



Dearborn school student Valentina Aldrich had her artwork showcased in this year's event.

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festivities, Girls Night Out, offers exceptional teenage girls an occasional evening on the town, including dinner, movies and makeovers – to help them recognize themselves as the beautiful young ladies they are.

According to program director, Susan Youngs, MD, Teenage Boys Night Out was introduced four years ago with the goal to provide a recreational event for all of the program's teenage boys regardless of their special challenges.

“All of the outings have promoted fun through team games and individual challenges. Our awesome volunteer pool provides the support needed to make this annual event a success,” Dr. Youngs said.

“The aspect of our program that gives

me the greatest satisfaction,” said Dr. Youngs, “is that we can be there for the family in whatever way the members need. This should be a medical home for them where we provide them the help they want, as they define it, not what we think it should be.”

For more information on **Oakwood's Program for Exceptional Families** call **313.294.1510**.

The Power of Art

As part of the Arts for the Spirit initiative, Oakwood has collaborated with the Dearborn Public Schools and the Dearborn Community Arts Council in the Celebration of Young Artists exhibit.

This annual event showcases student

artwork in Oakwood galleries in support of our continuing effort to create an environment of healing for the communities we serve. The Celebration of Young Artists exemplifies Oakwood's commitment to young people by providing local students with an opportunity to experience the power of arts in healthcare.

Art Resource Teacher at the Dearborn Public Schools, Wendy Sample, said, “One of the greatest benefits of the annual Celebration of Young Artists is the students' exposure to the use of the arts in a healthcare setting.”

During the recognition event, students and their families see for themselves the positive reaction of patients, visitors and staff to their artwork. Students receive certificates and a small gift from Oakwood.



The program is designed to improve the quality of healing and care giving throughout the Oakwood Healthcare System through fine art galleries, creative writing workshops and other community art projects and events. Gallery exhibits feature local, regional and nationally recognized artists and also provide an opportunity for employees, volunteers and area students to show their works in special exhibits.

For more information on any of **Oakwood's Arts for the Spirit programs**, call **313.586.4941**.

Keeping Our Kids Safe

Since her two children, Grace, 5, and Noah, 9, were born, Susan Tylutki of Grosse Ile has been diligent about



getting the proper child restraint seats fitted for her car at Oakwood Southshore Medical Center (OSMC) in Trenton.

To date, more than 95 percent of car seats checked through Oakwood's Keep Kids Safe Car Seat Safety Check Program have been improperly installed.

A few years ago what could be seen as a routine precaution, in an instant, became a lifesaving measure. Just a few days after her annual car seat safety check at OSMC, Susan and her two children were involved in a serious car accident.

“The car was totaled,” she said. “I had to go to the hospital, but my children were unharmed. I feel grateful that I went to the car seat safety day. I feel blessed that my children remained safe.”

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of fatalities for Michigan children ages 14 and under. That's why, on July 1, the State of Michigan passed a law requiring all children traveling in vehicles to sit in a booster seat until they are 8-years-old or 4'9" tall.

Oakwood's Keep Kids Safe team offers free child safety seat checks in several cities around Wayne County.

For more information on the **Keep Kids Safe** program, or to arrange a car seat safety check, please call **313.586.5488** or visit **www.oakwood.org**.



For the full story, see “Looking Good and Feeling Better” on page 2.



DEAR FRIENDS

At Oakwood, our mission is to provide excellence in care, healing and health to the individuals and communities we serve.

This includes a deep and far reaching commitment to the health and well being of those both inside and outside our hospital walls.

In 2007, Oakwood delivered \$66.4 million in uncompensated health related services and care to its communities through subsidized health services,

losses on government sponsored health care, community benefit programs and free care to uninsured, poor and underserved patients. However, at Oakwood, we gauge the community value of these programs and services not simply in dollars and cents, but by the impact on the thousands of lives touched.

Our passion for our communities is exemplified through school-based clinics and other centers targeting youth, community-based health promotion, safety and screening programs,

emergency services for the uninsured and so much more.

I invite you to learn more about our truly meaningful programs and, along with more than 12,000 employees, physicians and volunteers, look forward to delivering on our mission to serve you, your family and the residents of southeast Michigan.

Brian M. Connolly

Brian M. Connolly
President & CEO,
Oakwood Healthcare System

Looking Good and Feeling Better

Even though Debbie Kowalczyk, of Dearborn, is undergoing treatment for cancer, she'd rather not look like she is. Diagnosed with breast cancer in October 2007, Debbie says her friends tell her she's never looked better – and she agrees.

Despite undergoing chemotherapy and radiation, losing her hair and eyebrows and experiencing a change in complexion, Debbie said, "I feel I'm looking better than I've looked in a long time, and that makes me feel better inside."

Debbie credits her good looks and positive outlook to a free class, offered through Oakwood, called Look Good, Feel Better. "Just seeing other people having to go through the same thing really helped," she said.

Shortly after her diagnosis, Debbie had a mastectomy and began aggressive chemo treatment.

Four months later, she decided to go back to her job at a local daycare center. "I thought it would make me feel better," said Debbie. That's when she joined the Look Good, Feel Better program at Oakwood Hospital & Medical Center.

The program offers free make-up and



“This program is a community investment.”

application techniques to help women maintain self-esteem and face cancer treatment with greater confidence.

"It really helped with my mental state," said Debbie, "and it's a way to open discussion among a group facing similar situations. There's a camaraderie with other people that are experiencing the same issues." Support also includes gift certificates to with the cost of a wig. "It's such a wonderful program," said Debbie.

For more on these cancer support services call 313.593.8600.

Helping Teens Stay Healthy

For Sue Hage, working mother of two, keeping her children involved in constructive activities and out of trouble was a major concern.

Like many mothers who can't afford to stay home with their children, she worried about the limited resources available.

Sue's son, Amer, began attending the Summer Arts and Prevention Academy in the fourth grade. The program is offered through the Oakwood Taylor Teen Health Center.

"My mom made me go," remembers Hage "and I liked it." Amer is now 23 and works as a peer educator in the program.

The Summer Arts and Prevention Academy program impacts at-risk and high-risk youth entering fifth to 12th grades. Substance abuse and violence prevention education are emphasized using four art forms:

visual art, music, drama, and dance. artist instructors incorporate anti-alcohol, tobacco, drugs and violence messages into their lessons. The program also helps students learn how to communicate and show respect for adults and classmates.

The center's trained Peer Educators assist in the planning and implementation of lessons under the guidance of the Center's substance abuse prevention counselors. Research suggests that peer mentoring has positive effects in preventing substance abuse among youth.

"We're not here to judge," said Amer, "we're just here to help and this is one of the ways to engage our students."

The Taylor Teen Health Center, along with the other Oakwood school-based teen health centers located in



Romulus and Inkster, offers an oasis for young people and helps teens make healthy choices through peer education and variety of innovative and award winning programs.

"If you're not involved with your kids," said Sue, "they will go elsewhere and it may not be a good place. This program is a community investment. These kids will grow up to be contributing members of society."

For more information on the Oakwood Teen Health Centers, call 734.942.CARE (2273).

Strong Hearts, Strong Women

For a few days each week, Linda Veresh of Allen Park does something that everyone should spend more

time focusing on – taking care of her heart.

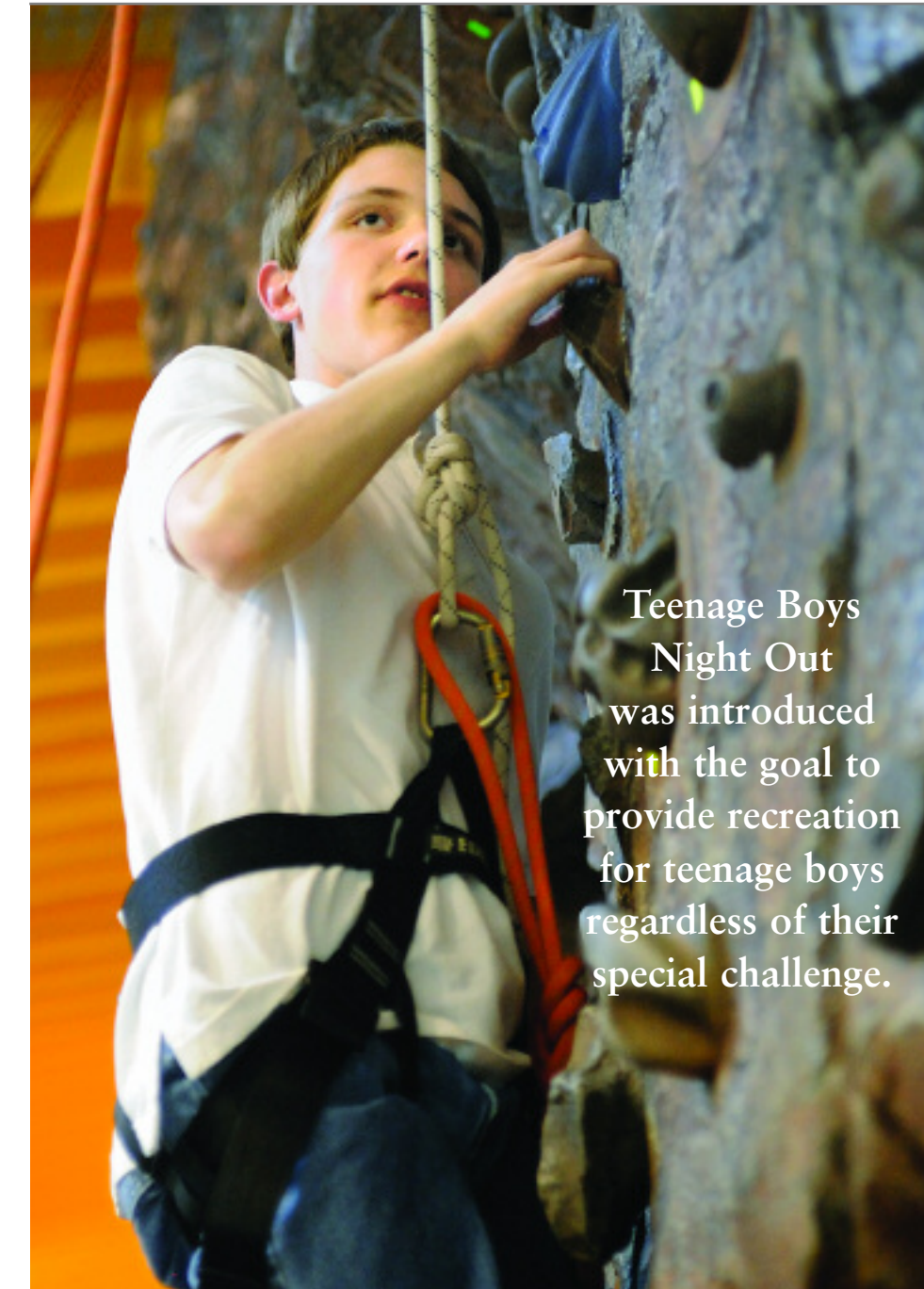
Two years ago, through the encouragement of her doctor, Veresh enrolled in the Oakwood's Healthy Hearts for Women research project – a five-year commitment to education and research regarding women and heart disease funded through a generous grant from the Ford Motor Company Fund.

The cardiac research study component of the program, which began in 2005, is free to all 400 women enrolled. For Veresh and many others, this means meeting with a personal cardiac coach.

Coaches assist participants in cultivating healthy lifestyle behaviors. They develop customized plans for participants using the most



Everyone knows what you're supposed to be doing for your health, but it's just great having someone there to encourage you to do it.



Teenage Boys Night Out was introduced with the goal to provide recreation for teenage boys regardless of their special challenge.

Ford grant, along with funds provided by the Oakwood Healthcare System Foundation, has also supported screenings for more than 14,000 women in our communities. Studies estimate that with adequate control of risk factors, the overall rate of heart attacks and deaths from coronary heart disease are reduced by 20 percent.

For more information and to arrange a lecture or screening for a community group, please call the Oakwood Healthy Hearts for Women program at 313.586.5496.

Exceptional Support for Exceptional Families

Oakwood is striving to make a difference in the lives of our patients and families throughout the communities we serve through programs such as the Program for Exceptional Families.

This innovative, award-winning program exceeds the bounds of traditional medical care to provide truly comprehensive, coordinated family-centered care for children with chronic, complex disorders and disabilities.

The Program was designed to meet not only the complex medical needs of children with special needs, but also to address the often overlooked psychological, social, cultural, and school-based needs of these children and their families.

"Sibshop" support group and workshop sessions offer support and an outlet for exceptional siblings. Martial Arts Therapy provides emotive and recreational support for exceptional children. Exceptional Fun

effective way to educate and motivate them individually.

"Everyone knows what you're supposed to be doing for your health, but it's just great having someone there to encourage you to do it." she said.

Another aspect of the Healthy Hearts

for Women initiative provides for free seminars and screenings to help women reduce their risk of heart disease.

Since the initiative began in 2005, Oakwood has worked in partnership with 90 organizations to educate more than 2,100 women through local seminars. During this time period the

