



# Good News Department

## A Wonderful Role Model For Young Teens

(NAPSA)—Life is a hands-on experience for 17-year-old spinal-cord-injury patient Nick Fonner. For his initial rehabilitation, Nick went to the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, ranked for 10 years as the number one rehabilitation care provider in the country by *U.S. News & World Report*.

Nick's injury left him without functional use of his legs and hands, but his injury was low enough that he still had sensation and movement in his arms. Recovering the use of his hands was important for him to become more independent and to achieve his goal of working in the computer field. He came to the Chicago Shriners Hospital for Children to investigate the possibility of using functional electrical stimulation (FES) on his hands.

FES systems can help those with spinal cord injury (SCI) develop a very effective key grip (to manipulate with the finger and thumb) and palma grasp (to hold larger objects), but an external controller and stimulator must be put on each day for the system to work.

Physicians at Shriners offered Nick another alternative. SCI patients with strong muscles under voluntary control nearby can often have a tendon or muscle surgically moved to assist the hand or arm muscle that is no longer working. With tendon transfers, functionality is available all the time without an external appliance.

Nick decided that tendon transfers were the best choice for him and his lifestyle. Surgeons at Shriners transferred some of the tendons powering his arms to his hand and fingers. Nick is now bet-



**Thanks to the efforts of the staff at Chicago Shriners Hospital for Children, spinal-cord-injury patient Nick Fonner, right, has a chance to be more independent.**

ter able to use a manual wheelchair and can eat and drink without help.

For more information on Shriners' network of 22 hospitals that provide medical care and services totally free of charge to children with orthopaedic problems, burns and spinal cord injuries, write to: Shriners International Headquarters, Public Relations Dept., 2900 Rocky Point Dr., Tampa FL 33607, or visit the Web site at [www.shrinershq.org](http://www.shrinershq.org). Treatment is provided to children under age 18 without regard to race, religion or relationship to a Shriner.

If you know a child Shriners can help, call 1-800-237-5055 in the United States or 1-800-361-7256 in Canada.