

Lifesaving Awards



American Red Cross
Training Services

NOMINATE NOW

Inspiring Stories by Region

Driver Saves Man From Burning Car in Alabama and Mississippi Region

Truck driver Gary Thomas was hauling a load at 4 a.m. when he noticed a large fireball on the side of the road. As he approached, he realized it was part of a multiple motor vehicle wreck and saw one of the drivers was still trapped in their car. After assessing the scene, Gary grabbed his fire extinguisher, directed bystanders, freed the driver and began to provide first aid, even as flames continued to creep up the driver's clothing. Gary dismisses his heroic actions, simply saying, "I knew that's somebody's father or somebody's son or husband." For using his Red Cross training to save a life, Gary was honored with the Certificate of Merit. To hear firsthand from Gary and listen to the moving local news story, visit the region's [Facebook page](#).



Gary Thomas (4th from left) received his Lifesaving Award in front of his family.

Police Sergeant Controls a Severe Bleed While on Duty in Southeastern Pennsylvania Region

While on duty in a Philadelphia casino, Pennsylvania Police Sergeant Jeffrey Taroski was summoned to provide aid to an employee suffering a severe arm laceration from a machine injury. Sgt. Taroski determined that advanced aid was necessary and contacted 9-1-1, but knowing the seriousness of a severe bleeding injury, began administering first aid himself. He first used his belt as an improvised tourniquet until an actual tourniquet could be applied. Then he applied direct pressure using towels, preventing further blood loss. For his actions, including what the nominator cited as "strong leadership," Sgt. Taroski was presented with the Lifesaving Award for Professional Responders. The extraordinary details about this can be found on the Philadelphia chapter's [blog](#).



Sgt. Jeffrey Taroski (center) with his wife Caitlin (left) and Red Cross Southeastern PA Regional CEO Guy Triano (right)

Dockworker Initiates CPR to Save Co-worker's Life in Northern Ohio Region

Estes Express Lines employee Jamell Fetter received the Certificate of Extraordinary Personal Action for administering CPR to co-worker Mark Benschoter, who experienced a cardiac arrest during a company lunch. Although Jamell hadn't yet been trained in CPR, he'd observed others taking training and knew what actions needed to be taken. "Events like the one in Toledo remind us how important it is to be prepared and to focus on everyone's safety and welfare at all work locations," says Director, Corporate Training and Development Tom Zahler. "Jamell didn't know he was going to be a hero when he showed up for work that morning. But we're grateful that he was." To read the details and hear about the experience, visit the Northern Ohio region's [blog](#).



L to R: Jamell Fetter and Rachel Hepner, executive director of the Red Cross of Western Lake Erie

Instructor Spotlight

Tasha Hanners

Each month we highlight Instructors whose student(s) used their lifesaving training to save or sustain a life. This month we recognize Tasha Hanners, whose Adult First Aid/CPR/AED student Gary Thomas was profiled in the first story from the Alabama and Mississippi region. Gary told a news reporter that he is grateful for the training that taught him to remain calm in emergency situations.



Lifesaving Awards Vault

From the vault of the Item (Sumter, South Carolina), May 29, 1981

The headline reads, "Girl Saves 'Gramps' Life" and recognizes high school junior Tina Marie Chatfield, who received the Certificate of Merit, signed by President Reagan. The Red Cross chapter stated that this was the first ever Certificate of Merit presented in the Sumter area. Tina Marie was watching television with her grandfather, age 91, when he started choking and turned blue. As a Red Cross volunteer and Instructor's aide in CPR, Tina Marie knew exactly what to do. After two sets of back blows and abdominal thrusts, Tina Marie's grandfather regained his ability to breathe, turned to her and said, "Why are you hitting me?" A tragedy was averted thanks to the lifesaving techniques Tina Marie learned in her Red Cross class.



Tina Chatfield And Her Grandfather, Carl
(Gift photo by Mike Lee)



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](https://www.redcross.org/lifesavingawards) to nominate them.

Want to see if you have a local hero in your area? Take a look at our [map](#).



Get Inspired!

After learning about the lifesaving actions by Jamell Fetter profiled in this eNewsletter, company officials asked the Red Cross to provide First Aid/CPR/AED training to all managers, supervisors and directors at its facilities across the country. Do you know a company that would benefit from training? Ask them to visit [redcross.org/training](https://www.redcross.org/training) and join the millions of people who are trained in Red Cross lifesaving programs annually.