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Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation Receives \$50k Grant from Gila River Indian Community

Funding Will Assist Programming for Arizona Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

PHOENIX – [Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation](https://www.affcf.org) was recently awarded a \$50,000 grant on Dec. 19 by the Gila River Indian Community, thus developing an exciting new partnership between these two organizations. The contribution will be used to support youth in foster care and young adults with former foster care experience in achieving self-sufficiency through AFFCF's Keys to Success program. This evidenced-based program provides comprehensive education and workforce development support services to youth to ensure their successful transition to independence.

“We are incredibly grateful for this contribution by the Gila River Indian Community, which will uplift and empower foster youth across our community,” said Luis De La Cruz, CEO and president of AFFCF. “GRIC’s outstanding leadership and support of local nonprofits for years has empowered agencies to do their most critical work, expanding and enhancing programs to improve the quality of life and experience for thousands of Arizonans each year. We are incredibly grateful to GRIC for placing their trust and support in our work.”

Funding will also be used to provide staff support needed to deliver in-person management services, wrap-around education and employment supports, as well as transportation assistance, allowing AFFCF to meet the needs of youth and deliver services in the communities where they reside.

Keys to Success programming serves foster youth from ages 16 to 26, and encompasses education support, employment development, financial literacy resources, emergency housing assistance and career coaching. In 2023, 88% of youth secured employment within one year of program enrollment, 87% of youth retained employment for 30 days or longer, 81% of youth gained an employable skill within six months of intake, and 80% who completed high school enrolled in post-secondary education or vocational training.

“The Gila River Indian Community is proud to support the AFFCF and the critical support they provide to youth and children in foster care. This partnership will make a direct impact and ensure that the AFFCF can create more opportunities for those that need it most,” said Governor Stephen R. Lewis of Gila River Indian Community.

AFFCF is a Phoenix-based 501c3 that serves to enrich, educate and empower the lives of Arizona’s children and youth in foster care through its three primary focus areas: Childhood Activities, Keys to Success, and Post-Secondary programming. To view AFFCF’s full resource database for foster parents and guardians, youth workforce development programming, financial assistance and scholarships for foster youth and more, visit [affcf.org](https://www.affcf.org).

About AFFCF

Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation (AFFCF) provides foster care support by closing critical funding and service gaps. AFFCF has over 40 years of experience ensuring Arizona's foster care population can participate in the same activities as their non-foster care peers, achieve self-sufficiency through employment, education, and housing programs and pursue post-secondary success. AFFCF is dedicated to changing the story of foster care in Arizona and qualifies for the Arizona Foster Care Tax Credit. Visit [affcf.org](https://www.affcf.org) for more information.

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