



Connections

A Newsletter for Friends of Homeless Youth Connection

Holiday Hope Thank You

A warm holiday thank you to all of the wonderful members of our community that stepped up to support our annual **Holiday Hope for Teens** program, which provided holiday gifts for our homeless youth. With your support, we were able to provide a brighter holiday season to 132 students, many of whom would not have received any gifts. The presents were distributed to 26 high schools, and since our expansion, this included high schools as far reaching as Higley and Gilbert. We truly could not do this without your support—and seeing the rows of beautifully wrapped presents in our offices, and the happy faces of our students is a gift in itself. In addition to gifts, many were also able to donate gift cards, which came at a great time as our supplies were nearly out. Gift cards to retailers including Walmart, Target and several fast food chains, are used by students to purchase food, clothing, and other needed items.

We are very grateful to all the individuals who supported Holiday Hope, as well as the community groups and businesses listed below:

- Allstate
- Adelante
- Chapter DM PEO/St. Peter's Episcopal Group
- Church at Litchfield Park Circle 5
- DMB Leadership at Verrado
- Edward Jones
- Friends and Family of OCM Recycle West
- Nike Factory Outlet
- Osborne Jewelers
- Pebble Creek Gimmee Girls Ladies Golf
- Pebble Creek Unit 42
- Pebble Creek Unit 64
- Summit Church
- Verrado Giving Tree
- West Valley Mavericks and Mustangs
- Yates Buick GMC



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Giving homeless youth a chance for a brighter future.



Thunderbirds Charities/ Waste Management Phoenix Open Birdies for Charity Program to Benefit HYC

HYC is one of the designated charities provided the opportunity to generate contributions for their organization based on the number of 'birdies' made by the PGA Tour players during the Waste Management Phoenix Open. As a participating charity, HYC is asking for pledges per birdie—and pledges can be as little as one cent! The 2016 Open had about 1,340 birdies, so a one-cent pledge would be \$13.40. The highest number of birdies was in 2014 with 1,746.

In golf, a 'birdie' is a score of one stroke better than 'Par' for any hole on the golf course. 'Par' is the normal expected score of a golf professional on any given hole. So, if Par is 5 then a Birdie would be 4 strokes.

HYC may also be eligible to receive a 10% bonus on the total amount of pledges collected if we have a minimum amount of \$500 collected by the April payment deadline. So, please help us collect pledges for this fun campaign—it's so easy! Just log on to the link below and make your pledge today!

www.birdiesforcharityaz.com

Last Chance!
Pledge
Deadline is
February 5th



HYC Founder Named City of Goodyear Citizen of the Year!

We are so pleased to announce that our very own Larry Cervarich has been named the 2016 Goodyear Citizen of the Year! Larry was honored for his efforts with Homeless Youth Connection, as well as his new nonprofit venture Meals of Joy, which will bring food to local senior citizens. Larry has worked tirelessly to serve the city of Goodyear and surrounding community for many years, and we certainly believe the recognition is well-deserved.

Larry Cervarich has over thirty years of management and ownership experience within the food service industry. His first experience with nonprofit organizations was with Loaves & Fishes/Meals on Wheels, where he served as a member of the board of directors for five years. During this time, he was responsible for developing fundraising programs to enhance a new commissary facility.

In 2010, he developed the Homeless Youth Connection. Because of his passion for the youth, he continues to create awareness within the community to see that each student will have the opportunity to graduate and improve their future.

If you see Larry out and about, please help us congratulate him on this significant achievement!

Congratulations Larry!

Spring Carnival is Back!

This March, the Spring Carnival hosted at Goodyear Ballpark will return with rides, games and food—and proceeds will benefit HYC!

March 16: Open 2-9 pm
March 17: Open 5-11 pm (Fireworks show at dusk)
March 18 & 19: Open Noon to 11 pm

The fair will be set up in front of the Goodyear ballpark. Watch for details on discounted tickets and special offers from Goodyear baseball spring training!

Thank you to Kastl Amusements for their support of this year's carnival.

Student Story

Each youth participating in the HYC program has a story. The story below highlights why this student needed HYC and how they are turning their story into success.

In this issue, we'd like to introduce you to Chris,* who recently ended up sleeping in a local park when he couldn't find a place for the night. At age 17, his father gave him a note that said he was 'emancipated.' Chris' father informed him that he was old enough to get a job and fend for himself. Unfortunately, in order to get a job, Chris would have needed his identification documents, which his father kept. Chris was left homeless, and without the needed personal documents to do anything on his own.

A friend told Chris he could come to his home for the night. The first night, the friend's parents were unsure of Chris' situation, but the second night it became clear that he was homeless and had nowhere else to go. The family reached out to HYC to see if there were any resources for Chris. Case Manager Tarinda Craglow then became involved and began the process of ensuring a stable environment, which

included finding a loving, long-term Host Family for Chris. Reaching out to contacts in the community where Chris lives, we were able to quickly find a family that said 'yes' to making the commitment to support Chris. Having a roof over his head every night, clothes that fit him properly and were clean, as well as food every day has been a blessing to Chris. He is thriving in a supportive family environment and looks forward to planning his future. We are so fortunate to have friends and neighbors in the communities around us that are willing to help HYC students, but we continue to need even more support. If you are interested in learning more about becoming a Host Family to an HYC student, please call us for details.

(Name has been changed to protect the privacy of the student.)

HYC Kicks Off Student Ambassador Program

HYC's Student Ambassador Program is an opportunity for high school students to act as liaisons between HYC and their schools. Student Ambassadors:

- Learn about HYC programs and events
- Plan and host fun events on behalf of their schools
- Act as a campus contact for HYC
- Help HYC better understand each school's culture
- Educate high school students about the issue of homelessness

The Student Ambassador program provides HYC with an opportunity to connect with students already attending the high schools we serve—increasing awareness and allowing us to speak directly to the teens that are learning alongside homeless youth every day. These students are uniquely equipped to help us tell our story and to advocate for our programs within the schools. Participating students also gain valuable skills in project management, relationship building, and marketing and fundraising in a real-world nonprofit setting. If you are interested in learning more, or if you know of a student or school that may benefit from this program, please call for more information, 623-374-3747.



Calendar of Events

Please mark your calendar for this important list of upcoming HYC events!



MARCH 16-19, 2017

Spring Carnival

Goodyear Ballpark

A fun family event featuring exciting carnival rides, attractions, food and games.

MARCH 18, 2017

Tee Off for Teens Golf Tournament

Tuscany Falls Golf Course, Pebble Creek

18 holes of golf and a delicious lunch! There are many opportunities to support this event including foursomes and donations for raffle prizes.

MARCH 29, 2017

Charity Spring Training Game

Goodyear Ballpark

Family fun at the ballpark with proceeds benefiting HYC!

APRIL 22, 2017

Bubble Run

Goodyear Ballpark

Three miles of good, clean fun. Registration fees are \$50 per person and proceeds will benefit HYC. First heat starts at 8 am.

Register: www.bubblerun.com

Don't want to race? The Bubble Run needs volunteers too—call the HYC office for details.

MAY 6, 2017

Racing for Hope

The Wigwam, Litchfield Park

Our popular gala event features a blend of the rustic southwest with the pageantry and elegance of the Kentucky Derby. 1-4 p.m. Call for details, tickets and sponsorship opportunities.

For information about any of these special events, please call 623-374-3747 or visit hyc.org



Homeless Youth
Connection

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