

## Diveheart program grows at OLCHS

February 5, 2009

For the past two years, Oak Lawn Community High School has opened its swimming pool to the Diveheart organization to provide scuba diving activities to individuals with special needs as well as conducting activities for injured veterans.

According to Robert Hemedinger, volunteer site coordinator, the program draws more participants each month and organizers are now seeking an additional southwest location.

The Diveheart Foundation was founded in 2001 and is a nonprofit national organization chartered in the state of Illinois.

The purpose of Diveheart is to provide and support educational scuba diving and snorkeling experience programs that are open to any child, adult or veteran with a disability with the hope of providing both physical and psychological therapeutic value to that person.

It is the "can do" spirit that Diveheart hopes to instill in all its participants by giving them the confidence and independence that allows them to face their own life challenges and overcome barriers that before might have seemed insurmountable.

The OLCHS and Diveheart partnership was formed under the leadership of District 229 board member James O'Malley.

O'Malley has been involved with Diveheart for many years and thought the program would, in addition to providing services to individuals with special needs, allow Oak Lawn High School students an opportunity to get involved and provide community service.

The next Diveheart session is scheduled for 9 a.m. Sunday at the high school, 9400 W. Southwest Highway.

The event is open to any individual with a disability.

To learn more about Diveheart, visit [www.diveheart.com](http://www.diveheart.com).

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