



# Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association

POWER AND PASSION... SAVING LIVES

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## **Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association Honors Corporate Citizens, Community Programs and Advocates for Efforts to Address Sudden Cardiac Arrest**

**Washington, DC (Sept. 30, 2009)** – October is Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Month, and the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association (SCAA) announced today the recipients of its 2009 leadership awards who will be honored for their work to raise awareness of sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), prevent sudden cardiac death and improve cardiovascular health. The awards will be presented at the SCAA Awards Dinner sponsored by Abbott on Saturday, October 10, 2009, at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Chicago, Illinois, during the SCAA Annual Meeting.

“This year’s award recipients have made a significant mark in the fight to increase survivability from SCA. Whether through public policy, emergency medicine, or community initiatives, these honorees have strategically influenced the public’s understanding of SCA. Raising public awareness, leading heart healthy lifestyles and implementing state-of-the-art emergency procedures and medical technologies are all crucial components in preventing sudden cardiac arrest, which kills someone every two minutes across the U.S.” said Chris Chiames, executive director of the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association. “The far-reaching efforts of our honorees have yielded positive results that we hope are replicated by communities, public officials and the medical community across the country.”

Sudden cardiac arrest is the nation’s leading cause of death, killing nearly 300,000 Americans each year. SCA is different than a heart attack; rather SCA is generally associated with an electrical disruption of the heart’s ability to properly function. Less than eight percent of victims survive because they do not receive immediate cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the shock of an automated external defibrillator (AED) to maintain blood circulation and restore the heart’s natural rhythm. Risk factors include a previous heart attack, coronary artery disease, family history of sudden death, diabetes, smoking and obesity.

The SCAA is the nation’s largest public advocacy organization exclusively dedicated to sudden cardiac arrest awareness and prevention. Its annual meeting in Chicago will bring together volunteers from nearly 50 chapters and affiliates from across the country, including SCA survivors, physicians, nurses, emergency professionals and others touched by SCA.

The 2009 SCAA Award honorees include:

### ***Medical Leadership Award***

Honoree: Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY)

New York City’s “NYC Project Hypothermia” is the nation’s largest EMS-led therapeutic hypothermia program to give SCA patients state-of-the-art pre-hospital and in-hospital care. The FDNY city-wide EMS 9-1-1 response protocol transports SCA patients directly to hospitals utilizing therapeutic hypothermia treatments and also begins cooling treatment in the field.

Therapeutic hypothermia medically cools a cardiac arrest patient, allowing for a gradual, managed return of organ functions, and has been shown to greatly improve patient outcomes and minimize neurological damage often associated with the lack of oxygen immediately following collapse from SCA. At least 40 hospitals throughout New York City's five boroughs are participating in Phase I of the program which began in January. Phase II of the program, in which ambulances are equipped with therapeutic hypothermia devices such as specialized intravenous fluids, will be implemented in 2010.

***Public Leadership Award***

Honoree: Governor Patrick Quinn of Illinois

While lieutenant governor of Illinois, Quinn worked with the Illinois General Assembly to pass the Colleen O'Sullivan law requiring defibrillators in schools, indoor park district facilities and physical fitness facilities. At his urging, the General Assembly also established the Heartsaver AED Fund, which helps make AEDs more affordable by providing matching grants to those entities. In 2008, Quinn worked to expand the Colleen O'Sullivan Law to require defibrillators at outdoor park facilities as well. Throughout his tenure as lieutenant governor and now governor, Quinn has been one of the nation's most visible public officials and advocates for improved emergency response for SCA victims. He continues his public push for defibrillators by recognizing the life-saving efforts of first responders, whether they are emergency personnel or lay bystanders. His efforts have raised awareness throughout Illinois about the critical job of first responders, the importance of widespread deployment of AEDs and the public health crisis related to SCA.

***Public Service Award***

Honoree: San Diego Project Heart Beat

A public access defibrillation (PAD) program, San Diego Project Heart Beat provides a community-wide approach to SCA response through broad AED deployment and CPR training. Since the program's inception in 2001, San Diego Project Heart Beat has helped deploy more than 4,000 AEDs, saved over 50 lives and trained tens of thousands of people how to perform CPR and use AEDs. It has also generated strong community support for adopting progressive local laws further expanding the presence of AEDs throughout San Diego. The program is a public-private partnership between San Diego Fire-Rescue Department and Rural/Metro Ambulance.

***June Daugherty Public Spirit Award***

Honoree: Dr. Joseph Ornato, Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center

Named in honor of Washington State University women's basketball coach June Daugherty, who is an SCA survivor, the June Daugherty Public Spirit Award recognizes an individual who uses his/her public position to raise awareness about sudden cardiac arrest and cardiovascular disease. Dr. Ornato's career consists of numerous SCA research initiatives, membership in various cardiovascular-related industry working groups, academic instruction of best-practices and development of next-generation technologies. He is past Chairman of the American Heart Association's (AHA) National Emergency Cardiovascular Care Committee and its Advanced Cardiac Life Support Subcommittee. A special consultant to the Circulatory System Devices Panel of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Dr. Ornato currently is the co-chairman of the \$50 million National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Resuscitation Outcomes Consortium (ROC) and serves as Principal Investigator for VCU on the NIH-sponsored

Neurological Emergency Treatment Trials (NETT) Network. He was recently elected to the prestigious Institute of Medicine.

The SCAA Awards Dinner is sponsored by Abbott, a global leader in the development of cardiovascular devices and therapies. For additional information or to attend the SCAA Awards Dinner or Annual Meeting, contact Jill Talley, 202-719-8926, [jtalley@suddencardiacarrest.org](mailto:jtalley@suddencardiacarrest.org).

To learn more about SCAA, visit [www.suddencardiacarrest.org](http://www.suddencardiacarrest.org).

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