

Nursing Students and the American Red Cross Prepare Community for Disasters

This semester, students from UHM Nursing partnered with the American Red Cross to help community members improve their preparedness for emergencies. As volunteers for the American Red Cross Pillowcase Project, UHM Nursing students visited multiple elementary schools around Oahu, leading presentations on safety during emergencies. The teaching sessions explained how to create an emergency supply kit by packing essential items in a pillowcase for easy transport during a disaster. Elementary students who participated in the teachings also had the opportunity to decorate and personalize their pillowcases, and share what they've learned with friends and family. According to Kathryn Pifer, Disaster Preparedness Manager for American Red Cross of Hawaii, UHM Nursing students did an incredible job, reaching 598 elementary school students, and even 40 preschoolers!



The American Red Cross Pillowcase Project, sponsored by Disney, is a free, interactive preparedness program designed for youth ages 8 to 11. The program aims to increase awareness and understanding of natural hazards, and teaches safety, emotional coping skills, and personal preparedness. The UHM Nursing students' work on this project was to fulfill requirements for their clinical course, NURS 450L: Community, Public & Global Health Nursing Lab.

In addition to their work on the Pillowcase Project, students also assisted with the American Red Cross Home Fire Campaign, by installing fire alarms in the homes of kupuna living in Papakolea. The goal of this campaign is to enroll volunteers across the country and install 100,000 free smoke alarms in high-risk neighborhoods nationwide. By helping to provide this lifesaving service, UHM Nursing students contributed to the American Red Cross's quest to reduce death and injury from home fires, and learned invaluable lessons about how nurses

can contribute to improving the community's preparedness for emergencies.

For more information about emergency preparedness programs, including volunteer opportunities offered by the American Red Cross, visit <http://www.redcross.org/>