

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

# Touching Lives

Community relations are a benchmark of NorthShore University HealthSystem's overall success and reputation in the communities it serves. Community relations uphold NorthShore's mission "to preserve and improve human life."

By Patricia Bates McGhee

“At NorthShore University HealthSystem (NorthShore), caring for our communities means more than providing our patients with quality healthcare through our four Hospitals,” said Mark Schroeder, Community Relations Director at NorthShore. “It also means extending our efforts into the communities we are so privileged to serve by touching the lives of individuals and supporting the work of organizations.”

During fiscal year 2008, NorthShore's initiatives and partnerships provided more than \$172 million in total community benefits (up 14 percent from the previous fiscal year). Over the last five years, the

number of charity care unique patients increased by 3,451 (or 98.15 percent).

“Through our commitment to research and our collaboration with the University of Chicago—as part of NorthShore's new teaching affiliation—research increased 24 percent during fiscal year 2008,” Schroeder said. “Plus, NorthShore's long-time emphasis on education produced a 34-percent increase in physician teaching stipends and additional expenses, and reporting of all student internship programs continued to improve.”

NorthShore's community relations initiatives are broad and encompass three primary areas—caring for the underserved, educating others and sharing resources. Here are examples of each area.

### Caring for the Underserved

- NorthShore Emergency Departments cared for 95,909 patients.
- NorthShore assisted nearly 4,000 callers through its 24-hour Mental Health Access Center.
- Evanston Hospital's Outpatient Department cared for 3,020 adults and 2,101 children who lacked insurance.
- The Eye and Vision Center treated 782 patients who received financial assistance.
- The Dental Center at Evanston Hospital had 2,153 encounters with patients who received 45- to 75-percent discounts on their services.
- The Prescription Drug Assistance Program filled more than 9,200 prescriptions at a cost of \$490,000 for

patients of the Evanston Hospital Outpatient Department—a nearly 125-percent increase since 2006.

- The Evanston Township High School Health Center (ETHS) had 2,680 patient visits, with 880 students receiving treatment.

### Educating Others

- NorthShore presented 414 health education classes to 8,415 participants.
- NorthShore professionals conducted 199 medical screenings for 5,448 individuals.
- The NorthShore Speakers' Bureau made 97 presentations to 3,170 attendees.

### Sharing Resources

- NorthShore provided \$1,109,374 in contributions to 87 charitable organizations.
- The Kellogg Cancer Care Center pledged \$20,000 toward support of the Cancer Wellness Center.
- Through a partnership with the Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center, NorthShore is providing \$500,000 in direct funding and \$500,000 in specialty care for underserved diabetes patients in Lake County. The initiative called “Be Well-Lake County” provides these diabetes patients with multidisciplinary care and diabetes education.

“These continuing strides in community relations reflect NorthShore's success in promoting wellness and providing compassionate care to all of our communities,” Schroeder said. **C**



During 2008, NorthShore substantially increased its total community benefits to \$172 million, or a 14-percent jump. Over the past five years, NorthShore physicians have cared for 98.2 percent more charity care patients from our communities.