



Photo by Jon Hillenbrand/Evanston Northwestern Healthcare

Support for Schools

ENH has supported the Evanston Township High School (ETHS) Health Center with both financial assistance and medical staffing.



J'mal E. Jones

A lifelong asthma sufferer, 18-year-old J'mal E. Jones knows how terrifying it is every time he cannot breathe. Sometimes his asthma medication is not enough, and he has to seek immediate care from nurses or physicians, so he can breathe again.

When an asthma attack strikes while Jones is at ETHS, the nurse practitioners and doctors in the Health Center can treat him right away with inhalers and medications that usually prevent a trip to Evanston Hospital's Emergency Room (ER).

"The nurses and doctors have helped me tremendously," said Jones, a senior at ETHS. "Instead of missing hours of school, I can visit them and know I'll be OK. And I'm back in my classes quickly."

In fact, Jones has only been rushed to Evanston Hospital's ER only three times from school during the past year. He used to end up there once a month.

"We have saved him countless emergency visits during the past four years," said Kathy Swartwout, APN, Nurse Practitioner and ENH employee at ETHS Health Center. "While J'mal is an incredibly compliant patient and a great kid, he has a type of asthma that's very difficult to stabilize."

Jones is comfortable visiting the ETHS Health Center. "I am always nervous about having an asthma attack," he said. "Not being able to breathe is always scary for me—no matter how often it happens. But I know the nurses at the Health Center will take care of me, and everything will be OK."

Giving to the Community

Jones is not the only student being treated at the ETHS Health Center. Of some 3,000 students, 1,900 are enrolled to use its services. From 2006 to 2007, Health Center staff reported 2,680 visits and cared for 880 students.

The school-based ETHS Health Center is a collaborative effort of ETHS, the Evanston Health Department and Evanston Northwestern Healthcare, providing free or

low cost primary healthcare and psychosocial services to its students. Additionally, the ETHS Health Center receives grant funding from the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Visiting Nurse Association Foundation of Chicago.

In 2007, Evanston Northwestern Healthcare's 2007 contribution of \$378,000 paid for the salaries of the Health Center staff, including doctors, nurse practitioners, a social worker, a public health nurse and a secretary, as well as for absorbing some costs for back-to-school physicals, immunizations, treatments and other healthcare services for students.

An ENH employee at the ETHS Health Center since its doors opened in February 1996, Swartwout pointed out, "By being inside the Evanston High School, we can do so much more for students. We're easily accessible to them. And we can give them comprehensive care, follow up on their treatments more closely and address their healthcare issues immediately." ■

Four Fun Facts about ENH and Community Schools

- Highland Park Hospital in partnership with Highland Park School District 112 analyzes and makes recommendations for the district's food policies.
- Highland Park Hospital's "Project Safety Net" program instructs school personnel at more than 100 schools in Lake and Cook Counties on when, what and how to assess teens at risk for suicide. It covers the risk factors, warning signs and therapeutic approaches.
- Glenbrook Hospital gives motivated high school students from District 214 Medical Academy the opportunity to rotate through 10 hospital departments through one-on-one job shadowing. They even receive high school course credit.
- Evanston Hospital hosts the Evanston/Skokie District 65 Health Challenge Bowl each year. Students visit the Hospital to interact with healthcare professionals and experience real-life health scenarios.