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Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation Receives \$25k Investment from Thunderbirds Charities

Funding to Invigorate Foster Nonprofit's Employment, Higher Education, Financial Literacy and Housing Programming

PHOENIX – [Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation](#), a nonprofit organization providing opportunities and empowerment for the state's foster youth, is thrilled to announce the receipt of a \$25k two-year investment from [Thunderbirds Charities](#) in December 2024. This latest engagement between the two nonprofit organizations will fund AFFCF's Keys to Success program, which addresses the challenges of affordable housing, rising living costs and barriers to higher education and employment for youth aged 16-26.

"This funding so generously provided by Thunderbirds Charities will be instrumental in building the futures of so many current and former foster youth," said Luis De La Cruz, president and CEO of AFFCF. "We are grateful for the ability to continue uplifting youth and meeting them where they are during their journey through young adulthood."

Keys to Success program participants receive support in career exploration, education, financial literacy and housing, as well as personalized guidance through individualized service plans that address transportation, interview preparation and technological access. The majority of funding from Thunderbirds Charities will be used to support direct assistance services to Keys to Success program participants pursuing secondary education.

Thunderbirds Charities was created in 1986 to distribute funds raised through the WM Phoenix Open golf tournament. The Thunderbirds Charities board consists of 15 board members from varying professional backgrounds. The mission of Thunderbirds Charities is to support organizations that assist children and families, help people in need and improve the quality of life in the Greater Phoenix Metropolitan Area. Giving is directed towards organizations based or with a significant presence in Arizona.

"Thunderbirds Charities is proud to support the Keys to Success program," said George Thimsen, president of Thunderbirds Charities. "This program will provide a clear path to youth pursuing a higher education. We know that attending college can be a stressful time but having access to programming that will provide the guidance and resources to get there is invaluable."

During 2024, AFFCF granted a total of 8,113 funding requests for foster youth across all of its programs, and served 3,704 unique clients across its three main impact areas. 473 youth were served by Keys to Success, 118 were served through its scholarship programming, and 153 youth benefitted from AFFCF's Focus Forward Fund. 88% of youth secured employment within a year of participating in Keys to Success, 86% retained employment for 30 days or more, and 86% of youth enrolled for over six months reported gains in skill or aptitude.

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.

About AFFCF

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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 for more information.

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