News Release

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UH CANCER CENTER RESEARCHER AWARDED $100,000 FOR GASTROINTESTINAL PILOT STUDY

The Masami Horio Memorial Fund awards research that could potentially identify people who might benefit from preventative gastric cancer screening

HONOLULU – The Masami Horio Memorial Fund awarded $100,000 to Scott Kuwada, MD, a professor in the Clinical and Translational Research Program at the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center for his gastrointestinal (GI) cancer pilot study.

"Being awarded the Masami Horio grant to study gastric cancer is special for me since I too share a personal family connection to gastric cancer here in Hawai'i. Both of my grandfathers were second generation Japanese, and, one died from gastric cancer and the other from colon cancer," said Dr. Kuwada.

Ruby Mizue, Dr. Scott Kuwada, Dr. James Turkson, Dr. Jerris Hedges

"We give great thanks to the family for their generous contribution to help us build UH Cancer Center investigators who will focus on curing the type of cancer that has affected their family as well as many others in Hawai'i. These funds are very important because they help early-stage studies have a chance for national funding in the future," said Dr. Jerris Hedges, dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine and interim director of the Cancer Center.

GI CANCER PILOT STUDY
Dr. Kuwada along with other collaborators recently discovered that a rare form of gastric cancer called gastrointestinal stromal tumor (GIST) occurs much more frequently in Asians than whites in Hawai'i, and, is strongly associated with Helicobacter pylori infection.

Prior studies at the UH Cancer Center revealed that the higher risk for gastric cancer in early Japanese immigrants in Hawai'i was due to Helicobacter pylori infection in their stomachs, which was acquired during their childhoods in Japan.

The grant will be used to identify novel molecular risk factors for gastric cancers, which could be used to identify individuals who might benefit from gastric cancer
"We intend to further develop evidence that there should be a gastric cancer screening program for individuals at higher risk for gastric cancers," said Dr. Kuwada.

**MASAMI HORIO MEMORIAL FUND**

![Image of Ruby Mizue](image.png)

Paul and Ruby Mizue

Ruby Mizue was the beneficiary of a bequest from her uncle and aunt Masami and Nobuye Horio. Ruby and her husband Paul Mizue decided to memorialize her aunt with a scholarship endowment at UH Leeward Community College and an expendable gift to the UH Cancer Center.

"The decision to establish a scholarship fund and to support cancer research in memory of my uncle and aunt seemed fitting memorials for them as they had no children of their own," said Mizue.

The purpose of the Fund is to provide a pilot project award for a UH Cancer Center research project related to GI cancer research with a preference for stomach cancer research.

"As a sansei, or third generation Japanese-American, I have been the privileged recipient of the values and sacrifices of my grandparents, parents, and loving aunts and uncles," said Mizue.

"Although these gifts will be funded entirely by proceeds from their estate, they are also established with deep gratitude and appreciation for the generations of family who preceded me and enabled my family to enjoy the benefits and privileges of our life in America."

The UH Cancer Center has many dedicated funds for specific cancer-related research projects, such as those focusing on liver, breast, pancreatic and ovarian cancers.

If you have a specific area of interest you would like to support, please contact Elaine Evans at elaine.evans@UHFoundation.org or T 808-692-0991. You can also make a gift at [www.uhfoundation.org/givetocancercenter](http://www.uhfoundation.org/givetocancercenter).

**The University of Hawai'i Cancer Center** is one of 69 research institutions designated by the National Cancer Institute. Affiliated with the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, the center is dedicated to eliminating cancer through research, education, and improved patient care. Learn more at [www.uhcancercenter.org](http://www.uhcancercenter.org). Like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/UHCancerCenter](http://www.facebook.com/UHCancerCenter). Follow us on Twitter [@UHCancerCenter](https://twitter.com/@UHCancerCenter).

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