

NEWS FROM YOUR ELKS MAJOR PROJECT . . .

A letter to Tim Martin, Executive Director:

Dear Tim,

I would like to express my appreciation for the special service made possible for our daughter through the California-Hawaii Elks Major Project. We live in a rural setting about 45 minutes from Fresno. Although my husband has excellent insurance coverage through his job as a public school teacher, occupational therapy is not provided for our daughter with cerebral palsy. I have no insurance through my employment because I am a stay-at-home mom caring for our 10 children (ages 11 months - 18 years). Without CHEMPI I would be commuting to Fresno for OT services financed on a sporadic schedule through mountains of red-tape through California Children's Services (CCS). The reality of working with CCS (who are trying hard) is that approval for OT can be delayed for 6 - 12 months.

Meanwhile our beautiful ninth child, Camille is struggling with the most basic developmental milestones. Cami and her twin sister, Natalie, turned 3 in July. Although Natalie is a very normal preschooler Camille is still working on learning to sit up without assistance and on creeping (not crawling) across the floor. We believe that the potential is there but we need assistance to effectively assist Cami in progressing further.

Judy Linda, the CHEMPI occupational therapist for our area, has provided the leadership and support responsible for many of Cami's gains in recent months. Judy is a cheerful, informative and encouraging professional. She focuses on diagnosing specific problem areas and then creatively approaches Cami's challenges from many angles. Every therapy session we spend with Judy is an education enabling us as parents to continue working with our child at home. Cami loves Judy and looks forward to their sessions together.

Since we began seeing Judy in late February we have seen a major decrease in Cami's drooling, much less muscle tightness in her legs and right hand, improved stamina for large motor activity such as sitting or creeping, and a more normal appearance to her formerly flared rib cage -- to name only a few specifics!

Thank you so much for sponsoring occupational therapy for rural families. The difference is truly life-changing.



A coin a day so they can walk, talk, see and play!