

Lifesaving Awards



American Red Cross
Training Services

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Inspiring Stories by Region

Lifeguards Exhibit “A Level of Courage Reserved for a Chosen Few” in the Northern New England Region

The laid-back scene at Lake Pinneo in Quechee, Vermont got a jolt when a beachgoer collapsed last June 2021. Getting the call, head lifeguard Brent Chandler arrived on the scene to find a bystander had started CPR. After directing guards Ayla Pearson and Benning Johnson to call 911 and get the AED, respectively, Chandler took over, performing compressions and managing application of the AED, which advised a shock. All totaled, Chandler gave seven rounds of CPR in four minutes before EMS arrived; the victim survived.



“To act quickly and decisively during a crisis takes a level of courage reserved only for a chosen few,” said Michael Lash, Vermont Chapter Board Chair, American Red Cross of Northern New England, as he presented each lifeguard with the Lifesaving Award for Professional Responders. Read the [full story](#) in the region’s blog post.

“The Training Paid Off” for These Lifeguards in Rescue of 98-Year-Old Man in the Greater New York Region

As fitness centers and recreation facilities boom in popularity, lifeguards are being called to conduct rescues both in and out of the water. That’s what happened to Lauren Chiappetta and Thomas Massam, who came to the aid of a 98-year-old man who suffered a cardiac emergency while exercising on a recumbent bicycle at the Greenwich YMCA on November 5, 2021. Chiappetta and Massam administered oxygen to the semi-conscious man, who was struggling to breathe and barely had a pulse. The team simultaneously calmed the man’s family until he was ready to be transported to the hospital by paramedics. While the victim was unable to attend the ceremony where Massam and Chiappetta were presented with the Lifesaving Award for Professional Responders, they feel the real reward is seeing him celebrate his 99th birthday. Get more details and see photos in this [Facebook post](#).



Lifesaving Swim Coach: “I Will Never Swim Alone Again” in the Cascades Region

Masters swimming champion and coach Tim Waud was swimming in open water with his friend and fellow coach Jim Teisher at Clackamette Cove in Oregon City when Teisher slipped under the water. Waud, a trained Red Cross lifeguard, grabbed Teisher and began towing him to shore. Once on land, Waud initiated CPR and was joined in two-person resuscitation by fellow master’s swimmer Aaron Hawkins. Though tired from swimming, they continued compressions until EMS arrived, restarted Teisher’s heart and created an airway. By the time Teisher reached the hospital he was conscious and complaining of a very sore chest. “I felt a wave of relief and emotion,” said Waud, who was awarded the Certificate of Merit by the Red Cross for the June 2020 rescue and vows to never swim alone again. Hawkins was awarded the Certificate of Extraordinary Personal Action at the same ceremony. Waud shared his story and safety tips for open-water swimmers in this [Facebook post](#).



Instructor Spotlight

Christie Merrill

Each month we highlight an instructor whose student used their lifesaving training to save or sustain a life. This month we recognize Christie Merrill from the Northwest Region who was honored in a ceremony on June 1, 2022. On January 5, 2022, a student whom Christie trained in Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED used her training to help save the life of a one-year girl who was turning blue from choking. The student administered back blows to dislodge the food item which she then carefully removed. Thanks to the student’s quick response and Christie’s instruction, the child was able to cough and breathe normally.



Lifesaving Awards Vault

From the vault of The Noblesville Ledger (Noblesville, Indiana), September 30, 1983

The Red Cross has been instrumental in teaching water safety for more than 100 years, so reaching into the vault to find stories of people who have used their training to save a life pulled up many. This issue features a rescue from nearly 40 years ago. On this day in time, Mark Downs and Scott Lamb were lauded by the Hamilton County Red Cross for saving the life of a 4-year-old Indianapolis boy. While enjoying a day at Hillside Beach on August 13, 1983, they administered CPR on little David Lasley and successfully revived him. The youngster was present at the Red Cross dinner ceremony recognizing Downs and Lamb.



Nominate.



Recognize.



Inspire.

Saving Lives Starts Here

If you or someone you know has used skills and knowledge learned in a Red Cross Training Services course to help save or sustain the life of another individual, visit [LifesavingAwards.org](#) to nominate them.

Want to see if you have a local hero in your area? Log on or create an account to the Red Cross Volunteer Connection portal to see our [interactive map](#).

Get Inspired!

The Red Cross has been the gold standard in lifesaving aquatic science, instruction, and certification since 1914. In fact, more than 320,000 lifeguards were certified through Red Cross training in 2021, helping to build confidence in the water, for life. Although it is peak season now, pools look for lifeguards year-round. Consider joining this elite profession, starting with taking a Red Cross [Lifeguarding](#) certification course.