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# AzFCAA: Tucson

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## Where? Here!

AzFCAA NEW QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER, by Eshawn Peterson, Chair

I'm so proud to present our first Arizona Foster Care Alumni of America Southern Region Newsletter. It has been a long time in the making, but hopefully a way for everyone to learn more about Foster Care Alumni of America & the Arizona State chapter. We want this newsletter to be a resource for people to highlight what is being done in the Southern Region, Arizona Chapter as a whole, other state chapters and the National FCAA, in order to educate and influence change in our constituents.

So what can you expect from our newsletter?

- Calendar, with detailed dates for meetings/events, 3 months at a time, so you can plan ahead.
- National, State, and Local Policies Information that will shape the future for our youth and what you can do to help.
- Member Highlights! Accentuating the positive that our members do for our community.
- FCAA Chapters Updates: What other state chapters are doing to make a difference.
- Local Resource/Events: Updates on important resources for our youth and events we can all go to.
- Judy's thought for Inspection: Words of wisdom and advice!

Since this is the first newsletter, we have decided to give you a little bit of background about Foster Care Alumni of America. In 2004 Casey Family Programs made a significant investment in the alumni movement by generously supporting the creation of Foster Care Alumni of America. Growing since that time, FCAA is now establishing chapters around the country and building our membership to harness the power of alumni and our allies to make real change.

Alumni, the adults who spent time in foster care as children or youth. This includes people who lived in foster care, group homes, institutional settings, and kinship care (placed with family members). It is with pride that we claim the term 'alumni' because it allows us to claim the expertise and experience we gained through our time in foster care of the foster care system know intimately what it is like to be removed from our homes, to live in placements, to carry around all of the questions that come with our history with us into the adult world. Therefore, we serve as role models that former foster children can overcome challenges, can navigate our experiences—good and bad—and make our own adult lives. Consider who else we represent...whose faces and experiences should be part of the planning and decision making in the child welfare system.

## Chapter Information

**Foster Care Alumni of America**  
**Arizona Chapter**  
**Southern Region-Tucson**

—  
**Eshawn Peterson, Chair**  
**eshawn.peterson@gmail.com**

—  
**Nicole Lavallo, Communications**  
**nek1106@comcast.net**

—  
[www.fostercarealumni.org](http://www.fostercarealumni.org)



# Southern Mission

MISSION FOR SUCCESS

The **MISSION** of Arizona Chapter Southern Region Foster Care Alumni of America is to build the awareness of foster care within the public while reaching out to the youth presently in foster care.

We will build the awareness within the community by changing the stereotypes and collaborating with other aligned organizations.

We will reach out to the youth in foster care by providing the living skills and support that will aide in them transitioning into productive adults.

**Our Vision:** Arizona Chapter Southern Region Foster Care Alumni of America will be the voice of positive change for the foster care system. We will serve the youth by communicating their needs to the appropriate people and organizations and promote the positive accomplishments of foster care youth and alumni.

**Our Values:** Arizona Chapter Southern Region Foster Care Alumni of America will accomplish our mission by adhering to the following values:

- All actions are aligned with and in support of the mission statement.
- Our service to the foster care youth, past and present, is our reason for being.
- We will at all times model the behaviors we desire to pass on to others.

As a collective group we have created our Southern Region Mission, Vision, and Values that in order to enhance the National umbrella organization Foster Care Alumni of America:

- *National Mission* is to: Connect the alumni community & transform policy and practice, ensuring opportunity for people in and from foster care.
- *National Vision* is to: ensure a high quality of life for those in and from foster care through the collective voice of alumni.

In keeping with the National Mission and Vision, and within our own community Mission, Vision, and Values do we expect to connect, transform, educate, build, reach-out, and break stereotypes of our community.

## Thought for Inspection

"You are well equipped with an incredible potential for absorbing knowledge. Let your imagination, the key to learning and memory, unleash that brain power and propel you along at ever-increasing speeds. It's not an exclusive path with access granted only to those with a special gift for learning. It is, instead, available to everyone who has a brain. Anything's possible."

--- Dominic O'Brien

# Member Highlight!

LUPE TOVAR, MEMBER



Lupe Tovar is one of the founding members of the AzFCAA. She currently has many roles in the community including the title of Program Coordinator of In My Shoes, Inc. a local non-profit foster advocacy organization. She is an alumni whose life's goals had led her to want to continue to impact and change the lives of our brothers and sisters in foster care.

Having been in foster care herself, she exceeded all expectations of someone who in 19 years in care, had over 13 foster families (among other short term placements), and went to 5 different high schools in two different states within 4 years. She is a graduate of Arizona State University, where she received a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, an achievement that only 2% of our brothers and sisters achieve. She has been honored in Washington, D.C. as a leader in advocacy, where she has been over 8 times in order to do advocacy work.

She most recently was voted onto National Board of Directors for Foster Care Alumni of America. We applaud her success and know that she is definitely a sister to be proud of and looked up to.

## In My Shoes, Inc.

LOCAL RESOURCE SECRET

In My Shoes, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c) 3 peer-mentoring organization. Their main focus is committed to offering one-on-one mentoring to youth in foster care. Our goal is to match youth when they are between the ages of 16 and 17, with an adult who was once raised in the foster care system. Our hope is that their two year commitment can assist in the youth's transition out of the foster care system and into the "real world" as "**Strong! Resilient! Amazing!**" young adults. Another venture of the organization is clubs for youth and alumni in and from care.

Three times per year, In My Shoes, Inc. holds a variety of clubs for youth ages 12-17 and alumni club for those 18 and older. These clubs give everyone a chance to interact with other people their age in an engaging and meaningful way. It's a great way for the youth to build long lasting friendships, while having some fun too. Some examples of club activities would be learning photography, going to bumper cars at Golf-n-Stuff, the movie theaters, and game nights.

In My Shoes, Inc. is always looking for qualified mentors to take time out of their lives to match with a person they once were, a 16 or 17 getting ready for the world. For more information about what this organization does or to get more information about volunteering please visit <http://www.inmyshoesinc.org/> or call them at (520) 747-1533.