



SAINT LUKE'S HEALTH SYSTEM

Directed by Cardiovascular Consultants, P.A.

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NEWS

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Donated AEDs make centers more "heart safe"

*Life-saving Automated External Defibrillators placed at City Union Mission
and Northland Therapeutic Riding Center*

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Individuals and families at two non-profit organizations will start the new year heart safe, thanks to newly placed Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) donated by an area couple.

AEDs have been donated to the City Union Mission in downtown Kansas City, Mo., and to Northland Therapeutic Riding Center in Kearney, Mo.

The devices were donated by Todd and Cheryl Grace in memory of their son Carter through his fund based at Saint Luke's Hospital Foundation. Carter died at the age of 4 from sudden cardiac arrest.

An AED is a small, portable device that trained first responders can utilize to deliver an electric shock to someone experiencing sudden cardiac arrest, a potentially fatal abnormal heart rhythm. The AED analyzes the heart's rhythm and prompts the user to deliver a defibrillation shock if it determines one is needed. The AED guides the user through each step of the defibrillation process by providing voice and/or visual prompts.

Sudden cardiac arrest is unpredictable and can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere. Time to defibrillation, the most critical factor in sudden cardiac arrest survival, can be reduced if an AED is "on-site" and can be brought to the victim quickly. This is one of the reasons that survival rates improve in communities with active AED programs. Every minute that passes before defibrillation reduces the victim's survival rate by seven to 10 percent.

"These devices can make the difference between life and death in areas where large numbers of people gather to work, learn, play, or worship," said Marcia McCoy, R.N., executive director of the Heart Safe program at Saint Luke's. "Thanks to the generosity

of donors like the Graces, more potentially vulnerable and worthy organizations like City Union Mission and the Northland Therapeutic Riding Center can increase survival from sudden cardiac arrest.”

Facts about Sudden Cardiac Arrest

More than 350,000 people die from sudden cardiac arrest each year; 7,000-10,000 of these are adolescents/young athletes. Ninety-five percent of sudden cardiac arrests occur outside a hospital setting, and nationally, less than five percent survive.

- It is estimated that more than 300 athletes die at an organized sporting event each year.
- Sudden cardiac arrest can occur without prior warning or symptoms and can happen to anyone, anyplace, at any time.
- Sudden cardiac arrest is a malfunction of the electrical system of the heart resulting in an abrupt loss of normal heart rhythm.
- Ventricular fibrillation is the most common life-threatening heart rhythm associated with sudden cardiac arrest.
- Early electrical defibrillation (shock) is the only effective treatment for ventricular fibrillation.
- For every minute that passes without defibrillation, overall survival decreases by 10 percent.

Saint Luke’s Mid America Heart Institute’s Heart Safe Community program works with diverse metropolitan communities to increase overall survival from sudden cardiac arrest by partnering with organizations to place AEDs where large numbers of people gather to work, learn, play, and worship.

For more information, visit saintlukeshealthsystem.org or call NurseLine at (816) 932-6220 and choose option four.

Saint Luke’s Mid America Heart Institute is a member of Saint Luke’s Health System, which consists of 11 area hospitals and many primary care practices, and provides a range of inpatient, outpatient, and home care services. Founded as a faith-based, not-for-profit organization, our mission includes a commitment to the highest levels of excellence in health care and the advancement of medical research and education. The health system is an aligned organization in which the physicians and hospitals assume responsibility for enhancing the physical, mental, and spiritual health of people in the metropolitan Kansas City area and the surrounding region.

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