

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Win-Win Scenario

Community-based mentoring programs at NorthShore University HealthSystem generate interest in healthcare careers and even attract future employees.

Mentoring programs are often viewed as opportunities that benefit students by offering a glimpse into a profession that interests them. Through its many mentoring programs, NorthShore University HealthSystem (NorthShore) does just that.

Evanston Hospital—University of Chicago and Loyola University

The Perinatal Family Support Center at Evanston Hospital provides clinical social work services to women and their families experiencing challenges related to pregnancy, birth, prematurity or perinatal loss. It also provides a real-world learning environment for social work students from the University of Chicago and Loyola University.

This year, several master's degree students and one undergraduate student are serving internships with the Center.

"The depth of the work that we do here provides an internship that is challenging and unique," said Nancy Eschbach, LCSW, Director of the Perinatal Family Support Center at NorthShore.

The internship benefits NorthShore, too. "For us, it's a win-win situation because our interns integrate so many great skills and learn so much about their field," Eschbach said.

Glenbrook Hospital—School District 214 Medical Academy

For eight years, students in the Medical Academy Program of High School District 214 have had the opportunity to rotate



Mentoring programs offer win-win opportunities for NorthShore and its mentees. Bonnie Lane, LCSW (right), a social worker in Highland Park Hospital's dialysis unit, explains Advance Directives policies in the electronic medical records system to Amy Lemmon, a master's-level intern in social work from Loyola University.

through Hospital departments, job shadow and get hands-on, clinical healthcare experience at the Hospital. Each school year, the Hospital has provided approximately 1,500 rotation hours of one-on-one mentoring on site to students.

Glenbrook educational specialist Mary Meyer, RN, M.S., coordinates the program from the Glenbrook Hospital side. "The medical academy program adds a new dimension to the high school experience for participating students, who are carefully screened and have expressed a high interest in pursuing a profession in medicine and healthcare," she said.

Highland Park Hospital—Stevenson, Deerfield and New Trier High Schools

Highland Park Hospital's clinical practitioner Sara Levin, MSN, RN-BC, eagerly talks

about the Hospital's longstanding relationship with Stevenson High School and Deerfield High School and a developing connection with New Trier High School.

Highland Park Hospital has several student mentors in Physical Therapy, Respiratory Therapy or Nursing. Some nursing participants observe for two days.

On Day 1, they observe for two hours, lunch at the Hospital and then study another area for two hours. Day 2 features a morning tour of Evanston Hospital, and then an afternoon tour of The Wellness Center at the Park Center in Glenview.

"All of them—at 15 years old—think they want to be physicians, but we cannot arrange observations with physicians," Levin said. "Our goal is to expose them to healthcare professions and introduce them to different domains rather than limiting the view to medicine." 