



AMERICAN SAMOA COMMUNITY CANCER COALITION

NEWSLETTER



[CANCER] IMPACTS EVERYONE IN THE COMMUNITY AND THAT IS WHAT IT TAKES TO FIGHT BACK.

- Va'atausili Tofaeono

Listed upon our office windows are four words: Community, Unity, Strength, and Partnerships, or as I call them: CUSP. The word community is important as cancer does not concern itself with race, gender, education, or any other demographic. It impacts everyone in the community and that is what it takes to fight back. Unity implies a coordinated and wholistic approach to effectively manage the fight. There is more than the physical struggle but the emotional and even financial ones that need to be realized. It then takes strength and perseverance for all of those involved in the care of a cancer patient. We try to build upon this strength to support each other. Finally, partnerships are needed and a dedication to do so within the community builds trust to achieve our organizational mission and vision.

OUR NEW MISSION & VISION!

Helping the people of American Samoa fight and reduce the burden of cancer through community-based advocacy, prevention, and support for comfort

A Cancer free American Samoa

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- INSPIRE
- Tautai Lavea'i
- REACH

KEY TERMS

- **Health Literacy:** an individual's ability to **access, understand, and apply** basic health information
- **Metastatic Cancer:** the spread of cancer cells to new areas of the body



AS WE ENTER THE CUSP OF LEAVING 2018 AND ENTERING 2019, WE ARE AT A PIVOTAL TRANSITION POINT TO RAISE THE BAR OF SUCCESS.

In 2018, we used these four words to be successful. Although the REACH program ended in September, leaders from the Diocese of Samoa-Pago Pago, Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa, and the Methodist Churches endorsed policies to eliminate the use of cigarettes and promote healthy beverages. The INSPIRE program continued its development of sustainable research infrastructure and assessing the health literacy on island, and the Tautai program continued to strengthen cancer patient navigation. The ASCCC raised over \$70,000 from community partners and individuals who donated through annual events, making it the most successful fundraising year.

Data that we have collected from our research project will help us to understand more about the decisions people make and their understanding of cancer. The infrastructure we have established will further the support of cancer survivors. Our partnerships will help to build the sharing of information in the community by hosting a cancer symposium, and much more. On behalf of the staff of the ASCCC, we look forward to another successful year and as Dr. Martin Luther King once said “We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right.”

*Sincerely,
Va'a Jogaono*

ASCCC - Special Projects Coordinator

As we enter the cusp of leaving 2018 and entering 2019, we are at a pivotal transition point to raise the bar of success. Thanks to the generosity of the community we are going to help more people who are afflicted with cancer.

Get screened for colorectal cancer regularly, especially if you are age 45 or older and have a strong family history of colorectal cancer



Over 700 participants



INSPIRE

TAKE PREVENTATIVE ACTION AGAINST COLORECTAL CANCER

Wear all blue in March for National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month! To promote awareness and encourage preventative care action, staff presented every week in March at elementary and high schools, including Lupelele Elementary, Aua Elementary, Leone High School and Fagaitua High School.

As part of the nation-wide campaign, “Dress in Blue Day”, we held a month-long “Wear all Blue” social media campaign. Each day in March was represented by an individual, a family, group of friends, organization or school that shared photos with INSPIRE in their “wear all blue”. **March postings hit 67,563 views, a 66% increase from February of the same year. By 2024, we would like to implement at least 2 more awareness campaign initiatives.**



DEVELOPING RESEARCH TOOLS TO COLLECT LOCAL DATA

It is important to have culturally competent research tools, and one way to ensure this is to have in-language surveys. Using the back-translation tool and conducting 3 focus groups, the Short-Test of Functional Health Literacy in Adults (S-TOFHLA) and a Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs (KAB) survey about Colorectal Cancer were translated into the Samoan language. By using respondent driven sampling, **the surveys were completed by over 700 participants in both the Samoan and English languages over the course of 5 months.** The data from surveys are now being analyzed. This information will allow us **to assess the community’s health literacy and its impact on colorectal cancer screening.** It is the hope **that by 2024, the number of people who are referred for screenings for prevalent cancers will increase.**

71 Cancer Patient Stipends given in 2018

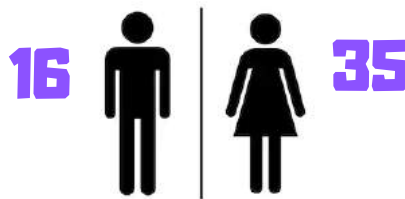


TAUTAI LAVEA'I

CANCER PATIENT STIPEND PROGRAM

In 2018, there were a total of 71 Cancer Patient Stipend recipients, **with 51 recipients being first-time applicants.** These \$500 stipends have assisted with treatment costs, airfare to pursue off-island treatment, household bills due to not being able to work and much more. This program is possible through sponsors, donations and fundraising efforts. All proceeds are used for stipends and not administrative costs. **By 2024, we hope to increase the annual fundraising amount by 10% and the number of first-time stipend recipients by 10%.**

First-time Applicant Demographics:



Average age at diagnosis:
55 years



Diagnosed with
Metastatic Cancer:

29 Patients

Most Notable:

 **7 of 12** 
Metastatic | Breast
(*7 of the 12 breast cancer diagnoses were metastatic.)

We have existing recommended screening modalities, but breast cancers are still not detected early enough.

 **1 of 8** 
Metastatic | Colorectal

Cancer was found during colonoscopies or were symptomatic and patients went in right away.

 **2 of 6**
Metastatic | Endometrial

There is an increasing incidence of this type of cancer in our program.

 **5 of 5**
Metastatic | Lung

This is consistent with national trends. Lung cancer presents the least symptoms, and there is no recommended screening.



TAUTAI LAVEA'I

Efforts are being made to continue strengthening the cancer patient stipend program. **The most important aim is sustainability.** After having designed, modified, and piloted this program twice - in a hospital, and then in a community-based setting, we now realize that the fundraising will go on regardless of any institutional funding. We need a formalized protocol to distribute funds, so we will collect data on patient experiences throughout their treatment, maintain client relationships, and train volunteers. **By 2024, we hope to develop a cancer patient navigation network for multi-level support, including family support.**

REACH

REACH HITS THE ROAD

The goals of REACH were to:

Increase accessibility of healthy beverages such as water and coconuts at church sponsored events

Decrease the exposure of second hand smoke to church members by eliminating the use of cigarettes on church grounds

To achieve these goals, this program **reached 75% of the population** in American Samoa by September 2018. **The focus was on all CCCAS, Catholic, and Methodist churches,** since 98% of the population is Christian. **Church leaders were encouraged to promote a healthy environment by not allowing smoking on church grounds; and serving water and coconut water during functions.** English and Samoan non-smoking signage were **posted**, and attendees at the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine religious education at Fatu o Aiga Hall recognized seeing the signs on holy grounds and other locations.

REACH Staff also conducted presentations for Fagaitua High School's Government class, the Aoelua Reading Program at the Aua LDS Church, and a Piano Recital at the Fatu o Aiga Hall. Staff taught about the effectiveness of policies, and participants had the opportunity to be innovative and create their own. It was empowering for participants to think they can control the environments at home, school or elsewhere. Although REACH ended in September 2018, **the goal is to expand partners to increase faith-based organizations by 20% by 2024.**



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS!

30-30 Strong	Family of Dr. Ierome Amoa	National Pacific Insurance
7PM Band - Filipino Youth	Family of Taulagi Faumuina & Kalameli Tuitele	Neil's ACE Home Center
A.S. Basketball Assoc.	Fax Cargo	Nighthawk Maliu Mai
A&T Station	Feli Fisheries	Onnuri Piano Academy
Alamai Gas Station	Feliciano Shipping	Pacific Sales & Marketing
Alliance Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault	Foresgren's	Pago Pago Trading Company
ANZ Bank	Haleck's West Administration	Paradise Restaurant
Aoelua Aiga	Hawaiian Airlines	PPG Consultants
April Su'esu'e-Lefono	ICS Cargo	Prime Consultants
AVE Designs	Godinet Rentals	Pro Shop
Aveina Wholesale	K.S. Mart	Rotary Club
BlueSky Pacific	The Korean Community	SAAB
CBT Ho Ching & Co.	Korean Community Assoc.	Samoa Motors
Chinese Community Assoc.	Korean & Chinese Community Youth	Samoa News
Christ the King Parish	Lalelei	Skelton
Cost-U-Less	Laulima Collaborative, LLC	So Pac Distributors
Dan King & Associates	LBJTMC	Stan & Robin Vasai
Department of Youth & Women's Assoc.	Maria Nimpha Duchnak	Starkist Samoa
DDW	Matson Shipping	Suani Farms
Family of Bonita	May & Associates	Swire Shipping
Thomsen & Dolan Teleso	McDonald's	Tafuna SM Mart
	McConnell Dowell	Talofa Airways
	Monsignor Viane Etuale	Talofa Systems
	Morris Scanlan Svc.	Tapumanaia Satele
		Tautai Rentals
		TMO Beverages

THANK YOU TO OUR FIRST-TIME STIPEND RECIPIENTS OF 2018!

Akeliana Mageo	Fala Tiatia	Meki Taumopeau	Sulia Taatia
Akenese Maifea	Feiloai Togia	Milovale Alai	Tafa Va'a
Amaketo Titilii	Fiaui Uikilifi	Misi Taufetee	Tau Sale
Avea Sefo	Florita Seumanutafa	Niue Muagutu	Tauaitia Aiava
Betty Vaeao	Jacinta Brown	Olevia Toilolo	Teuaililo Bird
Carolyn Bird	James Cedric Cayanan	Otila Pselio	Tiitiatalaga Sasagi
Christine Maifea	Jeanette Sili	Peato Tuisea	Tina Sevaaetasi
Edelmira Labaguis	Kerikupa Mafoe	Peter Ah Ching	Tinei Tolu
Faatulouna Tuitele	Lasela Auro	Renato Sello	Tutaima Leaupepe
Faapaia Taveuveu	Laina Misa	Reupena Togia	Uaite Auelua
Faapelepele Fualaga	Lefetaui Saelua	Saeu Porotesano	William Faulkerson
Faau Seumanutafa	Letoe'e Pua	Sai Steffany Pu'a	Zsofe del Mundo
Faulufalega Olo	Marilyn Anne Anesi	Shalom Tafili	

Unfortunately, some of these individuals are no longer with us. We send their loved ones our comfort and prayers, and we honor their fighting spirits.