



Blood Bank of Hawaii

Give Blood. It's Safe. It's Simple. It Saves Lives.

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Contact: Laurie Chang, Director of Communications
808.848.4711 (office); 808.271.5023 (cell)
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Total Page: 1

GIVING THANKS FOR A SECOND CHANCE AT LIFE

Honolulu – In July 2010, Tom Bongiorno faced what he thought was a seemingly routine surgery. Little did he know it would nearly cost him his life.

Tom was admitted to a hospital to repair a severely pinched sciatic nerve that had confined him to a wheelchair. During the anticipated four-hour surgery, something went terribly wrong. Doctors severed a vein that led to excessive bleeding into his abdomen.

“I knew the risks [of surgery] but I never thought anything would go wrong,” said Tom. “I later learned that, at one point, I had a five percent chance of survival.”

Tom required 31 units of blood and seven units of platelets to keep him alive during the surgery.

“During Tom’s hospital stay, people we don’t even know donated blood in Tom’s name at a company drive happening next to my office,” said Tom’s wife, Luanne. “My friends showed me the donor ‘Lei Cards’ at the hospital—and I broke down.”

Today, Tom and Luanne know there is nothing small about each unit of blood that helped keep him alive.

“If it weren’t for blood transfusions, I wouldn’t be here today to enjoy my wife and eight-year-old daughter, whose voice I heard when I woke up in the hospital,” recalled Tom. “She asked me if I’d be okay and if we can all go home and be happy again. It was music to my ears.

“I cannot thank the donors enough for their selfless commitment to saving lives,” he continued. “Life is indeed precious, and so are they.”

Founded in 1941, Blood Bank of Hawaii (BBH) is a non-profit organization committed to providing a safe and adequate supply of blood, blood products and related transfusion services to Hawaii’s patients. BBH is licensed and regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, accredited by AABB, and a member of America’s Blood Centers, the nation’s largest network of community-based blood programs. For more information, visit www.BBH.org.

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