



**Challenger Learning Center of Alaska Annual Fundraiser
September 19, 2015
A Letter from Catherine Stevens**

Congratulations for another year of a successful Geocache Rally! Thank you Marnie, the board, and staff for hosting this event, and to the sponsors for their generous support. I am grateful for opportunity to serve as an honorary board member of this extraordinary organization, and am sorry I am unable to join you in person as you celebrate 15 years of inspiring the next generation of Alaskan leaders in STEM education. Having just returned from China as a guest of the government for their 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, I was witness to a startling display of advanced sophisticated technology, including military hardware. This reinforces once again the critical mission of the Challenger Learning Center.

In 2000, Ted and I were honored to be a part of the dedication of the Challenger Learning Center of Alaska. Ted firmly believed that for our state to compete both nationally and internationally, Alaska's educational system must provide the resources and tools necessary for success, and to incorporate elements of innovation—to teach the future leaders of this great state to think outside the box when faced with difficult challenges, and “equip them to use the technologies of tomorrow.”

That is why he was so committed to the Challenger Learning Center of Alaska. He would be proud of what you have accomplished here, and the ways in which you continue to evolve and grow. Imagine the wonder of an Alaskan student who has the chance to fully understand how science, technology, engineering and math apply to their daily lives, and apply the lessons learned in furthering their studies.

Most importantly is your dedication to ensuring all Alaskan students, regardless of their financial situation, are able to participate in your programs. As an organization serving children from all corners of the state, you are helping inspire future generations of Alaskan leaders by expanding their horizons and enabling them to dream bigger than they ever imagined.

As Ted said, “[s]upport of the Challenger Learning Center is an investment in the future of our youth.” Let us work together to ensure the continued success of this important institution, and guarantee that future generations of Alaskans are inspired to explore the universe in our own backyard.