

To The Autism Grant:

I am writing to thank all those associates who have so willingly given of their time, money, and resources to create The Autism Grant. With the growing number of families touched by autism, this grant is critical as we are faced with the huge financial burden involved with providing our children with the education that they need. What an honor and privilege it is to be selected as the first recipient of this initiative!

When our son Ben was diagnosed with high-functioning autism at the age of 2 ½, his developmental pediatrician emphasized the need for intensive early intervention, more specifically, ABA based therapies. Wanting to provide Ben with the best chances for success, we began to research and visit private schools within the Richmond area, only to become disheartened and overwhelmed with the enormous tuition costs involved. Basically, we were charged with the task of figuring-out how to immediately fund the equivalent of a college tuition, a cost that most families save for over many years.

With the help of generous family members, along with taking out a home equity loan, we have been able to provide Ben with quality, ABA based therapy through the Dominion School for Autism over the past 2 years. Ben is now nearing the end of his work at Dominion and due to the intensive intervention that he received, is able to enter Kindergarten in a typical classroom this fall.

I often say that it has truly taken a “village” to help Ben reach this point in his journey with autism. Included in that village, are those that have so lovingly lightened our financial burden along the way. We extend a heartfelt thank you for being a part of our village!

Sincerely,

Kristin and Stu
(Ben's Parents)