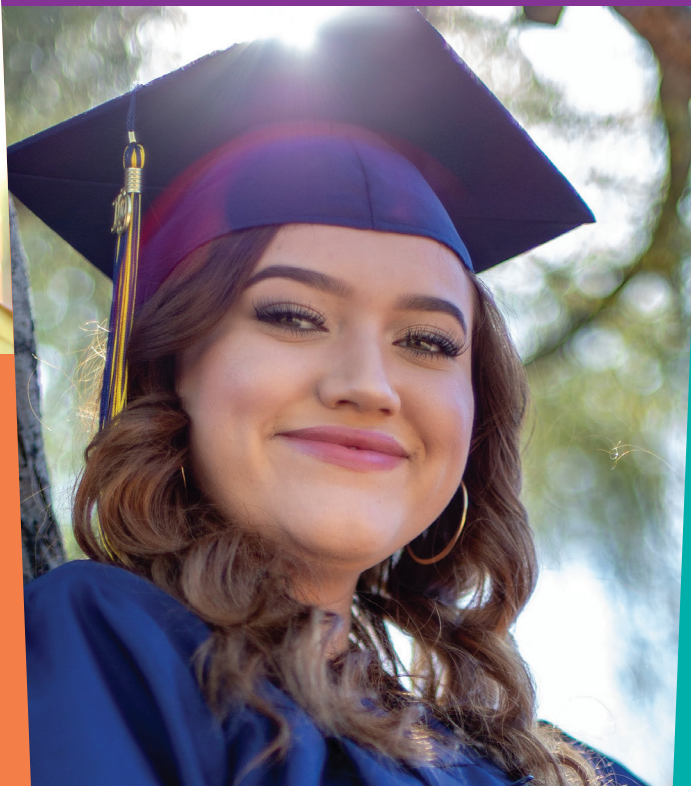
"We find it rewarding to help YOTO students. These students need support and understanding that people care and want them to succeed. The Women of Quail Creek value our involvement with YOTO!"

(Sue Ann Obremski)



I'd like to thank YOTO for making me the person I am today. Thanks for showing me that there are people who care for us youth. You've given me the strength to move on and the strength to do things for myself. The monthly stipends helped a lot for food, my phone bill, and rent. I just really appreciate all the staff and volunteers for everything they have done.

(YOTO 2020 Graduate)



Everything at school is done online due to COVID. I needed a laptop, not only succeed in school, but outside of school as well. I needed to apply for jobs and look for places to rent. Thank you to YOTO for providing me with a laptop! It means a lot knowing there are people out there like you who are kind and loving. I wish words could explain how thankful I am, but I really don't know where to begin.

(YOTO Student and Laptop Recipient)



I have been in the YOTO program since I was in 10th grade. Before that, I didn't know what to do – I was homeless and I didn't believe I would ever finish high school. With YOTO's support, I knew that I wasn't alone anymore. They helped a lot with the monthly stipend checks, food, and gift cards.

(YOTO 2020 Graduate)

Did You Know?

I want to tell everyone at YOTO that I am grateful for all your help! Thank you for the warm blankets at the end of the year. It is those seemingly little things that let you know someone else cares about you!

(Lydia, 2019 Graduate)

Your donation can support YOTO youth at no cost to you!

Contributions of up to \$400 per individual (or \$800 for couples filing jointly) can be applied toward the AZ Charitable Tax Credit!

Call us at 520.293.1136 or email yotonews@yoto.org for more information about making your tax credit donation to YOTO!

Thank you for helping homeless youth succeed!



YOTO's Federal Tax ID# 86-0644388

YOTO's Qualifying Charitable Organization Code for the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit is 20365





Connect with us!



YOTO.org



YOUTH ON THEIR OWN™

1660 N Alvernon Way | Tucson, AZ | 85712
520.293.1136 | YOTO.org



“YOTO helped give me financial stability and taught me how important it was to save my money and plan what I needed to use it for. The checks were like a prize, it made me want to go to school and do the work. All the YOTO people I met were kind and helpful!”

(Kevin, 2020 Graduate)