



## News

### Ottawa and Region

#### High schools receive defibrillators

By **ANDREW SNOOK, SPECIAL TO THE OTTAWA SUN**

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High schools across Ottawa are being handed a donation that truly provides a shock to the system.

Every one of Ottawa's 51 high schools is being equipped with an automated external defibrillator (AED).

The initiative was spearheaded by the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation. ACT has partnered with the province, the Sens Foundation, Ottawa Senators owner Eugene Melnyk, and the Heart and Stroke Foundation to train more than 10,000 high school students on how to use a defibrillator.

ACT's partners have donated \$280,000 towards the implementation of the Ottawa ACT High School AED Program.

The announcement was made Friday at Holy Trinity Catholic High School in Kanata.

Melnyk knows the importance of defibrillators and CPR first-hand, having lost his father to a heart attack when he was 17.

"This was something that struck a real nerve with him," said Cyril Leeder, president of Senators Sports and Entertainment. "He wanted to be part of this."

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario says cardiac arrest is the No. 1 cause of death for young adults.

"Unfortunately, to know whether you have a heart condition as a youth only typically happens when the cardiac arrest occurs," said Joanne Cote, manager of resuscitation programs at the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario.

"The reason why CPR is so important right after you deliver the shock is because that's when the heart and brain needs oxygen the most," Cote said. "The unit is great, but it's a complement to CPR."

Cote said that high school students have nothing to fear from pranksters looking to give a fellow classmate a wake-up call courtesy of their school's defibrillator.

"The unit is not capable of shocking someone that doesn't need it," she said.