Gift bolsters only Hawaii program to train heart specialists

Three of the cardiology fellows with Judith Pyle. From left to right, they are first year fellow Anne Kemble, MD, third year fellow Kahealani Rivera, MD, Judith Pyle, and second year fellow John Michael Chua Chiaco, MD. (Photo courtesy of University of Hawaii Foundation)

MEDIA RELEASE

There is good news on several fronts for Hawaii residents in the fight against heart disease, the state’s leading cause of death.

The developments include a generous monetary gift, an impressive accreditation and – soon – brand new, locally trained cardiologists to treat patients in Hawaii.

Local philanthropist and businesswoman Judith Dion Pyle has pledged $1 million to support the Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship Program at the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM).

Her gift will create the Judith Dion Pyle Endowed Fund for the Robert Hong, MD Professorship in the Cardiovascular Fellowship Program.

The Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship, a three-year program, is the only one in Hawaii training physicians to become cardiologists.

“It gives me great joy to have the opportunity to support Dr. Robert Hong and the Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship Program,” Pyle said. “The program offers Hawaii’s medical students the opportunity for a career in cardiology and it offers Hawaii’s people the comfort of knowing that there are highly qualified cardiologists to be available for them if there is a need.”
The Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship Program began in 2010 as a partnership between the University of Hawaii’s medical school and The Queen’s Medical Center. Now, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education has granted the successful program continued accreditation for five years, through 2017.

Among those being trained in the UH program is Dr. Kahealani Rivera, who next year will become the first ever female Native Hawaiian cardiologist.

Heart disease and stroke cause nearly 3,000 deaths a year in the state of Hawaii. Native Hawaiians are among those hit the hardest.

“Native Hawaiians are two to three times more likely to be diagnosed with or die from heart disease,” Rivera said. “We have so much more work to do, and I hope, as a Native Hawaiian physician, I will be able to give care to both Native Hawaiians and all people who suffer so much from heart disease.”

The facility houses 505 acute beds and 28 sub-acute beds and is widely known for its programs in cancer, cardiovascular disease, neuroscience, orthopaedics, surgery, emergency medicine and trauma, and behavioral medicine.

The need for cardiologists, in particular, is critical. According to the Hawaii Physician Workforce Assessment conducted by JABSOM, Hawaii currently has only 60 percent of the cardiologists needed to care for Hawaii residents.

Half of the state’s practicing cardiologists will reach retirement age within the next eight years, leaving the field at a time when more of our state’s aging population will need cardiovascular care.

“The Queen’s Medical Center extends our warmest appreciation to Ms. Pyle for her support and generous investment in the University of Hawaii to create the Judith Dion Pyle Endowed Fund for the Robert Hong, MD Professorship in the Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship Program,” said Arthur Ushijima, president of The Queen’s Medical Center. “We would also like to congratulate Dr. Hong on this extraordinary achievement and wonderful honor.”

Private philanthropic support continues to play a major role in helping JABSOM attract accomplished academic clinicians. To this end, The Queen’s Medical Center is continuing its financial support of the program to ensure its growth and success.

Judith Dion Pyle is currently the president of Judith Dion Pyle & Associates, LLC, located in Middleton, Wisc., a family office serving as her financial service company managing trusts, personal and business interests.

Pyle previously held the position of vice chairman of the board of directors of The Pyle Group, LLC, a Madison, Wisc. financial services company that oversees small and medium sized companies, which it has purchased or in which it has made investments.

Pyle currently serves as a board member or a trustee of several private and public companies and many foundations, arts and philanthropic organizations including the University of Hawaii Foundation.

The University of Hawaii Foundation, a nonprofit organization, raises private funds to support the University of Hawaii System. The mission of the University of Hawaii Foundation is to unite donors’ passions with the University of Hawaii’s aspirations by raising philanthropic support and managing private investments to benefit UH, the people of Hawaii and our future generations.

The John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM), UH Manoa was named for a visionary governor. Nearly half of the physicians practicing in Hawaii are graduates of JABSOM, its affiliated residency programs, or serve on JABSOM’s faculty.

JABSOM also trains Biomedical Scientists and Public Health, Communications Sciences and Medical Technology Professionals.

The Queen’s Medical Center is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation, acute care medical facility accredited by The Joint Commission. The facility houses 505 acute beds and 28 sub-acute beds and is widely known for its programs in cancer, cardiovascular disease, neuroscience, orthopaedics, surgery, emergency medicine and trauma, and behavioral medicine.
Queen’s is home to a number of residency programs offered in conjunction with the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii. Queen’s has achieved Magnet status – the highest institutional honor for hospital excellence – from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Magnet recognition is held by six percent of hospitals in the United States. Queen’s is the first hospital in Hawaii to achieve Magnet status.

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www.uhfoundation.org
http://jabsom.hawaii.edu

www.hawaii247.com/2012/12/07/gift-bolsters-only-hawaii-program-to-train-heart-specialists/