...Five Ways the UH Cancer Center Benefited Hawaii in the Past Year

Clinical Trials: providing leading edge cancer care for Hawaii's people

- The University of Hawaii Cancer Center, working with Hawaii hospitals and physicians, gave Hawaii's adult and pediatric cancer patients access to around 100 different national clinical trials of new treatments and technologies.
- This means that Hawaii's cancer patients did not have to leave the islands to access potentially better care and had the earliest opportunity to receive life-saving treatment breakthroughs.
- In so doing, the Center substantially contributed to keeping Hawaii's cancer care providers who offer clinical trials for their patients at the cutting edge. Clinical trials guarantee patients receive the national standard of best care and have the opportunity to benefit from treatment innovations.

Research: improving cancer care, prevention and survivorship

- Cancer Center researcher Thomas Wills, PhD, uncovered a growing public health problem among Hawaii's youth. His research conducted in Hawaii high schools confirmed that rates of e-cigarette use by Hawaii adolescents are at least double the rate of e-cigarette use observed in studies of mainland adolescents. Furthermore, his study published in the peer-reviewed journal Pediatrics clarified a reason why e-cigarette use is growing nationally among teens, as his data suggest that e-cigarettes may be operating to recruit lower-risk adolescents to smoking.
- A Hula Study for Breast Cancer Survivors was begun and is now in progress to assess whether hula can be an effective strategy to increase physical activity after treatment. Studies have shown that physical activity is important for reducing the chance of cancer recurrence.
- The Cancer Center began research to increase screening rates for colon cancer among Native Hawaiian men in hopes of reducing the high rate of cancer deaths in this population.
- Cancer Center researchers assembled a library of more than 2,586 natural products from Hawaii natural resources for testing against human tumors. Researchers have identified many drug leads, including two natural product compounds from plants (such as poha berry), one compound from sea sponge, and two compounds from microbial sources, which inhibit growth of human breast, brain, or ovarian cancers in experimental models.

Economic Development: to stimulate job creation and build Hawaii's future
The Cancer Center brought in $20 million in grants that supported cancer research in Hawaii. This money directly supported the economy of Hawaii.

The Cancer Center assisted researchers with technology development and patent activity in order to grow new revenue streams and assist with the development of new companies from this intellectual property. The Cancer Center supports the state's Innovation Initiative to develop Hawaii's technology sector.

Three patents have been filed in the last 1-2 years from research looking at natural products. The intellectual property rights to a natural product that was discovered by Cancer Center researchers have been licensed to a major pharmaceutical company with the goal of developing a new treatment for cancer. The compound (cryptophycin) has been licensed to Sanofi-Aventis.

**Outreach: to give reliable information to help end cancer**

- The Cancer Center through its Hawaii Tumor Registry division assemble the data necessary for Hawaii cancer statistics, including the next update (currently in progress) of the Hawaii Cancer Facts & Figures.
- Cancer Center faculty and staff are working with the state Department of Health and other Hawaii cancer stakeholders on the next revision of the Hawaii State Cancer Plan, a strategic initiative to end cancer in our state.
- Free Cancer Center public events for Hawaii residents deliver cutting edge information on cancer survivorship (from all cancers), as well as, specific information on breast cancer and prostate cancer. Many public educational events are held at the Sullivan Conference Facility in the Cancer Center.
- Cancer Center employees distributed cancer information at health fairs, neighborhood events, senior citizen fairs, and other venues.
- Cancer Center tours were given to groups of students, visitors, and senior citizens.

**Educating Hawaii's Youth: giving Hawaii students opportunity and training**

- Two dozen interns from Hawaii high schools and colleges, plus Hawaii students attending college in mainland schools, were trained in cancer research through the Cancer Center's summer internship program.
- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds receive educational and research opportunities through the Cancer Center using public/private grant funding.
- Additional college interns work in various areas of the Cancer Center throughout the year.