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**Akron Central School District is
First CPR Smart School in Western New York**
*New American Heart Association program recognizes schools
with written policy calling for CPR instruction*

AKRON, NY (April 21, 2015) - - In 2009, 14-year-old Emily Adamczak took her last breath in her mother's arms on the soccer fields in the Town of Newstead. She had suffered sudden cardiac arrest.

On Tuesday, April 21, at 7 p.m. at 47 Bloomingdale Ave., Akron, Annette Adamczak, Emily's mother, presented the Akron Central School District with the American Heart Association's CPR Smart Schools recognition. Since Emily's death, Annette has trained over 17,000 students in Hands-Only CPR in Western New York.

"This is something that I, personally have a strong emotional attachment to. My daughter, Emily, was born in Akron, went to school in Akron. She passed away due to sudden cardiac arrest while doing a sport she loved, in Akron. We started Hands Only CPR Training locally in Akron. Now almost 6 years since Emily passed, the school that became our pilot school, our prototype, is being recognized for its commitment to its students. The circle of life has taken in the shape of a heart and is now complete. A tragic event is now being replaced by an assurance that Akron High School students will forever be trained in how to do Hands-only CPR. I could not be more proud. Please ask the community to join us, as we applaud Akron's School Board for their decision to think beyond what is expected and to hold the belief that we can do better. Akron truly is Western New York's best kept secret. Now, it's time to shine for all of New York to see," Adamczak said.

Akron received the award because it has a written policy requiring CPR be taught to each student before graduation. It is the first CPR Smart School in the Buffalo/Niagara Region.

The district has already taught its students the necessary components to become a CPR Smart School: students have learned how to identify someone in sudden cardiac arrest, to call 911, begin performing Hands-Only CPR, and how to use an AED.

“The AHA commends Akron Central School District for being the first district in the WNY Region to be recognized as a CPR Smart School. Akron Central School District is training its students to be the next generation of lifesavers,” Jason Jankowiak, chair of the WNY American Heart Association, said.

“We know teaching students CPR can save lives, and if given right away, CPR doubles or triples survival rates because often a victim’s best chance at survival is receiving bystander CPR until EMTs arrive,” Kevin Shanley, Superintendent of the Akron Central School District said.

Only 9 out of 10 victims of sudden cardiac arrest survive. By teaching Hands-Only CPR in high school, New York can create an army of lifesavers.

“All of us at the American Heart Association hope that other WNY Region schools follow Akron’s lead in creating the next generation of lifesavers,” Liz Zulawski, executive director of the WNY American Heart Association said.

On Monday, April 13, The New York State Board of Regents recommended that Hands-Only CPR and AED use become part of the New York State curriculum. The New York state Department of Education will present regulations to the regents at the May 18 and 19 meetings. The regulations will be open for public comment prior to formal adoption.

The Akron Central School District – like any school that becomes CPR Smart – will receive a certificate of merit, an “honor roll” mention on the American Heart Association Web site and social media sites, and CPR Smart window signage.

A school can become a CPR Smart School by adopting a written policy that ensures students:

- learn how to recognize when someone is in possible cardiac arrest,
- learn Hands-Only CPR and practice compressions
- learn the importance and basics of an AED. Student certification is not required.

For an application or more information to become a CPR Smart School, contact the American Heart Association’s New York State Government Relations Director Julianne Hart at julianne.hart@heart.org.

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About the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association

The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association are devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – the two leading causes of death in the world. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The American Heart Association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. The American Stroke Association is a division of the American Heart Association. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-716-243-4610, visit www.heart.org/buffalo. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).