



For Immediate Release
September 21, 2004

**Lifesaving Foundation Launches Major Initiative
With the City of St. Louis Fire Department
To Ensure Sudden Cardiac Arrest Victims in St. Louis
Have a Better Chance at Life**

Organizations Will Purchase and Train Everyday Citizens In the Use of Public Automated External Defibrillators

ST. LOUIS, MO (September 21, 2004) – Victims of sudden cardiac arrest in the City of St. Louis will soon have a greater chance of survival thanks to the St. Louis Fire Department Public Access Defibrillator (PAD) program, funded by a \$986,861 grant from the Missouri Foundation for Health and in collaboration with the “St. Louis Fire Department Lifesaving Foundation” a private, nonprofit organization that seeks ways to support the St. Louis Fire Department and the City’s residents and visitors.

This grant will enable the St. Louis Fire Department to purchase 160 Automated External Defibrillators for public service and for the public’s use when cardiac emergencies occur. In a recent noteworthy study published in the *Wall Street Journal* and in *USA Today*, the number of people who survived sudden cardiac arrest doubled when a bystander performed CPR and an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) was available for use. AEDs are easy-to-use devices that detect a lethal cardiac rhythm disturbance and electronically shock a victim’s heart back into a normal rhythm. In response to the statistics of the study, the Lifesaving Foundation took action to make this lifesaving technology available to the public in St. Louis.

Not only will all the City’s Fire Trucks have newer model AEDs, these devices will be placed in St. Louis government buildings. In addition, our city will soon be the first and only one in the nation to train all its employees in CPR with the AED for resuscitation of adult and child victims. The training curriculum will follow the guidelines set by the American Heart Association. This benchmarking policy will involve nearly 6,000 employees and take approximately 3 years to complete the training. The Foundation’s collaboration with the PAD program is designed to have a lasting effect on the community. City employees who are trained in CPR, AED will, in turn, be available to teach others in the community the same lifesaving techniques.

J. Curtis Engler, President and co-founder of the Lifesaving Foundation knows firsthand the value of the AED, as he is alive today because of its use. “The need for bystanders to know how to properly perform CPR and correctly use the AED is literally as important as life itself,” says Engler. “The Lifesaving Foundation takes its role very seriously; it will be an honor and privilege to be a part of this lifesaving venture.”

Engler suffered a potentially fatal heart attack last year when first responders used an AED to save his life.

“The Lifesaving Foundation has been instrumental in ensuring that our firefighters received needed clothing, equipment and training” says St. Louis Fire Chief Sherman George. “The work that the organization does not only benefit the firefighters and Medics, but also the community we serve.”

Funding for this project was provided in part by the Missouri Foundation for Health. The Missouri Foundation for Health is a philanthropic organization whose vision is to improve the health of the people in the communities it serves.