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# News

**For Immediate Release**

## **Mercy Medical Center Donates 13 AEDs to Local Schools and Organizations**

**Cedar Rapids, IA – November 19, 2015** – Eleven schools including Washington High School, Wilson Middle School, Franklin Middle School, Coolidge Elementary, Truman Elementary, Jackson Elementary, Van Buren Elementary, Summit Schools, all in Cedar Rapids; Hiawatha Elementary and Nixon Elementary, in Hiawatha; and Francis Marion Intermediate School, as well as St. Wenceslaus Church and Waypoint, both in Cedar Rapids, will be outfitted with automated external defibrillators (AED) thanks to Mercy Medical Center, which donated the devices. The donation was made possible by both the Mercy Medical Center AED Donation Program, a program seeking to provide local nonprofits that demonstrate financial need with AEDs, and Think Safe, Inc., a local integrator and wholesaler in the first aid industry.

“I am excited to hear that Mercy is assisting in placing AEDs in the local schools,” said Hiawatha Fire Chief Michael Nesslage. “Early defibrillation can double the chance of survival in cardiac arrest, and every minute without CPR or defibrillation can reduce the chance of survival by as much as 10%. Having AEDs where school staff can access and use them is sure to make a difference.”

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is the leading killer in the United States. Annually, 300,000 people lose their lives to a sudden cardiac event. Of those 300,000, approximately 5,000 to 7,000 are students under the age of 21, most of which were unaware of a heart-related medical condition. The key to fighting SCA is early defibrillation within the initial minutes after 911 EMS has been called. Those critical early minutes make all the difference between life and death during SCA events.

“Everyone will feel safer knowing that there is an AED nearby that can help not only students and staff with known heart conditions in an emergency, but also our students and staff who may be completely unaware of a condition. SCA isn’t predictable, so we have to be prepared,” said Nancy Alderdyce, head nurse for Marion Independent School District and long-time advocate for SCA preparedness in schools.

The donated devices are HeartSine samaritan® PAD 350P AEDs, by HeartSine Technologies, a world leader in personal and public access defibrillators, and are sourced by Think Safe, headquartered in the Cedar Rapids metro area. Think Safe has been providing life-saving equipment and training for over 10 years, all over the world, and is an innovator in the first aid industry, holding various proprietary patents as a manufacturer of First Voice first aid hardware and software products. Think Safe is dedicated to the fight against SCA and gladly offers AED grants or contributing donations to help offset the costs of life-saving devices.

“Mercy is pleased to be partnering with Think Safe to make the AEDs available for donation in our community,” said Melissa Cullum, community benefit manager at Mercy Medical Center.

“Mercy is committed to equipping qualifying local non-profits with these life-saving devices. We know AED’s are a critical component in increasing survival rates among sudden cardiac arrest victims.”

The AEDs will be installed throughout the month of November on the following dates.

**Friday, November 20, 2015:**

St. Wenceslaus Parish Center, 8:30 a.m.  
Francis Marion Intermediate School, 9:30 a.m.  
Summit Schools, 10:30 a.m.  
Franklin Middle School, 11:15 a.m.

**Tuesday, November 24, 2015:**

Van Buren Elementary School, 9:15 a.m.  
Truman Elementary School, 9:45a.m.  
Jackson Elementary School, 10:15a.m.  
Waypoint Services for Women, Children, and Families, 11:00a.m.  
Nixon Elementary School, 1:30 p.m.

**Monday, November 30, 2015:**

Hiawatha Elementary School, 10:00a.m.  
Washington High School, 12:45 p.m.  
Wilson Middle School, 1:30p.m.  
Coolidge Elementary School, 2:30 p.m.