



TCAA Statement, Current Programs, and Population Served

TCAA was formed in 1966 to serve the basic needs of Tempe's most vulnerable households. Since 1966 TCAA has operated within our original Escalante neighborhood, opened three more sites, and greatly expanded our menu of services to assist residents with overcoming a crisis and improving their quality of life. ***TCAA's mission is to foster dignity and self-reliance for the economically vulnerable.***

Ultimately we work to alleviate poverty. Because poverty is a complex issue with multiple contributing factors, our programs are diverse in their focus. Our five areas of concentration include homelessness intervention and housing security, senior independence, healthy families, hunger relief, and economic advancement. In FY2018, TCAA served the greatest volume ever; more than 22,000 individuals—equivalent to one in eight Tempe residents.

Our Economic Advancement program is TCAA's newest. Launched in 2017, this program is designed to improve the financial stability of economically disadvantaged Tempe residents. The program utilizes the nationally renowned Financial Opportunity Center model, developed by Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), a large, national nonprofit which works to bring greater economic opportunity to low income communities. FOCs are career and financial coaching service centers embedded in communities and designed to help low and moderate income individuals build smart financial habits and improve their financial independence. LISC supports a network of more than 80 FOCs across the nation and provided TCAA with a small pilot grant to launch an FOC for Tempe residents—one of four in Maricopa County. FOCs offer three specific services: income supports, financial coaching, and employment assistance. Research conducted by LISC, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and others demonstrated that by bundling these three services, customers achieve better employment outcomes.

TCAA launched the FOC in October 2018. In the first 60 days, TCAA served 95 customers under the FOC model. We are currently expanding the program to serve a larger population and seeking additional funds to sustain this program for the long term in Tempe. One of our challenges is the limited space available for FOC services within our current facility. By relocating our I-HELP staff (three employees) to another location, we will be able to open up additional space for FOC staff and equipment at our Apache site. TCAA will install four computers for customer use and situate two staff in this workspace: a Financial Coach and an Employment Specialist. TCAA has the funds to support the FOC staff but lacks the funds to pay for the relocation of I-HELP staff and the improvement of the FOC space. A Tempe Diablos grant of \$12,000 will pay for three laptops allowing I-HELP staff to work remotely, six desktops for FOC staff and customers, installation of network cables, and a printer, as well as program materials and supplies and program marketing and promotional services.