

Lifesaving Awards



American Red Cross
Training Services

NOMINATE NOW

Inspiring Stories by Region

Quick-thinking Student Saves Teacher Experiencing a Choking Emergency in the Kansas and Oklahoma Region

What began as a routine lunch between senior Lucas Fearn and art teacher Jacob Lewis quickly turned into a life-threatening emergency. While chatting in the ceramics room, Jacob began choking on a turkey sandwich. Unable to breathe, he signaled to Lucas, who immediately performed abdominal thrusts, dislodging the food and saving his teacher's life. Lucas, trained in Red Cross Lifeguarding with CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer, First Aid and Waterpark Skills, was honored with the prestigious Certificate of Merit for his quick thinking and bravery. Jacob, deeply grateful, emphasized how fortunate he was that someone with training was nearby. The brave response by Lucas highlights the importance of being trained in lifesaving skills. The region's LinkedIn page contains a [link](#) to the full story in the local student newspaper.



L to R: Jane Bloucher, executive director of the Greater Kansas region and Lucas Fearn

Security Guard Takes Swift Action in the Greater New York Region

Angel Martinez was trained in Red Cross Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED and worked as a security guard at Summit ONE Vanderbilt when he received an alarming report of a man down. He responded, assessed the situation and determined that the man was in cardiac arrest. After calling for help, Angel immediately began chest compressions and rescue breaths. The AED advised two shocks, which he administered. With a faint heartbeat restored, Angel continued to monitor the situation and waited for EMS to arrive. For his heroic response, Angel received the Lifesaving Award for Professional Responders. His story is featured in this moving event [video](#) from the region.



L to R: Doreen Howe, Red Cross Greater New York CEO and Angel Martinez

Mother's Lifesaving Response Rescues Daughter from Drowning in the Minnesota and Dakotas Region

A perfect summer day at the lake turned into a life-or-death emergency when Jessica Simones' daughter, Jocelyn, was pulled from the water—unresponsive and without a pulse. With no reliable cell service and time running out, Jessica, a former Children's Hospital nurse, immediately began CPR on the dock. Her quick, skilled actions revived Jocelyn, who has since made a full recovery and is now preparing for high school graduation and a future in medicine. For her extraordinary courage and composure, Jessica was awarded the Certificate of Extraordinary Personal Action. Her story, which is recapped on the region's [news page](#), is a powerful reminder of the importance of lifesaving training.



L to R: Jessica Simones and daughter Jocelyn

Instructor Spotlight

Donita Grinde-Houtman

Each month we highlight an Instructor whose student(s) have used their Red Cross lifesaving training to save or sustain a life. This month we recognize Donita Grinde-Houtman, who trained three immediate responders in Red Cross Lifeguarding and CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer First Aid and Water Park Skills.



Both Issac Meek (lifeguard) and Owen King (swim manager) were on duty when a teenage swimmer experienced a seizure and subsequently went into cardiac arrest. Victoria Rogers, an off-duty lifeguard also trained by Donita, ran over to assist. Together, the trio demonstrated the power of teamwork. They safely removed the swimmer from the pool, activated the emergency response plan, got the AED and started CPR.

For their actions, Donita's students [received](#) the Red Cross Certificate of Merit and the Lifesaving Award for Professional Responders. Additionally, they were recipients of the Derby Mayor's Award of Excellence, highlighted in this inspiring [video](#). We extend our thanks to Donita for providing the quality training that allowed her students to take action when it mattered most.

Lifesaving Awards Vault

From the vault of the Lansing State Journal (Lansing, MI), June 8, 1983

Former Okemos man, partner earn Red Cross top lifesaving award

On this date in history, Michael Hegel and Michael Ross, both diving instructors, were working with students when one began to hyperventilate and lost consciousness. The student slipped beneath the water and was pulled to shore by a swimming buddy, unconscious and not breathing. The two instructors started CPR and were able to resuscitate their student. She was hospitalized overnight and released the next day. For their actions, both men received the Certificate of Merit.



Nominate.



Recognize.

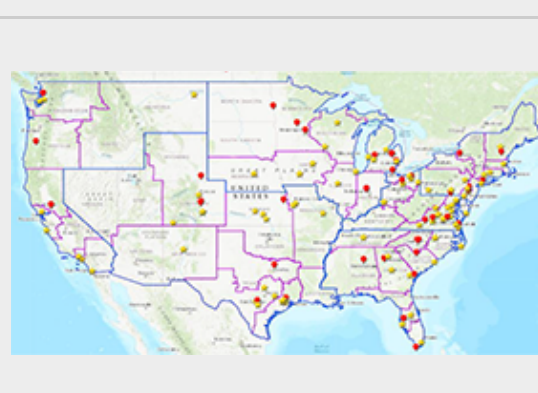


Inspire.

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



Get Inspired!

In June we recognize CPR + AED Awareness Week, a time to spread awareness about the lifesaving benefits of CPR and AED use. These vital skills can be the difference between life and death, as evidenced in many of the stories in this issue. When CPR is performed immediately, it can double or even triple a person's chance of survival.

When you take a CPR/AED course, you'll be empowered to act confidently and effectively when moments matter—potentially saving the life of a loved one, coworker or even a stranger. We encourage you to share this information, including how to sign up for a class, by visiting [redcross.org/takeaclass](#).