



The Hawaii Lions Eye Bank has a NEW Home!

Several Hundred people in Hawaii get
a Cornea Transplant Annually...

MEDIA CONTACT INFORMATION: Irwin Santos
District 50 Hawaii Lions Public Relations
Office: (808)946-8107 ~ Cell: (808)230-6107
Email: irwin@isle-cc.com

Hawaii Lions Eye Bank & Makana Foundation
Bob Lee - Cell: (808) 282-1258
Email: boblee@towillshigeoka.com

Find out more about the Hawaii Lions and becoming a member by visiting the website
www.hawaiilions.org

District 50 Hawaii
Lions Clubs



Celebrating 85 Years
of Community Service
in Hawaii

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Hawaii Lions Eye Bank New Facility Grand Opening **Saturday April 30, 2011 at 1:00pm**

The **Hawaii Lions Eye Bank & Makana Foundation** (HLEBMF) has moved into its new facility and permanent home in the **Kuakini Physicians Tower** 405 North Kuakini, Suite #801. A **blessing and tour** begin at **1pm Saturday April 30, 2011**. Due to space availability, this **press release AND invitation** goes out to the Media, Sponsors, and Lions Clubs members.

The HLEBMF is the **ONLY** eye banking facility in the State of Hawaii. Its main mission is to provide ocular tissue for corneal transplants and other ocular surgery to the ophthalmologists of Hawaii, providing the gift of sight to those in need in our State and around the world. The Eye Bank has provided over **4,200 corneas for transplants since 1980**, and currently supplies approximately 180 corneas annually for transplants in Hawaii.

Local placement of the ocular tissue is time sensitive and dependent upon scheduled surgeries and requests. As the demand exceeds local supply, approximately 75% of the corneal transplants in Hawaii are performed with ocular tissue imported by the HLEBMF from affiliated mainland eye banks. A small percentage, approximately 20% of the tissue recovered in Hawaii, is exported to mainland or international eye banks for their use.

As a tissue center, the HLEBMF is regulated by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) under 21 CFR 1217, and is a member of the Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA) who establishes policy and is the accrediting body for eye banks in the U.S.

For more info: E-mail **Bob Lee** at boblee@towillshigeoka.com OR call **(808) 282-1258**

On June 30, 1925, **Helen Keller** attended the Lions Club International Convention held at Cedar Point, Ohio. She spoke and challenged the Lions to *"help me hasten the day when there shall be no preventable blindness; no little deaf, blind child untaught; no blind man or woman unaided? I appeal to you Lions, you who have your sight, your hearing, you who are strong and brave and kind. Will you not constitute yourselves **Knights of the Blind** in the crusade against darkness?"*

Since that day, the Lions of the world have accepted her challenge and have worked in sight programs aimed at preventable blindness. The Hawaii Lions Eye Bank is part of that challenge and commitment to those in need.



Find out more about the Hawaii Lions and becoming a member by visiting the website
www.hawaiilions.org

MISSION:

The Hawaii Lions Eye Bank & Makana Foundation (HLEBMF) is the primary activity of the Hawaii Lions Foundation (HLF). The primary mission of the Eye Bank is to provide the people of Hawaii with quality ocular tissue for transplantation, while the Makana Foundation promotes organ and tissue donor registration.

The HLF is the charitable, tax-exempt body of the District 50 Hawaii Lions, which is administered by a Board of Trustees, comprised of elected Lions members from each Zone in District 50 Hawaii. All Lions Clubs in the District are members and decide the policies and bylaws of the Foundation.

HISTORY:

The HLF originally was organized and chartered as the Hawaii Lions Eye Foundation on July 28, 1961 by the Lions of District 50 Hawaii. Its objectives were to carry out the Lions programs of sight conservation and work with the blind on a statewide basis. That year, the Eye Foundation was asked to take over the Eye Bank of Hawaii from the Blood Bank of Hawaii. On January 24, 1962, the Hawaii Lions Eye Bank became an integral part of the Foundation, with its focus primarily educational, dealing with sight conservation and prevention of blindness and as an eye donor registry.

The Hawaii Lions Eye bank was “re-activated” to its current role of providing ocular tissue on October 1, 1980 as a program under the Hawaii Lions Eye Foundation, after suffering a period of inactivity during the 1970’s. At that time, there were twenty-seven individuals on the waiting list for corneal transplants. The first cornea from the Eye Bank was provided on October 15, 1980, with over 4,200 corneas provided to the people of Hawaii since then.

With the creation of the laboratory in 1980, the establishment of a list of potential eye, organ and tissue donors became critical. At that time another organization, the Makana Foundation, was also actively handling organ donor registrations. To prevent duplication and avoid public confusion, the two organizations merged officially on March 13, 1984 as the Hawaii Lions Eye Bank & Makana Foundation. On that day, the Hawaii Lions Eye Foundation also officially became the Hawaii Lions Foundation.

To support and fund the growth of the HLEBMF, the Lions of Hawaii conducted annual Candy Day Fund Raisers from 1981 to 1984. Insufficient to meet the needs of the Eye Bank, the candy sales were replaced by walk-a-thons, with a revised goal of \$1 million. Once the goal was reached, the “Walk for Sight” was discontinued. Funds from the campaign were used to establish an “Eye Bank Trust”, which could be used as a source of funding for the HLEBMF.

For the first twenty years, the Eye Bank was located at the Straub Clinic and Hospital, who provided office and laboratory space and equipment. Then the facility was required to relocate a couple of times, first to the Queen’s Physician Office Building #2 for five years, then to the recent South Street location.

Find out more about the Hawaii Lions and becoming a member by visiting the website
www.hawaiilions.org

With the need to secure another new site for the Eye Bank, the HLF trustees decided to authorize the purchase of a unit in the Kuakini Physicians Tower on June of 2010, finally securing a permanent home for the HLEBMF. The design and construction of the new facility began in July of 2010 and the work was completed at the end of February, 2011.

For more info on the Hawaii Lions Eye Bank & Makana Foundation visit the website:

<http://www.hlebmf.org>

For more information on the Hawaii Lions of District 50, visit: <http://www.hawaiilions.org>

Find out more about the Hawaii Lions and becoming a member by visiting the website
www.hawaiilions.org