

PPWNNM

connection

Summer 2010

JET Group Takes Off!

Planned Parenthood of West and Northern Michigan (PPWNNM) has launched a new advocacy group called JET, the Justice Engagement Team. JET is based in Grand Rapids and is open to PPWNNM supporters and volunteers age 18-34. The group, led by PPWNNM Public Affairs Specialist Dani Vilella, was founded in June with four flagship members. JET meets monthly to strategize advocacy campaigns, and other tactics for spreading awareness about PPWNNM.

"There seemed to be an age gap in who we were reaching out to. Our donors are mainly over age 35 and many of our clients are teens. JET seemed like a good way to bridge that gap and foster advocacy in young adults," said Vilella.

"I am passionate about sexual health and women's rights and believe strongly in Planned Parenthood's mission; I view JET as an opportunity to engage in activism," said founding member Taylor Wondergem. "I am currently a student and hope to eventually become

ad-vo-ca-cy [ad'-vuh-kuh-see]

n. The act or process of supporting a cause or proposal; active support of an idea or cause.

a sex therapist. JET will allow me to advocate for healthy sexuality while also providing me with the opportunity to learn more about sexual health and reproductive rights."

This year JET is focused on advocacy training, learning the history of Planned Parenthood's legislative work, and studying legislative structures. Members will be rolling out a Get Out The Vote campaign with an initial push for voter registration, followed by partnership with Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Michigan for voter mobilization in the November 2 election.

JET is currently recruiting for new members who would like to become more active supporters of PPWNNM and its mission. Contact publicaffairs@ppwnm.org if you are interested in joining, or finding out more about, JET.



JET founding member Bethany Reed works the PPWNNM table at the West Michigan PRIDE Festival in June.

Our MISSION:

To promote and ensure reproductive and sexual health, responsibility, and freedom.

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"Click" for your Connection



If you are not already on our mailing list, and you would like to receive an electronic copy of this newsletter, please let us know! E-mail your request to donations@ppwnm.org. Include your name, phone number, and the personal e-mail address where you would like to receive the *PPWNNM Connection* and *Annual Report*.

PPWNM Now Offering Rapid HIV Testing

PPWNM has begun offering HIV testing with same-visit results at all eight of its [health centers](#) in West and Northern Michigan. The Clearview Rapid Test gives results in about 15-20 minutes.

All PPWNM clinicians recently attended a day-long training in administering the test and counseling patients about their results.

"The rapid test offers the peace of mind that comes with knowing your status," said PPWNM Vice President of Medical Services Bridget White. "With other HIV tests, it can take up to two weeks to get results. That can be a long time to worry and wonder, especially after you've taken the step to do the right thing and get tested in the first place," said White. "And studies have shown up to a third of patients never return for their results."

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), one in five people that are HIV positive don't know it. In Michigan, it's estimated that 18,800 have HIV and 22 percent of them are unaware that they are infected.

"That means thousands of people could be having unprotected sex and unknowingly spreading the virus that causes AIDS to their partners," said White. "There is no cure for HIV. But with medications today, it is highly manageable; and the sooner treatment is started, the better the result."

PPWNM will follow CDC recommendations and offer the new test to all patients. The CDC recommends annual testing for those considered at high-risk for HIV. High risk behaviors include having unprotected sex, or using intravenous drugs. Testing is also recommended for pregnant women.



A quick prick



Results in about 15 minutes

Expanded Service Brings Comfort

PPWNM is now offering colposcopy services at four of its eight locations. Colposcopy is a procedure for detecting cancerous or pre-cancerous lesions on the cervix. It is performed after a patient receives an abnormal Pap test result.

"Around 10 percent of our clients receive an abnormal Pap result at their annual exam," said Shelley Paulsen, nurse practitioner at PPWNM's Petoskey Center. "That can happen for a variety of reasons; but it can be scary. Knowing they can take the next step to find out what's wrong right here in our office is a comfort to them."

Paulsen recently completed nearly a year of training to become a certified colposcopist. The training included a four-day seminar and conducting more

than 65 supervised colposcopy exams. A grant from the Hestia Women's Giving Circle paid for the training and necessary equipment, including a colposcope.

A colposcope is essentially a lighted microscope which allows the colposcopist to distinguish abnormal from normal tissues and take biopsies for further study. The main goal is to prevent cervical cancer through early identification and treatment. Patients are referred for treatment if the colposcopy confirms a problem.

Paulsen is performing colposcopies at the Petoskey and Traverse City Centers. PPWNM's Cherry St. and Evenson Centers in Kent County also offer the procedure.

Client Voices

"We have been happily married for seven years. We are responsible adults that believe children should not be brought into this world unless they are taken care of. We don't want children, have no health insurance, and without Planned Parenthood, may not be in a position to pay our taxes."

~ Dayna and Bruce, Negaunee

"Thank you all so much for all your hard work, kindness, and efforts in helping me among everyone who seeks care through your office. I am very grateful for all of your time and making my life a little easier in this economy."

~ Leah, Grand Rapids

"I could never talk to my parents about sex, protection, or birth control. The girls at Planned Parenthood made me feel comfortable, welcome, and helped me through some very personal issues."

~ Rachel, Muskegon

"I work full-time, go to school full-time, and have a beautiful two-year-old daughter. Having these services is fast, confidential, and convenient. I couldn't do birth control without it."

~ Courtney, Marquette

No Health Insurance?
Female, Age 19-44?

You may qualify for
Free Birth Control
and Annual Exams!

Make the call to
protect yourself today!

Call Planned Parenthood.
Ask about Plan First!

PLAN FIRST!

SAFER CHOICES PROJECT: Going Strong in Kent & Muskegon

What started as a pilot project last summer is now responsible for educating hundreds of teens in Kent and Muskegon counties! The Safer Choices Project is a 15-hour sexuality education program that gives teens the information and skills they need to make safer choices when it comes to their relationships and their bodies. The Project is a partnership with the state, and focuses on: anatomy and physiology; parent/teen communication; relationship skills; and abstinence (the safest choice), birth control, and sexually transmitted infections. Teens who complete the course receive a gift card and sexual health-related book.

PPWNM is now enrolling for fall sessions at our Cherry St. location in Grand Rapids. Call our Education Department at 616.774.7005, or go to ppwnm.org to learn more or apply.



Voices for Safer Choices What People are Saying About the Safer Choices Project:

The Safer Choices Project includes a two-hour mandatory Parents' Night. In a survey, 100 percent of parents from a recent Safer Choices program at PPWNM said they would recommend the Safer Choices Project!

- "I would recommend the program because it gives teens the information they need to prevent pregnancy and STDs."
- "My child is no longer afraid to speak up after taking the class."
- "I can trust her more to make safe choices about sex after this class."
- "My teen is more open and is talking to me more often."

Teens in a recent Safer Choices Project program at PPWNM rated it 4.8 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being excellent!

- "Fun and informative."
- "I don't want the class to end."
- "It was real fun!"
- "It was fun – thanks for providing the opportunity."
- "Make it longer - I'm gonna miss you!"

There's Always Time for Sex Education

Although we're well-known for our long-term education programs like the Safer Choices Project (see related stories above) and Peer Education; PPWNM designs, delivers, and evaluates learning opportunities that are customized to meet the needs of the learner — and that includes *short-term* programs as well. The following are some of our most requested:

Bridging the Gap is a one-hour program designed for middle and high school students to help them understand what puts people at risk for HIV, and how they can reduce or eliminate these risks.

From All Walks of Life is a two-hour program designed to help young people understand what can put teens at risk for HIV and how they can reduce or eliminate that risk. Students will identify and practice assertiveness techniques and value-based decision making skills.

Healthy Foundations is a two-hour program that offers parents and child-care providers information on healthy sexuality development in babies and children up to five years old. The program includes the stages of normal development; and how to answer sensitive questions, teach about appropriate public and private behavior, and become an "askable" parent.

Just Say Know is a two-hour program designed to help young people understand the risk of sexual pressures and how they can make healthy choices when confronted with those pressures. Students are given real-life tools to use when choosing abstinence, and also practice assertiveness techniques and value-based decision making skills.



PPWNM Peer Leaders show their support for REAL, comprehensive, and medically accurate sex education. This visibility event took place in Grand Rapids back in May, in support of Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month. Peer Leaders are teens who have been through the Peer Education and Safer Choices Project programs, and assist PPWNM educators in the classroom teaching other young people.

We'll See You There!

Do you know of a resource fair, health expo, or other community event where attendees could benefit from learning about Planned Parenthood's health care and education services? Invite us to come and provide informational materials, educational resources, promotional giveaways, items for sale, even trainings and learning sessions. Call our Education Department at 616.774.7005 to ask about our availability. Most of these resources are free of charge, however there is a fee for trainings and learning sessions.

Prevention First: MI House Victory!

Planned Parenthoods across Michigan celebrated a victory over the spring when the Michigan House of Representatives, after 10 years of inaction, voted to support proactive reproductive health policies.

Our statewide office, Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Michigan (PPAM), working with supportive lawmakers in Lansing as well as volunteers across the state, led the effort to forward the Prevention First agenda. The House passed several bills on March 24 with considerable bipartisan support.

The Prevention First legislation that passed the House would:

- Guarantee access to emergency contraception for victims of sexual assault.
- Provide the public and the medical community with comprehensive information about the use, safety, and availability of emergency contraception.
- Require “crisis pregnancy centers” to provide pregnant women with medically accurate information.
- Require that sexuality education be evidence-based, with course material that is factual, age-appropriate, medically accurate, and objective.

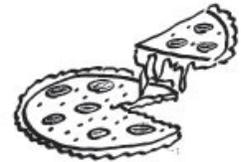
PPAM and Planned Parenthoods across Michigan have been organizing through phone banks, canvassing, tabling, campus organizing, media outreach, clinic action centers, and more; for the past decade to make constituents’ voices heard in Lansing. In the current legislative session, Planned Parenthood helped generate 500 phone calls, 2,600 e-mails, and nearly 8,000 postcards to targeted lawmakers in support of Prevention First (see sidebar article, “Traverse City Center Wins Statewide Contest”).

But our work did not stop with the House victory. The package of bills was sent to the Michigan Senate for approval after passing the House. PPWNM, PPAM and other Planned Parenthoods in Michigan immediately began mobilizing to let members of the Senate know their constituents support Prevention First. In just a few short months, more than 2,500 petition signatures have been delivered to select state Senators.

Our Prevention First efforts in the Senate will continue through the end of the legislative session; but if the bills are not passed out of the legislature and signed by the governor by December 31, they will have to be reintroduced next year in the new legislature.

Traverse City Center Wins Statewide Contest

Congrats to PPWNM’s Traverse City Center, winner of a pizza party from Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Michigan (PPAM)! The Traverse City Center won a contest which pitted Planned Parenthood health centers across Michigan against each other in an effort to sign up the most number



of supporters for the Prevention First campaign. Since August 2009, Traverse City collected nearly 300 signatures at its center, the most statewide based on the number of patients they see. Staff at the Traverse City Center enjoyed their pizza reward on August 2.

Don't Forget to Get your Exercise!

**Exercise your right to VOTE on
November 2 (register by October 4)**

Advocates Trained to **ACT**

PPWNM hosted its first-ever ACT Training on July 20. The event was designed to: educate supporters and volunteers on our legislative agenda for 2010-11, teach advocacy and activism skills, and launch our Get Out the Vote campaign leading up to the November 2 election (see sidebar lower left).

The training included activities educating participants on their legislative districts, and sharing strategies that can be used to take action on various issues. Each participant was asked to sign an Action Pledge, promising to use one new activist strategy in the coming months, and attendees took home toolkits of information reinforcing what they learned.

Help Us Get Out the Vote!



Planned Parenthood wants to help ensure that everyone who is willing and able has a voice in the upcoming election. We will be working to register new voters and to mobilize the electorate on November 2, and we could use your help! To learn more about how you can get involved, contact publicaffairs@ppwnm.org.

The Planned Parenthood Promise

Creating hope for humanity:

*The power to dream,
to make choices, and to live
in peace with the planet.*

Support for Healthy Families: Events Raise Thousands

Despite a May bitter cold snap, nearly 100 supporters came out for the Healthy Families Luncheon at Upfront & Company in Marquette on May 7. For the second year in a row, the luncheon raised more than \$10,000 to support healthy families in Planned Parenthood's service region!

The annual Martha Hatch Award was presented to Diane Valenzio, RN, who retired from PPWNM last year after more than 30 years of service. "I am humbled by this honor and grateful to be a part of an organization that has made such a difference in the lives of people in Marquette," said Valenzio.

The following week, a record crowd of more than 400 packed the banquet room at Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park for the Grand Rapids Healthy Families Luncheon on May 13. The event brought in more than \$80,000.

Speakers included former PPWNM Board Member Dr. Gayla Jewell and Evenson Clinician Pam Geldhof, who has been with Planned Parenthood since 1993.

"The majority of our clients would never have an annual or breast exam without your support," Geldhof told the crowd, "Thank you for helping people take control of their lives."

Nearly 200 guests raised more than \$20,000 at the second annual Petoskey Healthy Families Dinner on June 3. Supporters came out to Stafford's Bay View Inn to visit with friends and meet like-minded neighbors, "Planned Parenthood events are always so fun because it's interesting to see who else supports women's issues," remarked one guest.

PPWNM President/CEO Kathy Humphrey thanked the crowd and told them what their support means to our clients; while PPWNM Board Chair Sandra McClurg brought the message to life by reading a letter from an actual client, "I have Planned Parenthood to thank, not only for saving me from serious health problems, but also for connecting me to the resources I needed to survive financially," read

Sandra. (Read more excerpts from the letter below).

The program was topped off with the annual presentation of PPWNM's Founders' Award for Distinguished Service, recognizing Petoskey-area supporters. Recipients, Dave and Ann Irish helped launch the first Planned Parenthood in Petoskey, "It was an honor to receive the award from an organization that means so much to Ann and I," said Dave. "We are lucky to have worked with such caring and dedicated staff and volunteers over the years."



2010 Martha Hatch Award winner Diane Valenzio



2010 Founders' Award winners Dave & Ann Irish

Client's Story Highlights Need for Services

Following are excerpts from a letter by a client of the PPWNM Petoskey Center. The letter was shared with attendees of the Healthy Families Dinner in Petoskey June 3.

Thank you and your incredible staff for helping me through a time when I had no where else to turn.

As a self employed single mother of two, I am on a tight budget with no health insurance. Recently I began having abnormal cycles and excessive bleeding. Not having a regular physician, I didn't even know where to begin to look for help. I shared my situation with a close friend who was adamant that I call Planned Parenthood.

The staff was so welcoming and respectful of me and my situation. They immediately made me feel comfortable. Nurse Shelley Paulsen was particularly helpful. She is as empathetic and caring as she is competent!

My medical issues turned out to be very serious. Nurse Shelley spent significant time examining me, explaining my condition, and discussing my treatment options. Ultimately she needed to refer me to a surgeon. Shelly went above and beyond by locating and contacting a surgeon who would accept the subsidized funding that Planned Parenthood had helped me qualify for.

Two surgeries later, I am happy to report that my problem has been resolved and I am very healthy. I have Planned Parenthood to thank, not only for saving me from serious health problems, but also for connecting me to the resources I needed to survive financially. I also have my friend to thank for insisting that I call Planned Parenthood in the first place. Now I am one of those people out sharing Petoskey's best kept secret!

FUN with Fundraising!



Drag Queen Show in Traverse City on June 12 raised money for PPWNM HIV testing and education.

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This publication is meant to provide updates about PPWNM and information to aid supporters in furthering the cause of reproductive rights for all. If you have comments, corrections, or suggestions please call our Director of Communications at 616.774.7005, or e-mail publicrelations@ppwnm.org. Please consider making a gift to PPWNM that will help offset the costs of providing this information, as well as our other services.

Health Care
for the body



Education
for the mind



Advocacy
for the spirit



Stay Informed, Stay in Touch

There is always something going on at PPWNM. In this edition of the *PPWNM Connection* you read about new services and groups, events we've held over the past few months, programs that you can get involved in, campaigns the agency is participating in, upcoming opportunities, legislative activities, and more.

But you don't have to wait for the *Connection* to stay informed. Just subscribe to our RSS feed so you can receive updates about what's being posted on our website, ppwnm.org. Or, follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) for up-to-the-minute messages.



Upcoming PPWNM Events

September 21
Healthy Families Luncheon
in Traverse City

Coming this fall:
Healthy Families Luncheon
in Muskegon

Serving West and Northern Michigan

- **Administrative Headquarters:** 425 Cherry St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503, 616.774.7005
- **Big Rapids Center:** 110 Sanborn Ave., Suite B, Big Rapids, MI 49307, 231.796.8612
- **Cherry St. Center (Irwin/Martin):** 425 Cherry St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503, 616.459.3101
- **Evenson Center:** 3641 Byron Center Ave. SW, Wyoming, MI 49519, 616.531.3070
- **Ionia Center:** 175 E. Adams St., Ionia, MI 48846, 616.527.3340
- **Marquette Center:** 1219 N. Third St., Marquette, MI 49855, 906.225.5070
- **Muskegon Center:** 209 E. Apple Ave., Muskegon, MI 49442, 231.724.4415
- **Petoskey Center:** 1003 Spring St., Petoskey, MI 49770, 231.347.9692
- **Traverse City Center:** 1135 E. Eighth St., Traverse City, MI 49686, 231.929.1844

For more information log on to ppwnm.org

