

WKRBC unveils new donor beds

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Brand new blood donor beds were unveiled Wednesday by the Western Kentucky Regional Blood Center to the student members of Impact 100 Next Generation.

The grand unveiling was part of a Next-Gen social gathering to recruit new members for 2020.

“We are showing the class of 2019 what their award money did for us and showing the incoming class of recruits what they can expect their year to be like with Next-Gen and the work that these girls have done for us,” said Vicki Ellis, WKRBC director of donor resources.

The young members tested the new beds Wednesday and said they’re thinking about donating blood.

In its third year, the group is a grant-making initiative for young girls who are in 8th through 12th grade in the Owensboro community.

WKRBC was able to purchase seven new blood donor beds thanks to a \$13,000 grant from the young women in the group. Each member pitches \$100 and the money is pulled together to create the grant.

“We’re thrilled because when our donors come in, some of our chairs before were just malfunctioning. They weren’t working properly,” Ellis said. “But when the donors come in and see the new chairs they’re encouraged to donate, which is what we want. We want them to be comfortable so we’re all just thrilled with it.”

Ellis said the old beds were 40 years old, adding they desperately needed to be refurbished, retired and replaced.

Joy Carroll, chair of Impact 100 Next Gen, said more than a dozen nonprofits had submitted applications for the 2019 grant. WKRBC received the award in October.

“Their need was great,” Carroll said. “The Next Gen ladies came and visited on their site visit. They sat in the chairs. They saw the problems and it was their number one pick.”

Carroll said the organization has given a total of \$26,700 to local nonprofits. She said there were 130 members in 2019 and that number continues to grow every year.

“Seeing the donor beds and last year when we looked at them, they were in very bad conditions,” said member Maggie Bacon. “So it was really great to be able to help out this way.”