

Source: *Becky Winters, Education Developer for Novadebt*

Community Impact



Novadebt employees continue their focus on fundraising efforts for a first ever sibling reunion, in conjunction with the Child Protection Center at Jersey Shore University Hospital in Neptune, New Jersey. We are excited to share that we have already exceeded the midpoint of our fundraising goal and that the date of June 9, 2007 has been set to hold this reunion at Camp Arrowhead in Manalapan, New Jersey. From 10:00 a.m.– 2 p.m., siblings who have been separated into foster care will be reunited for a fun filled day of games, swimming and good food. But most of all, it gives them a welcomed opportunity to reconnect with their sisters and brothers, whom they might not see very frequently. Bake sales have been held every Monday, while “dress down” days are every Wednesday. These ongoing efforts will continue through May. During the month of April, our Outreach group will also hold a spring plant sale and a holiday candy sale, to add some different fun filled events to our fundraiser schedule.

April also brings excitement for our employee participation in the United Way of Monmouth County *Baby Bundle Wishes Drive*. In 2006, United Way of Monmouth County, along with 60 corporate partners, collected over 5,100 baby items for low-income mothers-to-be in Monmouth County. Novadebt joins other local corporations and organizations to participate in the program by organizing a drive to collect new baby items. Items such as baby clothes, food, monitors, bibs, bottles, rattles, teething rings, toys, diapers and formula are purchased by our employees for donation. After the items are collected, United Way staff picks up and delivers everything to a central location for counting and sorting and then they are grouped for distribution. Representative agencies who receive the donated items are: 180-Turning Lives Around, Association for Retarded Citizens, Epiphany House, Epilepsy Foundation, Hispanic Affairs, Manna House, Madonna House, Red Bank Borough Public Schools- Great Start Program, The Regional Perinatal Consortium, Samaritan Center and VNA of Central Jersey. Since Novadebt already works with a number of these agencies, we see first hand the benefit of our efforts and know the need that exists.



What Our Clients Are Saying...



“Your organization has been absolutely wonderful. I don’t know what I would have done to resolve my financial issue without your assistance. My debt is now paid in full and I am eternally grateful for everything you have done for me. I have never had any negative experience in dealing with Novadebt. For the first time in twenty years, I am TOTALLY debt free. Thank you all so very very much.”

KC, South Carolina

Spring Gardening Tips for April

Source: www.dotcomwomen.com



New shrubs and trees should be planted in April when the weather is warmer and there is more rainfall. Be sure these are watered frequently and that peat moss or wood chips are added to retain the moisture. After the spring frosts are over, it's time to plant annual flow-

ers, either from fresh seeds, new bedding plants, or cuttings. A slow release fertilizer should be mixed in the potting soil or compost for new plants; however, fertilizing new seeds is not necessary. Perennial plants usually will begin to show new growth at this time. In general, spring is a

favorable time of year for gardening, but in regions where late frosts occur, it is advisable to cover the tender plants.



Getting The Most Out of Your Tax Refund

Source: *American Center for Credit Education—ACCE*

If you're among the 136 million tax payers anticipating a refund this year, you may already know how you plan to spend the money, but before you do, here's some food for thought.

First Things First: While anticipating a chunk of cash (the average refund is close to \$2500, according to the IRS) can be exhilarating, tax experts will tell you that you are essentially allowing the government interest-free use of your hard-earned money. If you are expecting a sizeable refund, visit www.irs.gov and use the tax calculator to ensure that you do not have too much income tax withheld from your pay in 2007. Making the proper adjustments to your withholding can help you gain more flexibility in your monthly budget. Let's say, for example, that you're slated to get a \$2500 refund this year. What would another \$208 a month do for your household budget? Could you use this amount to help you build an emergency fund, pay down high-interest debt, create a cushion in your checking account, or save for a short-term goal? The extra cash in your budget could mean that you wouldn't have to resort to using a credit card when the car needs new tires or when the refrigerator conks out. The same money you're lending to the government with no reward could also be earning interest in a money market or savings account.

Consider the Split: Rethinking your withholding, of course, is something you do in anticipation of the next tax year. You can take advantage of an option right now to help you make the best use of your refund. The IRS unveiled a plan this year that allows taxpayers to split their refund among three accounts held at different financial institutions. This means that you can direct all or a portion of your refund into your retirement account, or you can divide the cash between your checking account, savings account, and your retirement account. Extra cash that ends up in a checking account is more likely to be spent on incidentals. With the split option, you can earmark money to help you meet your goals.

Think About How the Cash Can Improve Your Life: If you know a tax refund is on its way, or will be soon, you may be thinking—new furniture for the living room, a plasma screen television, a new digital camera, or a tropical getaway. Certainly, a refund can be useful in helping you get something you might enjoy, but it's wise to think before you spend. Your refund could help to reduce stress in your life and bring you greater sense of financial stability. Could you use your refund to pay down debt? Are you strapped with credit card interest rates of 12%, 16%, or 21%? How would it feel to get out from all or part of your debt? Could you use the money to jumpstart the retirement or college savings that you have been meaning to set up? How about sending extra cash toward your mortgage payment to help you retire this debt sooner? Or perhaps you could boost your basic savings for greater piece of mind when life's inevitable mishaps come your way.

