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Beverly High Students Prepare To 'Imagine A Cure' For Cancer At Charity Soccer Game On Saturday, Dec. 8

By Laura Coleman

For Beverly Hills High School students, the importance of finding a cure for cancer will be front and center at the upcoming charity soccer games against St. Bernard on Saturday, Dec. 8.

Starting at 2 p.m., the afternoon event will serve as a fundraiser for Tower Cancer Research Foundation, with the varsity girls kicking off at 3 p.m. and the varsity boys kicking off at 5 p.m.

"It's pretty much coming and getting the whole community together. All the kids love it because we're having fun and raising money for a great cause," described soccer player Lauren Stein, the BHHS senior who has helped spearhead the event since its inception three years ago to honor her mother, cancer survivor Patti Stein, who was treated at Tower. "They helped my mom and I thought it would be nice to do that in her honor."

Tower supports high impact research and clinical trials, in addition to offering a host of support programs.

"Imagine if we could come up with a cure for cancer one day," said Patti Stein, who has been involved in the fundraiser since her daughter suggested Tower as a recipient. "This would be such an amazing accomplishment for everyone, including the high school



Beverly Hills High soccer players at last year's fundraiser (from left): Makaya Tome, Ashley Heravi, Lauren Stein, Kayla Shadgoo and Dani Elitzur.

kids who have learned what it means to raise awareness of cancer and any good cause, as well as how much time and effort is involved to put on a community fundraising event."

The event is an incredibly meaningful opportunity to raise awareness in addition to funds. Already, students have raised almost \$2,000, and that amount continues to grow daily. Last year, the event raised \$13,000.

Both the boys and girls varsity teams will be kicking in honor of someone in their matches against St. Bernard, which will also be participating in this year's fundraiser.

BHHS Boys Varsity team captain Jonah Okum, who will be kicking in honor of his grandmother, a breast cancer survivor, underscored how meaningful the event is for all participants.

"I will always remember the determination and strength she utilized to

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KICKING FOR A CURE

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defeat it. She is an inspiration to me and my family," he said.

Each of the players will be kicking to honor someone close to them whose life has been impacted by cancer, such as BHHS Boys Varsity Team Captain Omer Cohen, who will be kicking in honor of his great uncle Moshe who passed away from cancer three years ago or fellow team captain Iden Azad, who will be kicking to honor his great aunt, who, after overcoming breast cancer, lost her second battle to cancer when he was 10.

Tower Cancer Research Foundation Director of Events Brook Poklemba said that the student-led fundraiser, which is now in its third year, is particularly meaningful for the participants and the community.

"Especially with that age group, when they get behind something it's really powerful," she said. "The spirit of the whole thing is really cool. It's kind of become an outlet for the girls on the team to feel like they are doing something and there's real power in that."

To donate or for more information, visit: <http://www.towercancer.org/bhhs>. There is no fee to participate, and everyone is welcome to attend the event.