ARIZONA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES 2024

WE ARE ARIZONANS AND ACF IS OUR COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Established in 1978, the Arizona Community Foundation manages over 2,000 funds supported by thousands of Arizonans. With five regional offices serving communities across our state, ACF is among the top 25 community foundations in the nation with more than $1.34 billion in trust and endowment assets. We are certified under the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations and recently earned our twelfth 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, recognizing us for executing our mission in a financially efficient way and demonstrating to the public our trustworthiness.

Because of our local connections and knowledge of the nonprofit ecosystem, community foundations are well-equipped to collect charitable dollars and distribute grants to the organizations that provide vital services day in and day out. ACF partners with individual donors, business leaders, and local government entities to support community projects large and small and to mobilize philanthropic responses to natural disasters and community crises.

STATEWIDE IMPACT

Grants, scholarships, loans, and distributions awarded by the Arizona Community Foundation and its regional offices between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023 totaled:

$108,455,677

31% Health Innovations

20% Quality Education

17% Community Improvement & Development

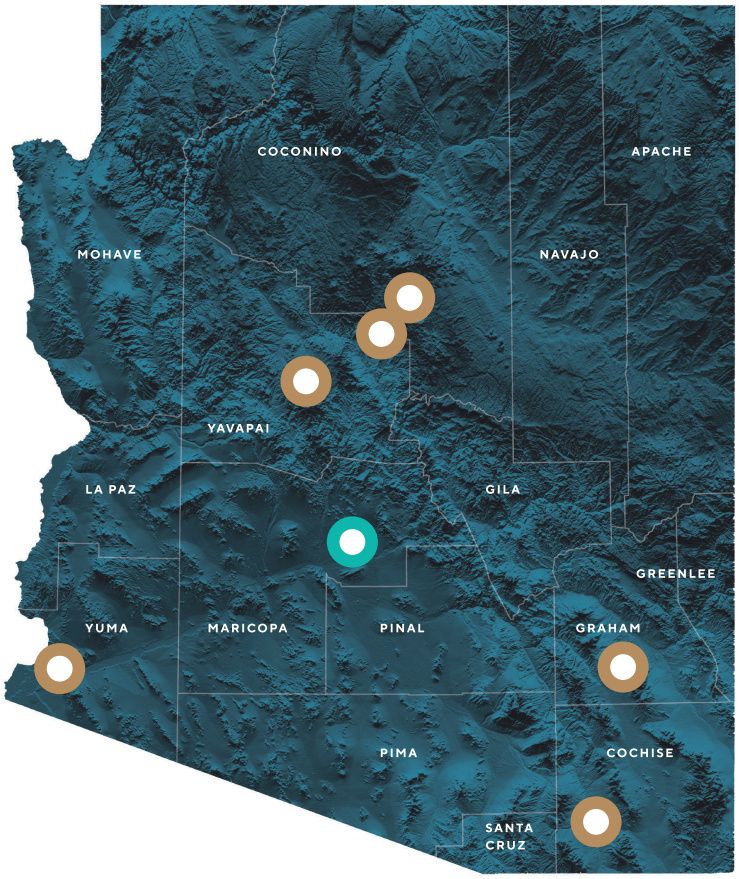
8% Arts & Culture

7% Environment & Sustainability

10% Nonprofit Fund Distributions

5% Scholarships

2% Impact Loans



MISSION

Lead, serve, and collaborate to mobilize enduring philanthropy for a better Arizona.

NORTH STAR

We see Arizona as a state that welcomes growth, inclusion, and prosperity for all.

WHY PUBLIC POLICY

Our work in public policy helps ensure that the philanthropic dollars distributed by ACF and our donors can be leveraged to create systemic change in our communities. Guided by our mission and north star, and under the leadership of our board of directors, public policy committee, regional advisory boards, and other community leaders, we are committed to drive change within the following priority areas:

- Housing
- Environment
- Education
- Philanthropy for All
- Philanthropy, Nonprofit Capacity Building, & Charitable Giving
- Strengthening Arizona

LEADERSHIP

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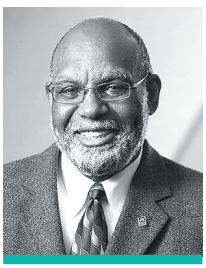

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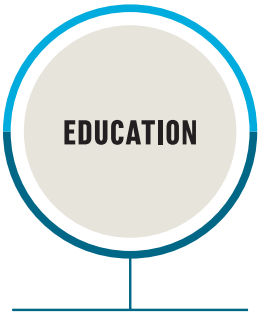
Public Policy Committee Chair
Eve Ross, JD

President & CEO
Anna María Chávez, Esq.



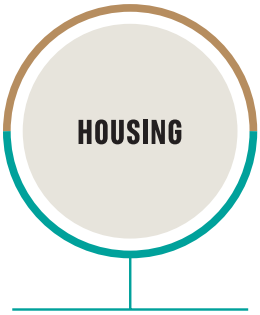
EDUCATION

We believe a quality education system is a significant driver of Arizona's economic competitiveness and quality of life. ACF supports policies that provide long-term funding solutions for early childhood education through college and career readiness. We also support policies that encourage equity, excellence, and innovative solutions that benefit all Arizona students.

Our Recent Work

- ACF is the largest independent provider of scholarships in Arizona, managing more than 200 scholarships and awarding millions of dollars in scholarships annually to help thousands of students achieve their educational goals. As such, ACF understands the significant financial barriers that students face as they transition from high school to colleges, universities, trade, and vocational schools in Arizona and across the United States.

- ACF has been closely monitoring the latest FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) submission and rollout updates. The delayed FAFSA rollout has significantly impacted students who are making decisions on their postsecondary plans for the Fall 2024 semester. As a result, the scholarships department partnered with Valley Leadership, Education Forward Arizona, and Arizona State University to host a FAFSA 101 workshop in March to provide support for students who were impacted by FAFSA delays.



HOUSING

We believe safe housing and stable neighborhoods are the building blocks of a healthy community. Housing security is at the heart of the lives and success of all Arizonans.

ACF supports policies that provide access to affordable housing, promote economic success initiatives for the working-poor, ensure basic needs for Arizona's most vulnerable populations, promote social justice for all, and build strong communities for all generations.

Our Recent Work

- ACF's Affordable Housing Loan Fund has helped finance the creation of 4,000 units of affordable housing in Arizona.

- ACF has been collaborating with local and national partners to address challenges and solutions related to manufactured and mobile homes. Highlighting preservation funding and displacement aid stemming from mobile home park closures and looking at local manufacturing solutions that address production of this type of housing that is affordable and quick to bring to market. Building partnerships with Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and ROC USA.

ENVIRONMENT

Arizona's natural resources are among the most highly valued attributes of our state, and a top priority of residents. We believe in protecting these resources so that they can be enjoyed by future generations.

ACF supports policies that protect, preserve, and responsibly manage Arizona's natural resources in both urban and rural areas.

Our Recent Work

- ACF has partnered with the Bikoh Farmers Cooperative in Tuba City to support the development of a farming and grocery store cooperative on the outskirts of Tuba City. There are only 13 grocery stores on the Navajo Nation which spans over 27,000 square miles and is home to over 300,000 people. The average resident must drive nearly 3 hours to reach a grocery store. While this particular project is focused on the growers in the Kerley Valley, efforts are underway to assess a regional plan that would develop a regional cooperative food hub creating access to healthy foods and building economic opportunities for growers across the region.

PHILANTHROPY FOR ALL

We believe strong, vibrant, and inclusive communities contribute to economic growth and create a positive quality of life for all Arizonans.

ACF supports policies that address the issues facing Arizona's growing populations and promote diversity and inclusion for all populations across the state.

Our Recent Work

- In 2020, ACF's Black Philanthropy Initiative (BPI) held a series of community convenings to examine drivers of inequality in Arizona and provide a platform to discuss the road ahead for social justice. Through the series, economic inequality was identified as a key driver of racial injustice in communities across Arizona and the United States. In response, BPI launched the Social Justice Fund, which will support financial literacy programs for Black-led nonprofits and small businesses.

PHILANTHROPY, NONPROFIT CAPACITY BUILDING, & CHARITABLE GIVING

Our nonprofit sector is a thriving network comprised of thousands of social-purpose organizations tackling many of our state's most difficult problems with innovative programs and services. We believe it is our role to support the sector and protect our business interests.

ACF supports policies that encourage charitable giving, promote partnerships between nonprofit organizations and government agencies to stimulate collective impact, and advance the sector's role in advocacy.

Our Recent Work

- ACF partnered with more than 150 community foundations across the nation to advocate for policies that promote continued support for America's spirit of philanthropy and chariatable giving. As such, ACF joined Community Foundation leaders who were among more than 40 speakers who testified at a hearing hosted by the Internal Revenue Service in Washington, DC to gather public input on proposed regulations to Donor Advised Funds. The proposed rules would place unncessary burdens on community foundations and their donors and would have a negative effect on charitable giving across the country and hurt community nonprofits providing vital services across the nation.

STRENGTHENING ARIZONA

Our statewide presence catalyzes the generosity of donors and partners to focus on local needs and opportunities through a robust network of affiliated community foundations serving Flagstaff and northern Arizona, Sedona and the Verde Valley, Yavapai County, Graham and Greenlee counties, Cochise County and southeast Arizona, Yuma and western Arizona, and Maricopa County and central Arizona.

ACF supports policies that strengthen rural communities in Arizona and address issues specific to the needs and diversity within their regions.

Our Recent Work

- In 2020, ACF forged a public-private partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and allocated $5 million to create the ACF/USDA Rural Development Investment Fund to support infrastructure needs in rural communities across Arizona. Through this partnership, ACF has provided access to low-interest, short-term financing through bridge loans for project predevelopment costs, and has leveraged large amounts of capital awarded to communities by the USDA. Loans from this fund benefit water systems, schools, affordable housing, firehouses, museums, parks, and related needs in rural communities.

ARIZONA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

azfoundation.org

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