

## Fourth-graders donate \$760 for breast cancer research

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Kendall Kirton, 9, signed a ceremonial check for \$760 as Devyn Goo, 10, left, Shaylee Ungos, 9, and Kiyera Werny, 10, looked on at the University of Hawaii Cancer Center on Saturday. The Punahou School students raised the money through bake sales. They are the youngest known donors to the center.

Four fourth-grade girls have donated \$760 to the University of Hawaii's Cancer Center, less than a year after one watched her aunt battle breast cancer.

"This definitely brought us closer together," said Kendall Kirton, one of the four friends, on Friday when the Punahou School classmates became the center's youngest known donors and designated their donation to fund breast cancer research.

Kirton, Shaylee Ungos, Devyn Goo and Kiyera Werny raised the money by selling cookies, cake slices and other baked items.

When asked what they would have done with the money if they hadn't donated it to breast cancer research, they named other charitable causes like diabetes research.

Goo's great-grandmother is a 19-year survivor of breast cancer. And Werny's aunt Sandra Shim has been cancer-free since last year. Shim had a double mastectomy.

While the diagnosis was scary for her niece, Shim said the girl maintained a helpful presence and made her knickknacks while treatments were underway.

Among the items Werny gave her aunt was a shell with the words "You are a fighter" written on it.

Shim credits her treatment team and support from family and friends with encouraging her to maintain a positive outlook, which helped her beat cancer.

Dr. Jerris Hedges, the center's interim director, said each donation counts and that the girls' contribution is appreciated.

Reports from the University of Hawaii Foundation showed that the average gift to UH's Cancer Center was \$768 in 2013 and \$814 in 2014. Data for this year were not immediately available.

"Not enough credit is given to our young ones," Shim said. "It doesn't matter what the amount is, it's just a great thing."

The center is designated by the National Cancer Institute as one of the premier research institutions in the country. There are 68 in all.

According to Hedges there are roughly 1,000 people participating in clinical trials through the Cancer Center at any given time. About 100 trials are underway, Hedges said.

After presenting officials with their donation, the girls and about 15 family members toured the Cancer Center and had a chance to take a look at microscope slides fixed with cancerous tissue.

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