age. Just over half of the participants (55.9%) reported that they were somewhat to very involved with REAL. Younger members, 12-15 years of age, were more likely to be somewhat to very active (64.4%) compared to older members, 16-19 years (50.3%).

Furthermore, a higher proportion of members that joined in the past 6 months were more likely to be somewhat to very active (69.9%) compared with those that joined in the past 1-2 years (59.4%) or over 2 years ago (42.4%). Most members reported they joined REAL for the following reasons: a) because they believe in the cause (96.8%), b) wanted to make a difference (93.0%), and c) wanted to learn new skills (79.8%). Members heard about REAL through a friend (25.0%), attended a REAL event (22.8%), or at school (19.8%).

Most participants felt that hearing the REAL message from peers is effective (82.8%), and that attacking the tobacco industry is an effective way to interest youth (63.3%). REAL has also had a positive impact on youth anti-tobacco advocacy efforts among members. Sixty percent (60%) of participants reported that they had tried to convince friends and family to quit using tobacco 4 or more times in the past 12 months. Furthermore, 14.3% of participants reported that they had actively tried to convince school or government officials to be more concerned about tobacco issues.

Just over 30% of survey participants reported that they had ever tried smoking, yet only 5.6% stated they had smoked a cigarette in the past 30 days. These rates for smoking in the past 30 days are well below 18.7% reported by Hawaii high school students of similar age (22). A large majority of participants (77.3%) reported that involvement in REAL had been somewhat to very helpful in helping them avoid using tobacco. Results from this evaluation provide evidence demonstrating that using a youth empowerment model can be effective in changing attitudes and behaviors of Hawaii’s youth toward tobacco use.

Conclusion
REAL: Hawaii Youth Movement Against the Tobacco Industry has demonstrated that it can have a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviors of its members. REAL captures the attention of youth through ‘edgy’ marketing; motivates youth to resist tobacco products by educating them about the manipulative strategies used by the tobacco industry to target young people; enables youth to advocate against the tobacco industry; and mobilizes them to be actively involved in tobacco control and prevention initiatives. As a result youth advocacy and empowerment has become a recognized component of a comprehensive statewide tobacco control and prevention program in Hawaii. Future directions for REAL include continued brand development with the inclusion of a mass media component, evaluation of the impact that anti-tobacco messaging has on Asian and Pacific Islander youth in Hawaii, and examine the long-term effects that participation in REAL have on members and alumni.

Acknowledgment
This project is supported through funding provided by Tobacco Settlement Funds/Hawaii Community Foundation. For further information about REAL: Hawaii Youth Movement Against the Tobacco Industry, please see the Website: www.realmessage.net.

For more information about the Cancer Research Center, please visit our website at www.crch.org.

References

Aloha Laboratories, Inc
...when results count

CAP accredited laboratory
Quality and Service

David M. Amberger M.D.
“Best Doctors in America”
Laboratory Director
Phone (808) 842-6600
Fax (808) 848-0663
results@aloahalabs.com
www.alohalabs.com