Philanthropy Club's Chemo Cap Project Knitting up a Storm

Handcrafted chemo caps are needed to help cancer patients during one of the most difficult parts of their treatment. Wearing a special chemo cap can help suddenly bald cancer patients feel like themselves again.

Berkeley Lab's Philanthropy Club is working to meet this need with the Chemo Cap Project. The project brings together talented staff from throughout LBNL to make individual caps that will be donated to Alta Bates Hospital and Children's Hospital of Oakland. Running from April to October, the Chemo Cap Project meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month to review progress, assist individual members with projects and questions, and plan for the upcoming parts of the project. So far the Project has completed over 80 individual hats for premies, infants, children, teens, men, and women.

In addition to providing an opportunity for staff to put their creativity and talents to a worthy cause, the project has also provided opportunities for

people to learn a new skill. Project members have taught classes in crochet (Phyllis Gale), working with the round knitting loom (Cynthia Ernest), and making hats with double-pointed knitting needles (Carmen Escobar). Some staff don't have the time or interest in creating hats, but have generously donated yarn that other project members can use for their projects.

In addition to the monthly meetings of the Project, members have organized to meet informally at lunch in the lower cafeteria on Tuesdays and Fridays to work on projects together and provide tips and training to each other. (Crochet classes continue on Fridays through the end of the project in October.)

Caps can be donated as completed or at the end of the project. Project members are planning lunch at the hospital cafeterias when the donations are delivered in October. Interest is already high among project participants to repeat the project next year.

Contact Cynthia Ernest at clernest@lbl.gov x 5938 for more information about how to participate, how to find free patterns online, and when classes are available.