

Youth on their Own Buys Resale Home Store – Opening September!



Youth On Their Own (YOTO) of Tucson recently purchased the building at 1642 N Alvernon Way in Tucson for \$285,000 (\$75 PSF). YOTO is a non-profit that provides youth, through no fault of their own, who lack a parent or long-term legal guardian in their

lives with a stable nighttime residence, financial assistance, basic needs and guidance as they work to obtain a high school diploma. We spoke to **Teresa Baker**, Executive Director of Youth On Their Own about the transaction.

Baker told us that in 2010 Pima County had 2,000 homeless youth in need of help; that number had grown to 6,000 by 2013. Baker knows that it will increase again when the 2014 stats are released for Pima County.

Last year, YOTO had budgeted for 1,250 kids, but instead helped 1,500 kids. Baker proudly said, “We have never turned anyone away, and of those 1,500 kids there were 350 seniors who had a 95% graduation rate from high school last year.”

The complex process of human development presents opportunities and challenges at every phase. Despite the obstacles these youth face, many of them flourish. They make the transition from adolescent to young adult feeling good about who they are. They believe they can make important contributions to society and will have opportunities to do so, and they know they possess supportive and caring connections to a range of positive people and groups. However, these young

people did not travel the unfamiliar road to adulthood without assistance

The increase in need was a large motivating factor for YOTO to buy the former arts and crafts gallery next door to its current headquarters located at 1660 N Alvernon Way in Tucson.

The plan is to turn the store into a specialized thrift shop for home goods that would also provide an opportunity to the kids fresh out of high school, and without scholarships, to learn the retail business. The program is partnering with **ENACTUS**, an international organization that connects students, academic and business leaders through entrepreneurial-based projects and will be guided by the **Terry J Lundgren Center for Retailing** at the **University of Arizona**.

Briefly, YOTO will offer one semester internships in a **Workforce Development** training program that teaches basic workforce etiquette to students who are in good standing with grades and academic performance before entering the program. YOTO is also seeking opportunities with local retailers who would be interested in hiring these out of high school kids as part of their internship.

In addition to such an ambitious undertaking, YOTO plans to set up a parallel online store for any oversize items or surplus donations.

There were no brokers involved in the transaction. **Bob L. Villaman** with Waterfall Economidis, Caldwell, Hanshaw, Villamana donated his time to handle the transaction for buyer and seller.

The YOTO Thrift Shop grand opening is expected before the end of September.

There are a variety of ways to support Youth On Their Own. Any way in which you are able to give to YOTO and further its mission – whether it be money, mini-mall items, or your time

– makes a huge difference! Contact YOTO at 520.293.1136 or go to <https://yoto.org/yoto-resale-home-store/> for more information.