



Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association

POWER AND PASSION... SAVING LIVES

EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER • 1820 Municipal Drive • Lancaster, PA 17601 • (717) 569-6622 • education@manheimtownshipems.org

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST ASSOCIATION LAUNCHES EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

Lancaster Group Will Work to Prevent Sudden Cardiac Arrest
Through Public Education and Advocacy

WASHINGTON, DC, February 4, 2009 - The Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association (SCAA) announced today that it has launched an Eastern Pennsylvania chapter as it continues to expand a network of local organizations to help carry out its mission of preventing sudden cardiac arrest (SCA).

The Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter will be headed by James Weber, the Director for Public Outreach and Education for the Manheim Township Ambulance Association. The non-profit group provides community-based programs to raise public awareness of CPR, AED training and use, and recognition of medical emergencies to strengthen the links in the chain of survival. The group also focuses on injury prevention, preventive health education and disaster preparedness.

“Manheim Township Ambulance Association is excited about our affiliation as the Eastern Pennsylvania chapter of the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association,” said James. “A comprehensive approach to avail resources for training and equipment is essential to assure prompt, quality care to persons experiencing medical crises and make a bigger impact across Lancaster and the surrounding region. We want to spread awareness of sudden cardiac arrest and promote the importance of quick resuscitation for victims of heart failure.”

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is a leading killer in the U.S., striking more than 300,000 annually, with a survival rate of only about five percent. The death rate for SCA exceeds the combined death rate of breast cancer, lung cancer, stroke and HIV/AIDS. SCA is triggered by an electrical problem with the heart that causes the heart to stop beating, and is often confused with a heart attack. SCA victims can often be revived with CPR and quick access to defibrillation to shock the heart back into rhythm. While there are more automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in public facilities and more patients implanted with Internal Cardiac Defibrillators (ICDs), broader AED deployment and better patient understanding of the condition is critical to improving the odds of survival.

In 2008, SCAA announced over 30 chapters and affiliates, bringing together sudden cardiac arrest survivors, patients, medical and emergency professionals and community leaders to carry out public education and advocacy programs and activities. Programs and projects will include patient support, broader deployment of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and CPR training, better public/patient awareness of sudden cardiac arrest, and improved screening and access to medical care for individuals who may be at risk.

“We have identified a committed group of volunteers and local community leaders like James Weber who have enthusiastically responded to our plans for a national network of local chapters and affiliates,” said Chris Chiames, SCAA’s executive director. “People from all walks of life and all kinds of interests have been touched by sudden cardiac arrest and we are heartened by their response to help. They know that our organization can make a difference in saving lives through better public response and

better public education. While we work to expand our national presence and influence, we are going to rely on our local chapters and affiliates to make the real impact in their communities through education and advocacy.”

SCAA is based in Washington, DC and is singularly focused on the issue of sudden cardiac arrest. It co-chairs the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Coalition with the Heart Rhythm Society, a professional association for electrophysiology and heart rhythm physician specialists. SCAA provides its local affiliates with a broad program of projects and activities that can be tailored to the interests and needs of the local community. For more information on SCAA and the Eastern Pennsylvania chapter, please go to www.suddencardiacarrest.org, and visit the Chapters/Affiliates section.