



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MERCYHEALTH DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION MAKES MAJOR DONATION TO AREA EMS AGENCIES

Loves Park Fire Department among entities receiving the life-saving equipment

ROCKFORD, Illinois – The Mercyhealth Development Foundation announced today it has committed more than \$400,000 to purchase 30 life-saving devices to award to regional Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies. The devices, LUCAS Chest Compression Systems, deliver high-quality mechanical CPR in a consistent manner and have been proven to greatly improve cardiac arrest survival rates and save lives. A total of twenty-five area EMS agencies, located in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin, are receiving the LUCAS systems.

Foundation Board of Directors Chair Patrick O’Keefe made the announcement at a news conference Monday, June 10, at the Mercyhealth Prehospital and Emergency Services Center–Rockford.

“The Foundation is thrilled to make this gift knowing that it will have a far-reaching impact on the health of the communities Mercyhealth serves,” said O’Keefe. “It will save countless lives.”

Mercyhealth’s Prehospital and Emergency Services team will provide training to the first responders receiving the donated equipment. The LUCAS machines are already in use on Mercyhealth’s emergency field vehicles, called MD-1s, which provide additional physician-level field support to EMS on critical calls.

“The benefits to both the patient and first responders are staggering.” said Dr. Jay MacNeal, medical director of Mercyhealth Prehospital and Emergency Services. “Performing high-quality CPR typically occupies several EMS providers, but the LUCAS device’s automated compressions free these providers to perform other life critical skills. With these devices on board our agencies’ ambulances, as well as high-fidelity simulation training and advanced protocols, we hope to improve our patients’ cardiac arrest survival to over 3 – 4 times the national average.”

The Loves Park Fire Department is one of the area EMS agencies to receive a LUCAS from the Mercyhealth Development Foundation. The donation comes at a time when Loves Park recently transitioned to an advanced life support ambulance service, meaning it will have its own ambulance dedicated to the city staffed by two paramedics.

“We want to thank the Mercyhealth Development Foundation for its generosity in providing us with another tool in saving lives,” said Loves Park Fire Department Deputy Chief James Hart. “The LUCAS device is very portable and easy to use. We are excited for what it will bring and how it will better equip us in successfully providing services back to our community.”

The Mercyhealth Development Foundation's mission is to provide development and oversight of philanthropic giving to support the Mercyhealth mission: Exceptional health care services with a passion for making lives better.

"By making the LUCAS devices more accessible and widely used throughout the area, we will be improving the quality of prehospital, emergency medical services delivered to our patients," said Jennifer Johns, Mercyhealth Development Foundation Director. "It's a great feeling to know we are making a difference."

The following is a listing of those EMS agencies receiving LUCAS systems:

Shannon Fire Department
Milton/Milton Township Fire Department
Oregon Fire Department
Fontana Fire Department
Harvard Fire Department
Win-Bur-Sew Fire Department
Mendota Fire Department
Dixon Fire Department
Loves Park Fire Department
Amboy Fire Department
Randall Fire Department
Capron Fire Department
Williams Bay Rescue
Richmond Township Fire Department
Darien Fire/EMS
West Suburban Fire Department
Northwest Fire Protection District
Brodhead Fire Department
Winnebago County Fire Protection District (Durand)
Paw Paw Community Fire Protection District
North Park Fire Department
Polo Fire Department
Beloit Fire Department
Hebron Fire Department
Mercyhealth Emergency Department

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About Mercyhealth

Mercyhealth is a multi-regional health system with more than 800 employed physician partners, seven hospitals and 85 primary and specialty care locations serving 55 northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin communities. Mercyhealth's over 8,000 employee/partners care for more than 2.4 million patient visits each year. Mercyhealth offers four core service areas: hospital-based service; clinic-based services; home health, hospice and retail services; and a wholly owned insurance company. It provides over 125 specialties, including emergency/trauma care, prehospital services, a perinatal medicine in its 52-bed Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), and heart, cancer and orthopedic care. As the top vertically integrated health care provider, it continuously works with a passion for making lives better for the people, families and communities it serves. For more information, please visit mercyhealthsystem.org.