



*Building a Legacy of Greatness!*

For the parents, students, staff, and community of Clay Middle School

# CLAY NATION NEWS

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Clay Nation,

First and foremost, I hope all of you had a restful and relaxing holiday break. The last time you received our newsletter, we were approaching the holiday season and reflecting back on 2020. 2020 was a year that most certainly brought several challenges for our community, state, country and world when approximately a year ago COVID 19 was first discovered. I would like to take a moment to begin my newsletter by acknowledging all of our front-line workers that have worked tirelessly through this global pandemic. As I talk about the front-line workers in our health care fields, I also want to recognize our teachers, school nurse, student services team (guidance counselors, social workers), office and support staff, cafeteria staff and custodial staff as all of these people are also on the front lines each and every day keeping our schools open and helping to nurture and educate our students amid this global pandemic. **THESE PEOPLE ARE ALL HEROES AND I WANT TO THANK THEM FOR ALL THEY DO.**

**“HEROES ARE ORDINARY  
PEOPLE WHO MAKE  
THEMSELVES EXTRAORDINARY.”**

I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge the loss 2020 brought to so many of our families in our community and around the world due to COVID. Please know that Clay Middle School is there for you as parents and families during these difficult times.

As 2021 is well underway with almost one month down, I am optimistic that this year will bring a renewed spirit as we see advancements in medicine and vaccines that will enable us to defeat COVID and return to some sort of normalcy. As principal of Clay Middle School, I am reminded daily of the power of “OUR”. As I mentioned 2020 was a very challenging year and we could not have gotten through it without OUR staff and students, OUR parents and families, and our great school community

*...continued on the next page*

### ADMINISTRATION

Todd Crosby, Principal  
Brooke Cole, Assistant Principal  
Mark Smith, Assistant Principal  
John Corcoran, Athletic/Activities Director

BUILDING A LEGACY OF GREATNESS  
FINDING THE POWER OF OUR...  
OUR STUDENTS  
OUR STAFF  
OUR COMMUNITY



WE WANT TO BE THE BEST  
AT GETTING BETTER

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE *continues...*

(Clay Nation) so for that I thank all of you for truly creating a wonderful partnership between our community and school. It has taken all of us to get through this.

### Three examples of TEAMWORK between the school and families:

1. A new hybrid learning model / schedule was created and because of you as supportive parents assisting your children on their "at home days", we have been able to carry on with in person learning every other day.
2. Canvas (our learning management system) has become our main source of communication, lesson planning and organization.
3. Zoom has become our tool for communicating to our students. This has also become our way for collaboration to occur from teacher to student and in small group settings and even breakout rooms that enable to work virtually together.

2020 also brought an even more heightened awareness of issues focused around the mental health of both our students and staff. As we continue to work through this pandemic, please know that your child's social and emotional well being continues to be one of our top priorities. I encourage you as a parent to contact the school if your child is struggling so we can work together to help find support. We are fortunate to live in Carmel, a community that values education and prides itself on having great schools.

Since returning back to school on January 4th, our faculty, staff and students have been hard at work carrying on goals that we started at the beginning of the school year in August, but also setting some new year's resolutions and goals for 2021. I would like to welcome any new families to Clay that moved in at semester and welcome back any of our students that were all virtual first semester that may have come back for in person learning. We are so happy to have your family at Clay and please do not hesitate to contact our Clay PTO for our new family / parent group. Our Clay PTO is such a great resource as you are getting acclimated to the Carmel community and Clay Middle School. For more information please go to: <https://www.ccs.k12.in.us/pto-clm/new-families/>.

As we left for holiday break we were highlighting so many wonderful things that our students and teachers were doing to pay it forward and help others. Some notable examples of **the Clay Way** being lived out were:

- Hamilton County Coat Drive
- Team Avengers Make-A-Wish Campaign
- Adopt a Family Holiday Drive
- Carmel Clay Schools Green Team Recycled Lights Donation Drive.

**THANK YOU, TEACHERS FOR EMPOWERING OUR STUDENTS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD BEYOND CLAY!**

Perhaps what I am most proud as the principal of Clay Middle School is that we are developing the whole student, both in and out of the classroom. As parents you should feel very proud of the children you are raising. It is through these examples that our students are learning to give back to others and look at their education as a life experience. The impact they are having on others at an early age is something that cannot be underestimated or under appreciated. So, thank you for all you do to support Clay and help to ensure that your child is ready to learn each and every day and give their very best knowing that it will be recognized. We truly appreciate it and as a school we value your partnership.

January has been a busy month thus far with our 5th and 8th transition programs which have been well underway. As redistricting decisions have been made, please be aware that the first letter in a series of school messengers going out to all 5th grade parents across our district went out January 25th and the next school messengers will be on February 1st and February 8th. Due to COVID we have had to cancel our 5th grade activity nights that we traditionally have where students come over and enjoy an evening at Clay by meeting Clay staff and students, eating pizza, getting a t-shirt, taking building tours, joining in cheers with our Clay cheerleaders and attending a sporting event where they get to enjoy our pep band playing, along with some great concessions. We are hopeful that come this spring we can revisit our plan to have our annual Spring Open House for our 5th grade student and their families.

### **WE ARE SO EXCITED TO WELCOME ALL OF OUR 5TH GRADERS TO THE CLAY NATION!**

On the other hand, as we are planning for the arrival this fall of our 5th graders and their parents, we are also in the process of working with Carmel High School to have high school transition events. Once February starts, our 8th graders will also begin the process of high school scheduling and essentially begin looking ahead to their four-year experience in high school. **With one semester left in middle school we could not be prouder of our 8th graders and the leadership they have shown during this unusual. Finish Strong!!**

I would also like to take a moment to say thank you to all of our winter sports coaches who have given of their time to coach, mentor and lead our students in model manner. We appreciate your leadership and your positive approach towards sportsmanship, effort and teamwork.

I challenge all Clay Trojans to inspire others to greatness and together we will take Clay Middle School to even greater heights. As principal, I believe it is my position to help provide vision, leadership, oversight, safety and the best instruction to every student that attends Clay Middle School. I truly realize success cannot be accomplished without an active school community to continue to take Clay Middle School in the direction of continuous success and excellence. I am happy to announce that the Clay Nation is alive and well.

Being the best at getting better is not easy work, but with your help as parents and the hard work of our teachers and students we are excited about what 2021 will bring for the Clay Nation.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO AN EXCITING 2021 AHEAD!**

Reminder to follow us on Twitter @ClayTrojans

#ClayGreatness **GO TROJANS!**

Sincerely,

Todd A. Crosby, Principal



## IMPORTANT DATES

### January

January 11-15 was CCS School Board Recognition - *Thank you to our CCS School Board for all they do to support our school district.*

January 22.....PTO General Meeting

January 26.....Tuesday Treats

### February

February 15.....No School

February 19.....PTO Meeting

February 24.....Late Start

### March

March 8-12 ..... Food Service Week (*Thank you to our Clay cafeteria staff!*)

March 10 .....Late Start

March 12 .....3rd Quarter Ends

March 18 .....Grades Due

March 19 .....PTO Meeting

March 24 .....Late Start

### Performing Arts Dates – ISSMA

February 6 .....ISSMA State Solo & Ensemble Contest

February 20.....ISSMA State Solo & Ensemble Contest

February 27.....ISSMA State Solo & Ensemble Contest

March 18 .....ISSMA - Bands/Choirs/Orchestras

March 19 .....ISSMA - Bands/Choirs/Orchestras

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FINDING THE POWER OF **OUR** OUR STUDENTS... OUR PARENTS... AND OUR COMMUNITY

## MATHCOUNTS

First of all, **CONGRATULATIONS** to the following students for making the

### 2020-2021 MathCounts Competition Team:

Jennifer H., Michael Q., Alex S.,  
Grant M., Grace Z., William Z., Vardaan G.,  
Eddy Z., Eric H., Ranie Y., Eesha S., Alex C.,  
Ellen R., Jacky C., Vibhi C.

We just had a practice chapter competition – **January 22. The official Chapter competition will be February 5 during core plus from 2:00-3:30 pm in the old 6A lab (room 623)** directly across from Mrs. Grace's room. Those students that are **not in school that day** (Trojan cohort and virtual) will need to be dropped off at the main entrance and check in with the office. Parents of **Trojan and virtual students**, will need to **pick students up after the competition at 3:30 in the small parking lot behind the school by the tennis courts.**

Students will need mask, paper, pencil/eraser, calculator, and a fully charged computer (and charger just in case).

### Summary of Dates

January 27.. Zoom meeting – Canvas Module 4:30-5:30

February 3.. Zoom meeting – Canvas Module 4:30-5:30

February 5.. Official Chapter Competition - 2:00- 3:30  
at Clay

*\*If students qualify for the Chapter Invitational, practices and additional information will be sent.*

Parents thank you for helping to assist us in making this competition possible. If you have any questions please contact Mrs. Grace (mgrace@ccs.k12.in.us) or Mrs. Arnold (sarnold@ccs.k12.in.us).

## FREE WAYS TO BENEFIT CLAY



Rewards card) directly to Clay Middle.

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**School code is #RK877 for 'Clay Middle School'.** Sign up now!



Clay Middle participates in AmazonSmile donation program! A portion of your purchases will be directly donated back to Clay Middle at no cost to you. Please click on the unique link below to be taken to smile.amazon.com where you will be automatically asked to support "Clay Middle School PTO". Our unique charity link is: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7374823/>.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Please forward this email to other parents you know and encourage them to sign up for PTO email updates at <https://goo.gl/FQ5ue6/>.

Also, follow us on Facebook at 'Clay Middle PTO' and on Twitter at '@ClayPTO'.

More information about Clay Middle PTO can be found at: <http://www1.ccs.k12.in.us/clm/pto/>.



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## THE GREEN SCENE

The Team Atlas Green Team would like to thank all who brought in their old holiday lights for our recycling drive. Lights were delivered to the high school and collected by Technology Recyclers. Members of the Community Green Team were recently invited to tour the facility to see just how they would recycle our lights.

Thank you for making this a successful community event.



## STUDENT SERVICES: RECOGNITION WEEK

February 1st-5th is National School Counseling Week, which is the same week that CCS acknowledges School Social Workers and School Counselors.



## STUDENT SERVICES STAFF

**Kaleesha Thompson**  
Administrative Assistant

**Michelle Janson**  
Counselor - All 6th Grade  
8th Grade Team 8-2

**Gina Potter, MSW, LSW**  
Social Worker - All 6th Grade  
8th Grade Team 8-2

**Kelli Grogg**  
School Psychologist

**Erin Naas**  
Counselor - All 7th Grade  
8th Grade Teams 8-1 & 8-3

**Britney Coats, MSW, LCSW**  
Social Worker - All 7th Grade  
8th Grade Teams 8-1 & 8-3



## MEDIA CENTER

**Volunteer Opportunity!** The Clay Media Center still has volunteer openings! If you're interested please contact Angela Frazier at [claymediavolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:claymediavolunteer@gmail.com).

## 21ST CENTURY SCHOLARS

21st Century Scholars is a scholarship which provides eligible students up to four years of undergraduate tuition at any participating public college or university in Indiana. If you attend a private college, the state will award an amount comparable to that of a four-year public college. To enroll your a scholar or learn more visit <http://scholars.in.gov/parents/enroll/>.



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**Register Now For High School Indoor Soccer Leagues!**

- **Winter Session 1** runs from November to January
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## FROM THE CAFETERIA

Some great news to start the new year:

THE USDA WAIVER ALLOWING **ALL** STUDENTS **FREE** MEALS HAS BEEN EXTENDED UNTIL THE END OF THIS SCHOOL YEAR! Please have your student take advantage of this wonderful opportunity! Please note that in order for a Breakfast or Lunch meal to be free of charge, it must be **COMPLETE** meaning a fruit choice with Breakfast and a fruit and/or 1 – 2 vegetables as a choice with Lunch. A complete meal has always been a great value and a great nutritional choice. PLEASE ENCOURAGE YOUR STUDENT TO GET A COMPLETE MEAL EVERY DAY!!

Also, we are asking that **ALL PAYMENTS BE DONE THROUGH EZSchoolPay.com** whenever possible. We are doing our best to protect our students and staff by avoiding any unnecessary contact. We appreciate your cooperation!

Lastly, the Clay Cafeteria Staff remains absolutely determined to provide the safest meal service possible. Masks, hand-washing and cleaning high - contact surfaces multiple times daily, encouraging our students to sanitize their hands and social distance while they're waiting in line... these are all practiced on a daily basis. We are doing our part to stay the course!

As always, don't hesitate to call or email with any questions or concerns!

Amy Glover, *Café Manager*  
(317)844-7251 x6755  
aglover@ccs.k12.in.us

DUE TO A USDA NATIONAL SCHOOL MEAL WAIVER,

### \*FREE\* BREAKFAST & LUNCH IS AVAILABLE TO ALL STUDENTS

Meals need to meet existing USDA guidelines. A lunch meal includes an entree, fruit, vegetable and milk. The meal **MUST** include at least 3 food components and 1 **MUST** be a fruit or vegetable choice.

**STUDENTS CAN RECEIVE  
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**PTO**

**Welcome to 2021, Clay Trojans!** Though 2020 looked very different from other school years, we made the best of it. Thank you to our amazing staff that works so hard to keep our students safe and healthy. In addition to our normal Tuesday Treats, PTO helped pamper the teachers with 12 Days of Mindfulness and other mini events throughout the Fall. Thank you to all who made such generous donations such as gift cards, food, flowers, coffee, donuts, or other accessories that let us shower our teachers with appreciation!!! Our students are amazing too - with our fundraiser being so successful, several students were able to give Mr. Crosby a "Pie in the Face". He was such a good sport, and the students got some great laughs! Huge thank you to Karen Wolf and Lisa Pellegrino for leading this. If you drove past Clay recently, you may have seen the Welcome Back Clay Trojans sign that was donated by the business of one of our Clay Parents! We also welcomed the teachers back with The Donut Truck - thanks to Stephanie Zircher for coordinating that one! The Clay PTO is grateful for the support of the staff and we look forward to some more fun surprises as we round out 2020-2021!

**7TH & 8TH GRADE SCHEDULING**

Students will begin the process of making course requests for the 2021-2022 school-year at the start of February. Counselors will be uploading detailed scheduling information and instructions via Canvas. We will share information during Core+ but hybrid and virtual students and parents are encouraged to review and follow steps in the **7th and 8th grade scheduling modules** inside of the Student Services Canvas page on their own time.

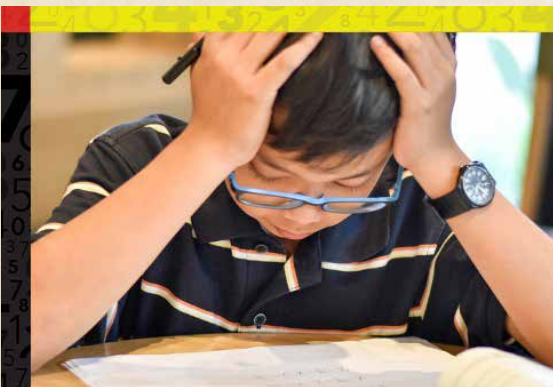
Course requests will be made online through the PowerSchool Class Registration System. PowerSchool can be accessed through any CCS webpage using a student or parent PowerSchool account. The class registration system will be open between February 1, 2021 - March 1, 2021.

Again, we ask parents to login with their student to discuss and review course requests. Please visit our **Student Services Canvas Page** starting on Feb. 1 for details including step by step instructions.

Final course selections will be due by March 1, 2021. After this date, requests for changes may be emailed to the counselor listed below.

- **Current 6th grade students:** Mrs. Naas, enaas@ccs.k12.in.us
- **Current 7th grade students:** Mrs. Janson, mjanson@ccs.k12.in.us

You may visit our **2020-21 Middle School Program of Studies** for all middle school course descriptions.



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## HIGH SCHOOL

If your 8th grade student is planning to attend a school other than Carmel High School for their 2021-2022 freshman school year, please go to Clay's Student Services page **Current Students**, fill out the withdrawal form and return to our office at your earliest convenience.

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## ✓ Attendance

Please remember to call the school's Main Office (317-844-7251) or our Attendance Line (317-571-4450) for **ALL** attendance issues before 8:30am on the day of the occurrence:

### Full Day Absences

### Late Arrivals

If you are picking up your child early, please call the Main Office (317-844-7251) when you are on your way and we will call for your child to meet you in the office for you to sign out.

## Everyone needs a helping hand — so don't be afraid to reach out!

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- In the school
- Through Video in Person appointments
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## SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT: ESSAY & COMPETITION OPPORTUNITIES

### Essay opportunity for 6th grade students

To whom are you most grateful for the freedoms you enjoy? Are your freedoms more important than those of others? Are you ever disturbed when others practice freedoms that hurt or offend you? When? Why? What might cause you to lose your freedom? How would you feel about that?

In March, sixth-grade students will have the opportunity to write **What Freedoms to them**. For the past 39 years, the Sertoma Club of Broad Ripple has sponsored the annual National Heritage Essay Contest for sixth-grade students. "What Freedom Means to Me" is the essay subject topic that students are asked to address in their essays. The Sertoma Club of Broad Ripple was chartered in 1958. It provides financial support to charitable causes in central Indiana and conducts programs to promote the prevention of hearing loss. Students will learn more about the writing competition in their social studies class.



### Essay opportunity for 7th & 8th grade students

Dr. King, Jr had an important belief for all American citizens, and students will have the opportunity to learn about these beliefs, honor him, and earn a monetary prize all at the same time!

Encourage your student to participate in the essay contest offered through their Social Studies teacher. Students were shared a link that offers contest rules, guidelines, and prize information on their Social Studies teachers' Canvas page.

The essay should be based on a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Each school can only submit a total of FIVE essays, so spots are limited. Student entries should be submitted to the student's Social Studies teacher by February 16th and then a committee of Social Studies teachers will choose the best five essays (based on the contest guidelines) to move forward in the contest. Final essays will be submitted by February 28th, online. Seek out your child's Social Studies teacher with questions.



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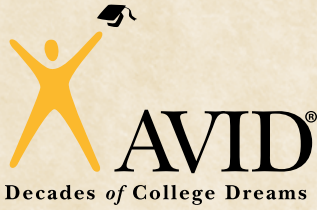
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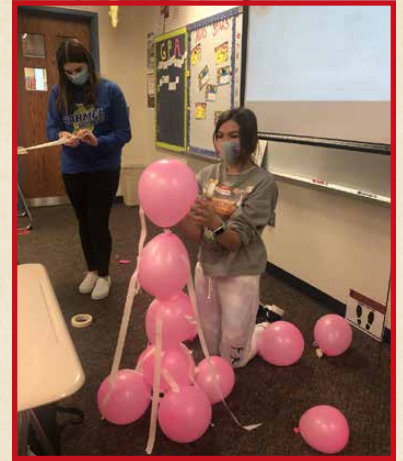
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**AVID**

Seventh grade AVID classes are beginning the college exploration unit this quarter. Over the next several weeks, students will learn terminology associated with colleges and universities. Students will research the different types of colleges and universities and discover which ones best fit their goals and possible career paths. As a culminating activity, students will participate in a virtual college campus tour. The AVID program believes it is never too early to consider your college journey!

AVID classes participate in a team building activity teaching students about the advantages that come with having a strong foundation in everything they do.



## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY BEE

The National Geographic Society has officially placed their Geography Bee on hold for this year. Therefore, there will be no school wide Geography Bee for the 2020-2021 school year. We are looking forward to restating this tradition next year as it has inspired students to take an interest in geography as well as their world. Students will continue to focus on Geography at the classroom level.

## TUESDAY TREATS IS BACK FOR 2021

The teacher and staff fan favorite event is open for January and February - sign up today on this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E49ADAC23A13-tuesday6/>.



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## CLAY ATHLETICS

The Clay Athletics Department would like to say, thank you to the entire Clay community for their continued efforts to keep our sporting teams in action. Clay families, event workers, custodial crew and many more continue to work together to provide a safe environment for our students to participate in the activities they love.

It is hard to believe we are already looking ahead to spring sports. If your son or daughter is interested in playing a spring sport please complete the necessary required forms as well as sign up for their specific sport using the google link below.

### Spring Athletics – Required Forms

Any student interested in participating on a spring sporting team at Clay must have all required forms on file with the main office one week prior to start of their sporting season. Click the link provided for more information on required forms <https://www.ccs.k12.in.us/clm/athletics/required-forms>.

The spring sporting season offers a variety of opportunities for students to get involved with our athletics program. Are you curious when your spring sporting season begins? You can find a full list of sporting opportunities offered at Clay along with their start dates by clicking this link - [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FwG6uasmM8bqGq4fZpK4bErEPbr3ehwh--5Gr4n\\_rpo/edit/](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FwG6uasmM8bqGq4fZpK4bErEPbr3ehwh--5Gr4n_rpo/edit/).

### Spring Athletics – Sign-up

Anyone interested in a spring sport at Clay should complete the appropriate google form linked below:

- **7th & 8th Softball** - <https://forms.gle/whcpXLmSqB8TUKfXA>
- **7th & 8th Baseball** - <https://forms.gle/eNEPxaLXse9fHHNX6>
- **6th, 7th & 8th Boys' & Girls' Track & Field** - <https://forms.gle/JJNpBhPb8hDBmH977>



## SPRING MUSICAL 2021

Our show this year will be Disney's 'The Lion King, Jr.'

**Performance Dates:** April 22, 23, and 24

**Audition Due Date:** Monday, February 1

### [HOW TO AUDITION](#)

#### Cast Rehearsals

Starting Tuesday, February 9, 2021, Students who are selected for the cast will rehearse on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays after-school until 4:45PM in the Clay Auditorium.

*COVID safety measures will be in place for all rehearsals and performances.*

Contact Miranda Susie, Director, with any questions: [msusie@ccs.k12.in.us](mailto:msusie@ccs.k12.in.us).

Contact Patrick Anderson, Assistant Director, with any questions about Stage Crew: [panders1@ccs.k12.in.us](mailto:panders1@ccs.k12.in.us).



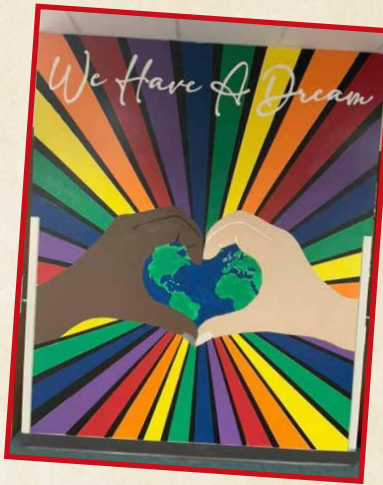
## STAY UP TO DATE

For up to date information, announcements, events and school happenings, please view the Weekly Announcements on our website or at the link below. Also, follow us on twitter @claytrojans.

[Weekly Announcements](#)

# 12 Building a Legacy of Greatness!

FINDING THE POWER OF OUR OUR STUDENTS... OUR PARENTS... AND OUR COMMUNITY



CLAY NATION: WE WANT TO BE THE BEST AT GETTING BETTER