



## For Immediate Release

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### **FosterEd Arizona Receives \$500,000 From The Bob & Renee Parsons Foundation to Increase Support for Arizona Students in Foster Care**

**PHOENIX (July 11, 2018)** – FosterEd Arizona, an organization dedicated to improving graduation rates and life outcomes for children in foster care, has received a \$500,000 grant from The Bob & Renee Parsons Foundation. The grant will allow FosterEd to take full advantage of Arizona's Foster Youth Education Success Fund, which allows state funds to match up to \$500,000 in philanthropic funding.

"I was a very distracted student who failed the 5th grade and almost didn't graduate high school, so I can only imagine how challenging it must be for foster children to stay focused on school work while dealing with the additional stresses they face in their personal lives," said American entrepreneur and philanthropist Bob Parsons. "FosterEd offers the extra support and encouragement that can make a real difference in their futures."

For many foster children, learning is interrupted by multiple home and school moves. FosterEd, an initiative of the National Center for Youth Law (NCYL), operates under the framework that all foster youth should have an Education Champion who can support the student's long-term education success. This includes establishing an Education Team of engaged adults - caregivers, teachers and child welfare caseworkers - who develop an ongoing education plan based on each student's academic strengths and needs.

"All children deserve to have someone on their side, looking out for them, someone who will advocate for equal education opportunities during what is often an incredibly tumultuous time in their lives," said businesswoman and philanthropist Renee Parsons. "FosterEd works to ensure these students have the support they need not only to continue their education but excel through graduation."

A recent study showed that only one third of Arizona students in foster care who enrolled in grade 12 graduated in the 2012/2013 school year - one of the lowest graduation rates among at-risk student subgroups. The FosterEd approach has been shown to improve attendance and graduation rates for students in foster care while also transforming the public agencies that serve them by advocating for legislative change and sharpening state focus around education for children in these programs.

"The funding from The Bob & Renee Parsons Foundation, combined with the state match, will allow us to support many more foster children," said FosterEd Arizona's Director Molly Dunn. "It will also enable us to expand our efforts to more students, develop youth leadership councils and increase our volunteer capacity."

In Arizona, FosterEd works with a committed group of local and state partners, parents and students to create a future in which the majority of foster youth graduate high school. The campaign began with

the launch of a demonstration site in Pima County, the success of which allowed the organization to expand programming throughout Maricopa County. To learn more about FosterEd Arizona, visit [www.foster-ed.org/topics/arizona/](http://www.foster-ed.org/topics/arizona/).

#### **About FosterEd Arizona**

Through implementation of demonstration sites, bold policy agenda, collaborative learning networks and research, FosterEd is creating a future where each and every young person in foster care or under the jurisdiction of probation graduates from high school with a wide array of possibilities for their future.

#### **About The Bob & Renee Parsons Foundation**

The Bob & Renee Parsons Foundation offers support to nonprofit organizations successfully working to empower, educate, nurture and nourish people during what is often the darkest time of their lives. Founded in 2012 by the philanthropists and business leaders Bob and Renee Parsons to provide hope and life-changing assistance to the country's most vulnerable populations, The Bob & Renee Parsons Foundation offers critical funding at critical times to those in need. The Foundation's giving is driven by the core belief that all people—regardless of race, religion, roots, or economic status—deserve access to quality healthcare, education, and a safe place to call home. Follow @WeDealInHope on social media or visit TBRPF.org, to learn more about partner organizations and the important work being done in the community.

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