A Summer Of Fun, Food For Jack Hall Memorial Complex Keiki

BY NICOLE KATO

Dozens of children at Jack Hall Memorial Housing Complex in Waipahu were treated to a fun summer and good food as part of YMCA of Honolulu’s free summer lunch program.

“Many of the families who reside in Jack Hall Memorial Housing community have children who are not regularly enrolled in organized school break and summer programs when school is out, so we knew that many of these children would not have access to the free lunch program we were offering through our summer programs at the Lee Ward Y.,” explained YMCA executive director Jen Townsend. “So instead, we decided to bring the program to them.”

The partnership and plans to begin the summer meal program at the complex began this spring, and YMCA also was able to coordinate activities for keiki, thanks to a No Kid Hungry grant from Share Our Strength, in partnership with Arby’s Foundation.

Summer activity favorites included capture the ball, instructional swim and water safety lessons, and arts and crafts activities like making “flubber” and origami.

“What we found was that many of the children living in the complex have never experienced organized summer programs before,” Townsend continued.

YMCA of Honolulu joined the national Y-USA’s Anti-Hunger movement in 2012, offering free meals in communities where 50 percent or more of the school-age population is on the free-and-reduced lunch program.

In addition to the summer program, YMCA of Honolulu also offers free regular-session after-school meals to children enrolled in A+ classes at August Ahrens, Honowai and Waipahu elementary schools.