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Two San Diego Foundations Donate 26 AEDs to San Diego Unified School District

***Smart Hearts Assembly at Mountain View School During CPR-AED Awareness Week
Teaches the Next Generation of Life Savers***

June 3, 2022 – San Diego, CA – In its continuing partnership with San Diego Project Heart Beat (SDPHB) to protect schools from the leading cause of death on campus, the Eric Paredes Save A Life Foundation and SDPHB donated 25 automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) to support their initiative to maintain its 17-year-old public access defibrillator program by upgrading sunseting devices over the next two years.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is the leading cause of death on school campuses and the #1 killer of student athletes. An AED is the only way to restart a heart that has suddenly stopped beating. National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS) data reports 23,000 youth are stricken by SCA each year. In addition to SDUSD's student population of 121,000 plus 13,559 employees, studies show approximately 20% of a community is on a school campus on any given day, which means these AEDs will be accessible to tens of thousands.

With the SCA survival rate barely 10%, and research showing that an AED used in the first minute of collapse could increase survival to 90%, having AEDs that are well maintained and ready to respond is critical to a school's safety plan," said Maureen Legg, Co-Executive Director of the Eric Paredes Save A Life Foundation. "Supporting SDUSD in this life-saving initiative is central to our ongoing mission to protect young hearts."

To commemorate the donation (which includes a new AED to Mountain View School) and mark National CPR-AED Awareness Week, EP Save A Life hosted a Smart Hearts Don't Miss a Beat student assembly on June 3 at Mountain View School to increase health literacy around warning signs and risk factors of sudden cardiac arrest and what to do in a cardiac emergency. Students will get hands-on experience delivering hands-only CPR and an AED—both critical for bystanders to undertake before emergency personnel arrive.

"Mountain View is a community of changemakers, where our students are empowered to develop skills to become lifelong learners and contributing community members," said Rhea Brown, Mountain View principal. "Learning how to become the next generation of life savers with a vision to eradicate sudden cardiac arrest in their lifetime is the kind of connection to purpose that we hope to inspire in our youth."

Founded to honor the Steele Canyon High School teen who lost his life to SCA at 15 in 2009, Eric's Foundation strives to educate youth, parents, educators, coaches, medical practitioners and elected officials on the prevalence of SCA among youth and the importance of evolving prevention practices and policy. To date, the foundation has provided more than 35,000 free youth heart screenings and free sudden cardiac arrest prevention training to thousands of students, coaches and medical practitioners, placed 190 AEDs and is now sponsoring its fourth state law advancing sudden cardiac arrest prevention in youth.

Started in 2001, San Diego Project Heart Beat is a self-sustained program of San Diego Fire-Rescue Department, with the goal of increasing PAD programs throughout San Diego County. SDPHB has helped place nearly 10,000 AEDs throughout the county and counts 196 lives saved to date from amongst its program participants. Three of those lives saved were children at their school sites during regular hours of operation.

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