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# David Jones Speech Contest for Charity

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A with Honors- SPE 101

Jimmy V Foundation Transcript for David Jones Speech Contest

During my junior year of high school, my school conducted a cancer awareness night at a boy's varsity basketball game. As everyone entered the gym, they were given a glow stick. After everyone was seated, the lights were turned off and the basketball announcer got over the loudspeaker. He said: "if you are currently fighting or have beaten cancer, please raise your glow stick." A few glow sticks were raised. Then he asked: "if you, or someone you know, is currently fighting cancer, has beaten cancer, or has lost the battle with cancer, please raise your glow stick." Every single glow stick in the gym was raised. In general, 1 out of every 2 men and 1 out of every 3 women living in America will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetimes (Jimmyv.org). Imagine half of the men and a third of the women sitting in this room could potentially face cancer at some point in their life. That's where the Jimmy V Foundation comes in. I have been aware of this organization for several years, but this event has allowed me to further research and become involved with this great organization. I'd like to use this occasion to discuss the issue that is cancer, share some of the important work accomplished by the Jimmy V Foundation, as well as let you know some of the many ways you can get involved with this necessary cause.

I'd like to begin by sharing some facts about this deadly disease. Cancer is one of the world's biggest issues. 1.5 million cases were expected to be diagnosed in 2010, with 569,000 of those people expected to die (Jimmyv.org). The World Health Organization projected in 2010 that cancer would become the leading cause of death globally. Many organizations have been formed to fight this deadly disease.

The Jimmy V Foundation is one of the premiere charitable organizations fighting this disease. It was founded in 1993 by Jim Valvano, a famous collegiate basketball coach at North Carolina State University who had recently been diagnosed with cancer. The outlook for Valvano was bleak and he was very frustrated with the lack of research that had been done to find a cure for his disease. So, along with ESPN, he launched the Jimmy V Foundation for cancer research at the inaugural ESPY awards in 1993. In his memorable speech he said: "it may not save my life, but it may save my children's lives, or someone you love." Jimmy V fought and lived with a positive attitude for the duration of his battle with cancer. Unfortunately, he passed away just a few months after launching his organization.

People battling cancer today are inspired by Jimmy V's fight and positive outlook on life. On the charity's website, a mother shared a story about her son, Jason, who lost his battle with cancer at age 23. Jason had inflammatory fibro sarcoma, a rare form of cancer. Jason had been diagnosed as a stage IV cancer patient, the deadliest possible diagnosis. Jason had eleven tumors on his body. Jason had a tumor the size of a softball near his heart. Yet, Jason had the fight and positive attitude of his hero, Jim Valvano. His mother shared that Valvano's famous words and the motto of the charity, "Don't Give Up, Don't Ever Give Up," are inscribed on Jason's memorial urn.

If Jimmy V were still here today, he would be very proud of what his charity has accomplished. Since its launch, the Jimmy V Foundation has raised over 100 million dollars for cancer research (Zucco, Tom. St. Petersburg Times). This money is then given out as grants to top scientists around the nation to take their research from labs and apply them to clinics. Gerold

Bepler, a recipient of a grant from the Jimmy V Foundation in 1994, is now world renowned in lung cancer research. Victoria Steelwaldt used her grant to open the Duke Breast Wellness Center. Among the many things that this center does is provide mammograms for women without insurance or who could not afford it otherwise. It is clear that the Jimmy V Foundation is one of the premiere charitable organizations fighting all types of cancer. So, you may be asking yourself: “how can I get involved?”

There are many ways to contribute to this necessary cause. The Jimmy V Foundation is always in need of more financial support to continue giving out the previously mentioned grants to find the cure for cancer. Simply go to [www.jimmyv.org](http://www.jimmyv.org) and click on the “Support Us” tab. Sherrie Mazur, Director of Marketing and Communications for the Jimmy V Foundation, assured me that 100% of new donations go directly towards finding the cure to this deadly disease. This is due to the fact that since 2006, all administrative expenses for the organization have been paid for by their endowment fund. This has given the Jimmy V Foundation a frequent 4-star rating from the Charity Navigator website ([charitynavigator.org](http://charitynavigator.org)). If you are not able to support the Jimmy V Foundation financially, you can contact the organization and volunteer your time to host an event. You can also encourage your school or workplace to host a Jimmy V Show Your Spirit! Day. What this day entails is every student or worker donating \$5 to a general fund that would, again, go directly towards finding the cure for cancer. After giving this small donation, each person would “earn the right” to wear apparel from their favorite sports team or alma mater to school or work that day. This simple, yet fun event not only raises money to cure cancer but also raises comradery with peers or co-workers.

In that famous speech in 1993, Valvano said: “try to support if you can, so that someone might survive, might prosper, and might actually be cured of this deadly disease.” Since he spoke those words, advancements in cancer research that his foundation has helped fund have saved over 12 million lives in the United States alone ([jimmyv.org](http://jimmyv.org)). Yet, there is still a long journey to go.