

The GRIT Program



Inspiring Inclusive Futures

September 2011

Special points of interest:

- © **We Are Family**—a workshop for parents and children 5-12 years.
- © **Workshop Series**—check out GRIT's fall and winter sessions.
- © **Upcoming Events**—volunteers needed for Oilers 50/50 and Casino days.
- © **Parent 2 Parent**—first session September 13

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WELCOME MESSAGE

from Barb Reid, Executive Director

I am excited to welcome families and staff to GRIT for another year of working and learning together. I hope each of you have enjoyed time this summer to relax and have fun. Whether out and about in your own yard and community or travelling further, I know smacking mosquitos was a part of summer for all of us!

This is an exciting year for our program as we begin to celebrate GRIT's 30th Anniversary! Wow, we have come a long way since we started with five families in 1982!

As we look ahead this year, we see GRIT increasing our services to 79 families (an addition of 6 children) due to the high number of families seeking our support. We are also expanding our services to

more and more day care and preschool programs committed to the successful inclusion of children with disabilities in their centers. Plus, we have been extremely fortunate to have the opportunity for a few fundraising activities that are critical to keep GRIT financially stable. So, another busy year begins.

I look forward to meeting each of you. If I miss you at orientation, please drop in to introduce yourself and grab a coffee together. I would enjoy that very much.

FAMILY

(fam-i-lee) yours, mine, theirs, ours



We're all in this TOGETHER

What is Playgroup?

Playgroup is a place where children in the GRIT Program can come and engage in a wide variety of play experiences. Centers are set up around the playroom for children to explore; a calming sensory room is available for children who need a quiet space; and a gross motor room has fun equipment for busy bodies! Playgroup has an open structure of free play, snack, and a short circle time involving songs, lap games and a story. Siblings and parents are always welcome! Come meet Vicki, Gina and Danielle, our fabulous playgroup organizers. Please plan on joining us!

September 12 & 19

9:30 to 11:30 am **OR**
1:00 to 3:00 pm



We Are Family...



Learn with other parents while your children have a stimulating playful workshop. Then celebrate your learning together at noon and at the end of the workshop.

Date: Saturday, November 19, 2011
Time: 9:30 am—3:00 pm
Location: GRIT office: 14930—114 Avenue
***pizza lunch provided**
Cost: GRIT families are free
\$40.00/family for non-GRIT families

Sibling Age group:
5—12 yrs

For Parents...

- Share the journey with other parents
- Explore the effects of a child's disability on their siblings
- Discuss what your wishes and dreams are for your children?
- Participate in interactive activities
- Learn to help your child live with less stress

For children...

- The opportunity to meet children with similar life experiences
- Discuss what your wishes and dreams are for yourself and your parents.
- Activities focused on each child and their interests
- Relaxation and fun!!!



Registration begins September 1st: please visit our website for a registration form or call the office at 780.454.9910

GRIT Updates—Cont'd

Community Learning Workshops Fall and Winter 2011-12

A workshop calendar has been planned for the full year and we are very excited about the sessions that will be offered.

Parents, please attend any workshop of your choice as each is designed with you in mind—check out the childcare services info below!

Workshops are facilitated by a diverse group of GRIT staff, alumni parents, and outside speakers, who each contribute valuable expertise to our learning community. Plan to join our learning community of GRIT parents, staff and kindergarten and playschool teachers.

Workshops are labeled **core and option** to best meet the individual learning needs of new and experienced staff. Workshops alternate between Tuesdays and Wednesdays. **See the Community Learning Workshop Calendar for details of workshops for the full year!!**

It is important **staff** attend the designated **core or option** workshop as indicated below.

CORE workshops are intended for staff in their first two years of employment with GRIT. Topics ensure participants are introduced and familiarized with Grits' values.

OPTION workshops are planned for staff that worked with GRIT more than two years. They are intended to further enhance learning.

SEPTEMBER WORKSHOP SERIES

****Check your Community Learning Workshop calendar for more information.****

Tuesday, September 27—"Core"

The Value of Play (am)

Building Relationships (pm)

Wednesday, September 28—"Option"

Fun, Fun, Fun! (am)

Adapting Curriculum (pm)



Upcoming Workshops:

****Saturday, October 01**

Emergency First Aid with Level A



Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation including Child Resuscitation. For parents and staff. Register as soon as possible.

****Saturday, November 26**

Sign Language-Basic Sign From 9:30 am to 3:30 pm at the GRIT office, We are pleased to facilitate a fun, innovative workshop with activities and stories.



NOTE: Childcare is available for GRIT parents.

Onsite Childcare for Community Learning Workshop Series:

Grit is pleased to provide highly skilled childcare providers (past developmental specialists) to support parents who are interested in attending Community Learning Workshops.

If you plan to use childcare to attend a workshop, please note:

- ☺ Childcare will be provided to the GRIT child and siblings
- ☺ Childcare staff will be available from 8:45 am to 11:15 am in the mornings and 12:45 - 3:15 pm in the afternoons
- ☺ Parents will be responsible for providing lunch for their children and administering of any medication

In order to ensure appropriate care of children, we ask that you phone to confirm your children's participation as soon as possible. Please call the office at 454-9910.

GRIT Updates—Cont'd.

Local Heroes Honored at MacEwan Convocation Ceremonies

At convocation ceremonies in June, MacEwan University recognized the achievements of notable alumni and community members. The highly regarded **Distinguished Alumni Award** is granted to individuals who exhibit outstanding achievements in one or more of the following areas: service to the community, business, the arts, human development, the environment, lifelong learning, post-secondary education and/or government.

On June 23, 2011 **Barb Reid** was one of three alumni members to be honored by MacEwan University and presented with a **Distinguished Alumni Award**. Barb has worked for over 25 years supporting families and children with disabilities. Her work is grounded on the values of community inclusion, family-centered practices, early childhood development, and life long learning.



Please congratulate Barb on her success when you see her. We are so proud of her! This award is a wonderful acknowledgement of Barb's passion and commitment in supporting GRIT families and their vision for their children.

CONGRATULATIONS BARB...you are a TRUE hero!

WELCOME

Welcome back to **Ooi Lin Pheh**, Physical Therapist on the Yellow Team returning from maternity leave.



GRIT's Voicemail System

We hope you will find the system user friendly, while providing confidentiality in leaving messages directly with an individual person. **During office hours** of 8:30 am to 4:00 pm your call will be directed as needed by Leslie or Heather.

After hours the system will give the caller three options:

1. If you know the extension of whom you are calling, enter the number now.
2. If you would like a directory of staff, press 411, (or **check your orientation folder**).
3. Press zero to leave a message in the general mailbox.

Policy and Procedure Manual

GRIT has been hard at work updating our policy and procedures manual. It has been a huge task and is almost completed. We have included two of our revised policies in all of our staff and family's orientation folder - **Dress Code and Use of Technology/Cell phones** - so that we can begin the year with the same shared understanding. Please look for The GRIT Policy and Procedure manual coming soon on our website this fall!

GRIT Car Seat Inspection Clinic

**Mandatory* for all developmental specialists to attend.*

Note: All car seats must be inspected with the child in the car seat to determine appropriate fit and safety of the child.



Monday, September 12 at the GRIT office from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm or 1:00 to 3:00 pm. First come, first serve.

Monday, September 19 at the GRIT office from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm or 1:00 to 3:00 pm. First come, first serve.

Please bring the car seat instructions and the vehicle owner's manual to the inspection.

Developmental Specialist

Awards At our June luncheon three awards were presented to the following DSs.



- ☞ **Peer Appreciation Award** (nominated by DSs) *In recognition of a DS who has gone the extra mile, willingly extended support, encouragement and mentorship to enhance the work of her peers—Julie Michaud*
- ☞ **Leadership** *In recognition of a DS who has consistently demonstrated exemplary performance of GRIT's core values each year—Cheryl O'Connor*
- ☞ **Rookie Award** *In recognition of a first-year developmental specialist who has demonstrated outstanding commitment and application of learning throughout the year—Jamie Bishop*
Congratulations Ladies!

Introducing the GRIT Staff.....

ADMINISTRATION (left to right)

Heather Luciw, Office Manager
Leslie Dancause, Administrative Assistant
Barb Reid, Executive Director
Sue White, Financial Manager
Sherri Kirkland, Family Support Social Worker
Christina Cameron, Human Resource Coordinator



RESOURCE (left to right)

Gina Blank, Resource Coordinator
Vicki Traub, Resource Coordinator
Suzanne Kahler, Behavior Consultant

Sydney Goss, Facilitator of Learning
Barb Round, Resource Librarian
Danielle Gauld, Playroom Assistant

Marilyn Armstrong, Family Liaison
Lynn Connop, GRIT Plus Program Coordinator



BLUE TEAM (left to right)

Rachel O'Brien, Physical Therapist
Amber Michaud, Speech Language Pathologist
Martha Doxsey, Coordinating Teacher
Christa Lucyk, Occupational Therapist



ORANGE TEAM (left to right)

Tameeza Chatur, Occupational Therapist
Taunya Wizrba, Physical Therapist
Susan Bayne, Coordinating Teacher
Julie Leeson, Speech Language Pathologist



GREEN TEAM (left to right)

Lisa Lawrie, Physical Therapist
Brenda Skirrow, Coordinating Teacher
April Monkman-Lees, Occupational Therapist
Julia Giesen, Speech Language Pathologist



YELLOW TEAM (left to right)

Krista Sabrowski, Speech Language Pathologist
Ooi Lin Pheh, Physical Therapist
Sara Murchison, Occupational Therapist
Maggie Gibson, Coordinating Teacher



PURPLE TEAM (left to right)

Twyla Bruce, Coordinating Teacher
Rachel O'Brien, Physical Therapist
Tameeza Chatur, Occupational Therapist
Debbie Hubbard Speech Language Pathologist



Getting to Know "Our Language"



Getting Ready for Inclusion Today

inspiring inclusive futures

GRIT Board

GRIT is a non-profit society and the Board of Directors is the legal operator. The executive director is responsible for program operations and reports to the Board. The Board is comprised of both parent and community representatives. We invite you to meet the Board at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in October.



Victor Bilodeau
Board President & Alumni Parent



PUF—Program Unit Funding



This funding is accessed through Alberta Education and is designated for children that qualify and have a delay in one or more areas of their development. This is the primary source of funding for The GRIT Program.

Developmental Specialist (DS)

This individual implements the daily program to support the child's learning in the home, community (e.g. playgroups, library, etc.) and/or kindergarten. The developmental specialist reports to the coordinating teacher.

Child's Team is composed of the parents, developmental specialist, consultants and a teacher who coordinates the children's educational program.

Individual Program Plan (IPP)

is required by Alberta Education for each child in the program. This document identifies the specific educational program for each child. The IPP is developed by the child's team in October/November and updated in the spring.

Family-Oriented Sessions

A home visit involving the active participation of parents and team members in which opportunities for new parent learning, coaching, information, resources, skills and teaching strategies are created. Overall, the value of this session is to offer knowledge and skills to the parent/care provider to meet the needs of the child now and in the future.



Parent 2 Parent

This is a parent group that runs during playgroup on Monday morning from 9:30am - 11:30am. Parents meet in the parent room and share experiences, resources and build new friendships. It is facilitated by Sherri Kirkland, Family Support Social Worker.



Community Learning Workshops

Every month learning opportunities are provided for our GRIT community which includes parents, staff, and kindergarten or playschool teachers. Topics are selected to reflect GRIT values and are offered in a positive, supportive, and fun atmosphere.

GRIT offers onsite childcare for these sessions or will reimburse parents for home childcare for any sessions they attend.

GRIT Plus (*Specialized Services*)

Provides enhanced programming to children who qualify for Specialized Services through Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD). Currently, GRIT offers this programming support to ten families each year. Families must be enrolled in the GRIT Program and have been approved by FSCD. This program adheres to all of GRIT's existing values and places a strong emphasis on parent involvement. If you have any questions, feel free to call Lynn at ext. 229.

Upcoming Events!

"It takes a whole community to raise a child"

Call for Volunteers! We also need an army of volunteers to help make the following fundraising events a success! Come meet new friends and have fun while supporting GRIT:

Oilers 50/50— Date TBA

Casino - March 13 & 14, 2012

Save the Date to attend one or both benefit fundraisers being held on GRIT'S behalf— **October 21** and/or **November 12!** - Watch for more information to come.....

CPI Construction presents

"Building a Better Future"

Wine Tasting & Silent Auction

Friday, October 21, 2011

@ Muttart Conservatory

7:00 to 11:00 p.m. Tickets \$70.00 Each

Rose dela Cruz presents

"Surrounded by Family & Friends"

Dinner, Dance & Silent Auction

Saturday, November 12, 2011

@ Continental Inn

5:00 to 11:00 p.m. Tickets \$60.00 Each

For more information on volunteering or to purchase tickets please contact Heather Luciw at 780.454.9910 or gritprog@gritprogram.com. Check out our website @ www.gritprogram.com

September and October at a Glance

September 1 **First Day of Programming/School**

September 5 *Labor Day—Program closed*

September 12 Parent 2 Parent (am)

Playgroup (am & pm)

Car Seat Clinic (am & pm)

September 16 Mid September Orientation:

New staff only

September 19 Parent 2 Parent (am)

Playgroup (am & pm)

Car Seat Clinic (am & pm)

September 27 Community Learning Workshops (Core)

September 28 Community Learning Workshops

(Option)

October 1 CPR—Parents & New Hires (all day)

October 3 Parent 2 Parent (am)

Playgroup (am & pm)

October 6 Assisted Prep—New DSs (am & pm)

October 7 Assisted Prep—New DSs (am & pm)

October 10 *Thanksgiving Day—Program closed*

October 12 Parent 2 Parent (evening)

October 17 Parent 2 Parent (am)

Playgroup (am & pm)

October 21 ***CPI Wine Tasting Fundraiser (pm)***

October 24 **Annual General Mtg (6:15—9:00 pm)**

October 25 Community Learning Workshops (Option)

October 26 Community Learning Workshops (Core)

October 31 ***Fall Festival (am & pm)***

Creative Corner—Discover

The first few weeks of September are such an exciting time as you get to know the child that you are working with. You will be learning about your child (and he/she will be learning about you) through the activities, outings, and interactions that take place. Here are just a few ideas to encourage a sense of discovery as you play and learn together.

Play dough - smell it, poke it, squish it. Make balls and roll them back and forth, stack them as high as you can, squish them to your nose. Make a worm and wriggle it, wear it as a bracelet, wrap it around your finger.



Books - spend time looking at your child's current favorites. Put a different spin on how it's read by labeling different things in the book, singing throughout the book (e.g. if the book has a duck on the page, pause and sing "5 Little Ducks"), making sound effects, etc.



Movement - copy your child as he rolls, crawls, or claps his hands. Does he love crawling? Arch your body to make a 'tunnel' for him to crawl through. Does he love drumming with his hands? Drum a beat on a variety of objects to discover different sounds. Does he love to run? Play tag in the back yard; take turns being it, and let the child choose something fun that happens when you are each 'caught' (e.g. tickles, airplane ride, etc.)



Art - Experiment with a variety of art materials: crayons, chalk, paint, pastels, etc., to see their effects on paper. Blow watery paint across paper with a straw. Draw an image with crayons and then paint water color over top—what happens to the crayon?



Bubbles!—while the weather is still sunny and warm, have fun blowing bubbles outside. Count how many you can make, pop them with fingers, toes, knees... Use different objects to blow bubbles of different sizes (e.g. straws, funnels, etc.). Enjoy this homemade bubble recipe!



- 1 c warm water
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ c dishwashing liquid
 - 4 tbsp glycerin (at most grocery stores)
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp sugar
- Mix together in a large bowl.



*I've learned that people will forget
what you said,
People will forget what you did,
But people will never forget how
you made them feel.*

Maya Angelou



Parents supporting Parents...

Definition of Support:

- * Something that serves as a foundation; to carry the weight of.
- * To undergo or endure; especially with patience or submission.
- * To give aid or encouragement; to give approval to.
- * To give strength to.
- * The act or instance of supporting or being supported.



Support has many definitions and many benefits to us as individuals. Having a child with a disability can sometimes be isolating and support can be difficult to find. The GRIT program wants to help connect parents together so they can support each other during their family's journey.

Below is a list of benefits to attending Parent 2 Parent Support Group at GRIT.



This list was made up by parents who attended last year.

- * Learn new resources from each other
- * Feel like you are not alone in what you are experiencing (fear, grief, anger, guilt)
- * When you talk about issues, you know others know where you are coming from because they have experienced similar issues
- * Have a sense of belonging and feel understood
- * Make new friendships
- * Learn to respect other's differences and points of view
- * Have fun together
- * Help each other out through difficult times

PLEASE COME AND JOIN US!!!
PARENT 2 PARENT GROUP
SEPTEMBER 12, 2011
9:30AM—11:30 AM
(DURING PLAYGROUP)

Learning Opportunities for Parents

GRIT will reimburse parent's registration fees for a variety of learning experiences. For more information call Sherri.



Open
your arms
and welcome
the joy
of today!



Family Living Program 2011 Schedule

Catholic Social Services' Family Living Program is now offering the workshop schedule for 2011. If you would like more information or to register, please contact Kari Boulton, FLP Coordinator, at 780-420-6081.



Setting Healthy Boundaries

\$250/person

September 20 – November 22, 2011 (ten Tuesday evenings) from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm at Catholic Social Services East Office (8212 – 118 Avenue in the Genesis Room).

A boundary or limit is how far we can go with comfort. Having an awareness of boundaries and limits will help you to discover who you are. Without boundaries, it would be hard to define yourself or have a healthy self. One of the keys to your boundaries is knowing your inner life (includes your beliefs, thoughts, feelings, values, decisions, choices and experiences). In our day-to-day experiences, we have many opportunities for growth. That growth includes the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual realms of your awareness, experience and consciousness. Awareness of our boundaries help us in that growth (personally and professionally). This program is designed to help you handle the daily demands of life in a way that protects your time and energy for the things that matter. It can help you to be clearer about what to include and what to leave out, so that you can fill the spaces of your life with the people, activities, and pursuits that are truly yours. Facilitator: Debbie Hart

Couples Communication

\$350/couple

October 4 – December 6, 2011 (ten Tuesday evenings) from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm at Catholic Social Services East Office (8212 – 118 Avenue in Room 035).

Do you want to reconnect with your partner? Learn practical and effective communication techniques to make your relationship the formula for success. Explore your differences and learn to support each others' dreams and goals. Find out if you are truly "listening" to "hear" what your partner has to say and vice versa. Lots of issues and areas of concern are covered in this ten week program including strengthening and/or developing new skills in communicating, different communication styles, problem solving, negotiating, intimacy and learning how to "turn toward each other instead of away". Included is "The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work" by John M. Gottman for each of you to start reconnecting with your partner! Facilitator: Irene Mitrowka

How to Register: Call 780-420-6081 to register or you can drop by the office (8212 – 118 Avenue) and speak with the Family Living Program Coordinator. We accept Visa, MasterCard, Debit Card, Money Order, Cheque and / or Post-Dated Cheques or Cash.



Date & Time

Friday, September 23 - 6pm until
Sunday, September 25 - 11am

Location

Star of the North Retreat Centre

Centrally located in St. Albert
www.starofthenorth.ca

Cost (2 choices)

1. \$200* (Both nights)
 2. \$135* (Saturday night only)
- *Bursaries available upon request

RSVP

780-454-0701 ext. 221
registration@gatewayassociation.ca

Register ASAP—Space is limited
Registration Deadline: Sept. 16

Your weekend will include:

- Massages* and Esthetics*
- Drum Circle
- Essential oils class
- St. Albert Farmers Market & River valley walks
- Reiki
- Yoga
- Meditation
- Aromatherapy Baths
- Numerology and nail design*
- Meals
- Private rooms (shared washrooms)

*at an added cost



Gateway
Association

**Sunday,
Sept. 18th**
2011

2:30 pm
Seating begins at 2:00

Rachel Coleman
Live! in Edmonton!
at Royal Alberta Museum

Royal Alberta Museum
12845 102 Avenue Northwest
Edmonton, AB T5N 0M6, Canada

For Information Call:
1-800-838-3006

benefitting:
 Signing Time! Foundation

Tickets:
Children \$10
Adult (13+) \$15
Available in advance or at the door.

for tickets and information, go to:
www.signingtimefoundation.org/edmonton

Learning Opportunities for Parents—Cont'd



Workshops for siblings of children with special needs. Join us! These workshops will provide opportunities for brothers and sisters of children with special health, mental health and developmental needs to obtain peer support and education within a recreational context.

Sibshops are lively, pedal-to-the-metal celebrations of the many contributions made by brothers and sisters of kids with special needs. Sibshops acknowledge that being the brother or sister of a person with special needs is for some a good thing, others a not-so-good thing and for many somewhere in between. They reflect a belief that brothers and sisters have much to offer one another, if they are given the chance.

Sibshops are not therapy, group or otherwise, although their effect may be therapeutic for some children. Sibshops acknowledge that most brothers and sisters of people with special needs, like their parents, are doing well, despite the challenges of an illness or disability.

9 - 12 year olds

Saturday, September 11, 10:00am - 2:00pm Fort Edmonton Park
\$30.00

6 - 8 year olds

Saturday, October 16, 1:00pm - 3:30pm John Walter Museum
\$25.00

13 - 15 year olds

Tuesday, November 20, 10:00am - 2:00pm Muttart Conservator
\$30.00

For more info, contact Debi Currie at 780-496-7318
or debi.currie@edmonton.ca

To register call 311 or visit www.edmonton.ca/ereg

Inclusive Programming for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

A workshop with SHEILA WAGNER Friday, October 21st, 2011

This presentation will examine the process of behavior analysis for teachers who have students with autism spectrum in general education classes. This setting poses challenges that must be considered in light of this disability, zero tolerance and student needs. It will identify the key components for analyzing the inappropriate behaviors and identify ways to improve student performance, increasing the likelihood for inclusion.

This session will examine the behavior plans that have proven successful for students with ASD in inclusive classrooms from elementary to high school.

Register today at www.autismedmonton.com or call 1-877-9AUTISM

You Are Invited



Conversation Café:

What Do Siblings Want?

Thursday, October 5, 2011, 5-700 pm

WHERE: Gateway Association

ADDRESS: 105, 18304 105 Ave

Gateway wants to hear from YOU! What supports and resources if any would be beneficial to you in your role as a sibling to someone with a developmental disability?

Supper Provided

Please RSVP by *September 29* to
Sarah At 780 454 0701 x 221
sarah@gatewayassociation.ca

LIFE WITHOUT LIMITS

TOGETHER, WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Children's Art Program

In Partnership with the Centre for Autism Services Alberta

This six week Children's Art Program is open to children of all disabilities. The adapted program is designed to enhance children's physical, mental and emotional well-being through the exploration of various art forms such as painting, clay and much more!

Dates: Sept. 11, 2011—Oct. 23, 2011

Ages: 6-12 years

Times: Sundays 1:00pm to 2:00 pm

Place: Art Gallery of Alberta

Fee: \$55/6 week session

For more information or to register contact Kim Henye:
kim@cpalberta.com, ph: 780.477.8030

The GRIT Program
14930 - 114 Avenue
Edmonton, AB

Phone: 780-454-9910
Fax: 780-455-1806
E-mail: gritprog@gritprogram.com
Website: www.gritprogram.com



The GRIT Program's Mission Statement

To provide a family centered, early education program which will assist the child with special needs to be fully included in family life and community.

To provide the information and support necessary for the successful transition to and full inclusion in a community school.

To promote public education and public awareness in support of inclusion and inclusive communities.

inspiring inclusive futures

Do you know how far your donations dollars to GRIT can go?

For example.....If you donate \$500 to GRIT, you receive a \$200 tax credit. That means your \$500 donation only costs you \$300! And GRIT can take that \$500 donation and have it matched by the Alberta Government (Culture & Community Spirit) to make \$1000!..... **In other words we turn \$300 into \$1000!!**

Please keep GRIT in mind for your 2011 tax donations by:

- ◆ designating GRIT as your charity of choice through United Way payroll deduction
- ◆ donating online at CanadaHelps.org* For more information, see our website at www.gritprogram.com
- ◆ monthly donating on your Visa or MasterCard
- ◆ GRIT Staff payroll deductions



For more information please call either Sue, ext. 202 or Heather, ext. 200.

All donations to GRIT support the children's growth and learning, and enhancement of GRIT's service to families. Your support is greatly appreciated!

