

August 14, 2014

Dear friends,

First, how are you all doing? I miss you all and still enjoy great memories of you from the REP! I am doing well, everything considered, after the brain tumor surgery. Wow, I never would have expected that in a million years.

I am writing to ask you to consider donating to International Students Inc (ISI) this year as part of Intel's United Way campaign. The reason I am asking you to consider this is a) ISI is a worthy non-profit devoted to helping international students and scholars be successful while they are here in the US. They have been successful at it for over 60 years and then b) I work for ISI now doing much of what I did in the REP- I mentor, teach and provide necessary resources and materials to the students. Most of them are PhD students in the engineering field. They are very intelligent and hard-working. However, they are under lots of pressure to succeed and it is difficult adjusting to the US while here on just on a one-year visa.

There is a place on the form where you can designate the non-profit of your choice (*input: ISI/Erv Thomas*) and the 501C3 # (*input: 53-021-4853*).

I won't say much more about my role as most of you know me and what I am all about. I have worked with students my entire life. When I was in recovery from my surgery I was sort of sad. I saw how weak I had become, I was now blind in my left eye and I was still unsure what damage was done to my brain. I cried out to God and said, 'what good is my life now?' In my head I heard this, 'you can still do good. You don't realize yet how much value there is in just doing that.' Working with international students allows me to still do what I love, to 'do good' and see the value in that.

Here are the ISI websites if you want to know more about the organization: www.isionline.org and www.internationalstudents.org. There is also a pretty useful iStudents App for your smartphone to share. However, I would rather take you out to lunch (In-n-Out burger ;) and tell you about it. I am back in Folsom now, but still get down to the bay to check-up on my boat. I can meet in either place pretty easily.

As always, I still wish you guys all the best and that you continue to find your 'fit' in your career and in life. I would also encourage you to continue to 'do good.' There is more value in that than we realize.

- Erv

micah 6:8