



ULSTER COUNTY NEWS

ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Heart Safe Program Task Force

In an effort to save lives, Ulster County Legislature Chairman David B. Donaldson has formed a task force to implement a Heart Safe Program in Ulster County.

“Approximately 250,000 people die each year in the United States from sudden cardiac arrest,” Donaldson said. “That’s 600 people a day and about 25 per hour. A successful Heart Safe Program will undoubtedly save lives. So we believe it’s very important to organize an effective program here in Ulster County.”

The role of the task force – which will be chaired by Legislator Robert Parete, D-Boiceville – will be to consider Ulster County’s role in implementing the Heart Safe Program in the County. The task force is expected to work closely with the American Heart Association, which has recognized the need for more public participation in CPR training and public access and training on defibrillators.

Businesses and worksites in particular will be targeted for participation.

“By becoming a Heart Safety Community, I am hopeful that Ulster County will further recognize and advocate for such an important public health matter,” said Parete, who is also

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Chairman of the Ulster County Legislature's Health Committee. "Furthermore, I am delighted to be working again with folks from the American Heart Association and other community leaders to make our Ulster County a safer place to live, work and raise a family."

Parete said it is essential to make more people aware of the effectiveness of CPR and defibrillator training. "Statistics prove the need for training and access to these life-saving devices is a critical element to survival," Parete said.

Today, a new generation of defibrillators – called automated external defibrillators (AEDs) - make it possible to train community members to deliver defibrillation.

Statistics show that survival rates are drastically increased when an AED is used within three to five minutes of sudden cardiac arrest. For every minute without a shock to the heart, the chance of survival decreases by seven to ten percent.

Donaldson has appointed the following individuals to join Parete on the Heart Safe Program Task Force: Victor Work, Ulster County Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds; Art Snyder, Ulster County Director of Emergency Management; Dean Palen, Ulster County Public Health Director; Officer George Hill, Ulster County Sheriff's Department; Anthony Marmo of the Northeast Head Trauma Center; Michele Lieberman of the American Heart Association and Ulster County Tourism Director Rick Remsnyder.

The first meeting of the Task Force will take place at 5:15 PM on March 18, 2008 in the Legislative Chambers, 6th Floor, Ulster County Office Building, 244 Fair Street, Kingston, New York.