

February 7, 2008

## **MPS practices defibrillator drill day** ***Schools will test responses, equipment to “Get the Beat”***

Many Milwaukee Public Schools will participate in the district’s second annual Defibrillator Drill Day at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 14. The purpose of the “Get the Beat Day” is to test responses to life threatening situations when an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is required, and to encourage more schools to obtain an AED – a portable device used to restore proper heart rhythms to patients in cardiac arrest.



“February is National Heart Month, making this the best time for our trained response teams to test their readiness in case a staff member or student has a cardiac incident,” said Superintendent William Andrekopoulos.

“Get the Beat” drills will be featured simultaneously at three Milwaukee Public Schools for media access. Those schools are Bay View High School, 2751 South Lenox Street; Riverside University High School, 1615 East Locust Street; and Bethune Academy, 1535 North 35<sup>th</sup> Street. During a Homecoming Dance in October 2003, a 15-year-old student, Jalissa Hope, died of a Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) at Bay View High School.

The AED program in MPS includes trained teams in 135 schools and offices where defibrillators have been installed. Currently, there are more than 1500 staff members who have been trained to use the defibrillators. Since October 2006, there have been three incidents of people in cardiac arrest being saved by trained responders, including two staff members and one 13-year-old child who suffered a SCA while in gym class.

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Funding for the AED program in MPS is provided by contributions from the Wisconsin Masonic Foundation–Medical Fund, Northwestern Mutual Life Foundation, ING Financial Services, Helen Bader Foundation, Kilbourn Lodge #3, Nathan Hale Lodge #350, Freemasons Lodge #363 and George Washington 1776 Lodge #337, and the Wisconsin Coalition of Asian Indian Organizations (WCAIO) which recently purchased 41 defibrillators. MPS employees provided the training of response teams in the use of the defibrillators. Grant funds for training were provided by Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin and made possible by Project ADAM, which began in 1999 after the sudden death of Adam Lemel, a Whitefish Bay High School basketball player. Project ADAM was created in his memory.

For media information about this release, call MPS Communications Director, Roseann St. Aubin, at (414) 475-8237.

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