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Phoenix Nonprofit to Launch Community College Scholarship for Foster Youth

AFFCF's Kiita Scholarship Will Support 20 Students Pursuing Community College Each Year

PHOENIX – [Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation](#), in partnership with the Kiita Foundation, recently established an all-new scholarship enabling students with foster care experience to pursue community college. Named the “Kiita Scholarship”, this new funding is designed to support at least 20 students pursuing community college every year, and represents about 80% of AFFCF’s historic annual higher education funding for current and former foster youth. Students who apply for this scholarship will also be program participants in the nonprofit’s [Post-Secondary Program](#), and the scholarship includes dollars for each student’s Focus Forward Fund, which is emergency financial assistance for those students.

“The Kiita Scholarship is the first AFFCF scholarship focused on supporting youth who choose to pursue community college versus a university. Attaining a degree can be challenging for youth with foster care experience not because of a lack of aspiration to attend college, but because the traditional four-year pathway fails to account for the complexity of their lives and situations,” said Luis De La Cruz, CEO and president of Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation. “This new scholarship was designed to target and support students who contend with complexities that many traditional college students simply don’t, and we at AFFCF are grateful to the Kiita Foundation for their investment in our critical work.”

The Kiita Scholarship is designed to give AFFCF the maximum flexibility to distribute funds to Post-Secondary Program participants and serves as a critical source of sustainable funding for the nonprofit’s community college scholarships.

The Kiita Foundation was formed in 2000 by Jim and Jo-Ann Armstrong and is named after the Inuit word meaning “get up and go”. Its primary focus is to provide scholarships, educational and service centered experiences, and programmatic support to independent students who either grew up in the foster care system or have extenuating family circumstances. With programs in Arizona, Colorado, and Montana, they support nearly 100 students a year.

“We know that a student’s past affects many things, but it does not need to shape their future potential and their success. We are proud to Partner with AFFCF to invest in students entering the community colleges and to work together to help these young adults who deserve every chance to thrive,” said Amy Armstrong, vice president of programs at Kiita Foundation.

Students can apply for all AFFCF scholarships this fall for the Spring 2027 semester. Applications can be submitted via AFFCF’s Post-Secondary Program webpage, linked [here](#).

The Post-Secondary Program goes beyond financial aid, providing support for young people who age out of foster care through regular check-ins, scholar outings, and care packages that help students stay on track. In 2025, AFFCF served 219 students through the Post-Secondary Program, helping 112 earn scholarships. AFFCF itself awarded 178 scholarships to help foster youth pursue their education goals. It also provided emergency and enrichment funds to 328 youth, helping them purchase necessities such as groceries, gas, and auto repairs.

To learn more about how AFFCF is empowering students with foster care experience with the financial support and resources they need to success, visit 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 for more information.

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