

High schoolers take up cancer cause

Park Vista medical students to raise awareness

By JAN ENGOREN
Staff writer

Ninth-graders Alexandria (Allie) Pizzino and Amelia Glas, students in the medical academy at Park Vista Community High School west of Boynton Beach, are two young women on a mission.

Members of the Health Occupations Students of America club, the 15-year-olds are participating in a competition in the Community Awareness category with a goal to raise community awareness about lung cancer.

"Both Amelia and Allie have the same goals and ambitions," said Vinne Pizzino, Allie's father. "They are great working together

and give it equal efforts. They are both go getters and want to do well. This is not even for a grade, but for an extracurricular activity."

The teens attended different middle schools and only met this year at Park Vista when they shared similar classes.

Initially wanting to work solo, Allie came around to Amelia's idea of working in tandem.

"Once I thought about it, I decided it would be fun to do it with Amelia," Allie said.

The two chose lung cancer, Amelia said, "Because it's common enough so people know about it, but not common enough so others wouldn't choose the topic."

"We want to target kids our age to teach them about prevention," Allie said.

They prepared a PowerPoint presentation and created lung models with balloons and old water bottles to use for demonstrations.

They visited elementary and middle schools, including Spady Elementary School in Delray Beach and Woodlands Middle School west of Lake Worth, to teach smoking prevention and how it relates to lung cancer.

They created an Instagram account (AA.lungcancerawareness) for fellow students to follow their

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Allie Pizzino, left, and Amelia Glas, medical students at Park Vista Community High School, are raising awareness of lung cancer through a club project.

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progress and ordered 200 rubber wrist bracelets that read, "Lung Cancer Awareness," which they are selling for \$1 with the proceeds going to the Lung Cancer Foundation of America.

Allie is a dancer who wants to be an orthodontist, and Amelia, who loves to scuba dive and do aerial tripeze, wants to do stem cell research.

The two have received

help from their teachers, Christine Finkel and Maria Yoder.

"I'm really impressed with the girls," Yoder said. "This is one of the best projects I've ever seen since I've been part of the HOSA program. They're both dedicated, responsible, meticulous, caring and well-liked. Not only in the classroom, but in the community as well."

She said they both participated in the club's Haunted Hospital fundraiser and have worked to raise money

for the club's competition costs.

"Ever since they signed up for the event, the two have come in early before the bell to work in the computer lab, stay after school and even work during their lunch," Yoder said. "They're passionate about what they're doing and have a great drive to succeed."

To donate, email allie_pizzino@comcast.net or ameliarglas@gmail.com.

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