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Subject: Thank You. Let' Amplify What's Next for Phoenix Youth and Family Services, Inc.

To:

Dear Partners,

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended the Phoenix Youth and Family Services (PYFS) 2025 Bi-Annual Stakeholders Meeting. We are grateful that you took the time to share your expertise and, in doing so, helped strengthen the foundation of our work in the Arkansas Delta. To those who were unable to join us this year, we missed your voice and perspective—and we encourage you to be with us in April 2026 for the next Bi-Annual Stakeholders Convening. Your participation matters, and we look forward to having you at the table as we continue building a stronger, healthier, and more economically vibrant Delta region.

**Our Strategic Positioning at a glance:** Our guiding theme for the next fiscal year is Economic Mobility through Health, Wellness, and Workforce Development. This year, PYFS began developing a comprehensive initiative that connects our existing priorities with a new and critical focus. Workforce development has always been a core priority for PYFS, and we remain firmly committed to our existing work with justice-impacted individuals, system-involved youth, substance abuse, and domestic violence prevention. We are not shifting away from our core mission — we are strengthening it. PYFS is expanding its mission with a deeper understanding that health access and wellness are essential drivers of workforce readiness, stability, and long-term economic mobility. By integrating health access and wellness supports into our established programs, we can more effectively address the real barriers people face and create a stronger pathway from crisis to stability to full participation in the workforce.

**The Stakes Are High — Here's What the Data Tells Us:** To ground our work in the realities we confront, we considered the alarming but motivating data.

1. Arkansas faces a deeply troubling recidivism challenge: nearly 46 percent of individuals released from prison return within three years. (*Arkansas House*)
2. Even more sobering, the Justice Reinvestment Initiative in Arkansas found that 72 percent of prison admissions involve people revoked from community supervision—often tied to unaddressed behavioral health challenges. (*Justice Reinvestment Initiative*)
3. Research shows that 70–90% of individuals with serious mental health conditions are unemployed. (*PMC*)
4. In rural communities, mentoring is far too rare: a study found that 47% of rural youth reported having no mentor at all between the ages of 6 and 18. (*Youth Research and Evaluation eXchange*)

**Why This Matters for PYFS:** These realities speak directly to the expansion of the PYFS mission: if we are to build economic mobility in the Arkansas Delta, we cannot ignore the powerful interplay of health, lack of supportive relationships, and reentry challenges.

- By integrating health into our programming, we help prevent cycles of incarceration, support mental wellness, and stabilize the workforce.
- By building mentoring capacity, especially in rural areas, we can give young people the sustained adult relationships they so desperately need—relationships that anchor them, support them, and help them thrive.
- By advocating for and securing funding, especially for adults who fall outside the typical age bracket for services, we can fill a critical gap in our system and expand life-changing services.

**Your Partnership Is Transformative:** As we look ahead, I invite each of you to deepen your role in our work. Credible messengers like you are exactly what we need. Your voice carries weight. Your testimony about our collective mission helps spark conversations, drive investments, and shift the hearts and minds of people who may not yet see or understand the work of Phoenix Youth and Family Services (PYFS).

Here's how you can help:

1. Tell the story. Talk about PYFS's integrated mission—with your friends, colleagues, funders, and community leaders.
2. Open doors. Introduce us to potential funders and donors who may not yet be aware of our work. Let them in on this vision of health, workforce, and sustainability.
3. Become a mentor champion. Help us build or strengthen mentoring programs in rural areas. Whether formally or informally, committed adult relationships change lives.

Our goal is straightforward: create livable, sustainable communities by supporting long-term self-sufficiency, helping people transition from dependency to positively contributing to their communities. Your partnership isn't just appreciated—it's essential. The wisdom you bring and the questions you raised are more than contributions; they're the bedrock of what makes PYFS's impact possible. Without you, our reach would be narrower and our capacity far weaker.

I look forward to our continued collaboration and to exploring how we can further develop this work together. I also invite you to join us for the **2026 PYFS Bi-Annual Stakeholders Convening** in April 2026, where we will build on this momentum, share our progress, and shape the next phase of PYFS's growth—together.

With gratitude,

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