



HEROES FOR LIFE™
PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION



Two of Laura Seibert's three daughters have birthdays in December. This year, there was a consensus among all of her girls to celebrate with an afternoon of ice skating. So, she and her daughters joined friends and family during the public skating session at Ice World in Abingdon, Maryland one December afternoon.

About halfway through the session, facilities manager Mike Iles was alerted to a skater down on the ice with a possible head injury. Joe Santopietro, one of the first skaters to find her, was keeping her neck and head stable to prevent any further trauma. The young skater was in and out of consciousness, so Mike ran to the equipment area to find on-duty supervisor Gary Jones. "We have a problem. Come with me," Mike said. Gary grabbed the automated external defibrillator (AED) and ran after him.

At the same time, Laura and her friend Shannon Dauses were skating laps and came upon the crowd gathered around the fallen skater. They were shocked to see it was Laura's 13-year-old daughter Lucia lying there, gasping for air.

AED feedback provides peace of mind

There was no cell reception on the ice, so April ran to the lobby to call 911 while Shannon quickly ushered

the onlookers away. Recognizing Lucia's gasping breaths as a sign of sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), Shannon asked Joe to check Lucia's pulse. She was unresponsive. Thanks to Gary's quick thinking, Shannon turned and found the ZOLL® AED Plus® defibrillator already by her side.

"My hands were shaking so someone opened the AED case," Shannon explains. "I attached the pads and we immediately started cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)." The AED recommended a shock and then directed rescuers to continue CPR. "In a situation like this," Shannon says, "you feel very much on your own. That's the great thing about the AED. It's easy to use and comforting. The prompts are really helpful."

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It was helpful to hear the AED device say, "compressions aren't deep enough" because I didn't want to hurt her.

– Gary Jones, Ice World supervisor and SCA rescuer

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Gary and Shannon took turns delivering compressions. "It stopped me in my tracks seeing how young she was," Gary recalls. "It was helpful to hear the device say, "compressions aren't deep enough" because I didn't want to hurt her," he explains. The AED repeatedly analyzed Lucia's heart rhythm, warning the rescuers before delivering two more defibrillating shocks.

Advanced lifesaving support arrives

From the lobby, Laura was able to get through to emergency services. She watched and prayed as bystanders delivered CPR and defibrillating shocks during those six to eight minutes it took for EMTs to arrive. "I felt helpless watching," Laura recalls. Rescuer Shannon Dausen explains, "It may have only been six to eight minutes, but it felt like a year."

Paramedics took over CPR and airlifted Lucia to The Johns Hopkins Hospital, where she regained consciousness the following day. She was discharged nine days later with a ZOLL LifeVest® wearable defibrillator. After a variety of tests, doctors couldn't pinpoint a cause for her SCA. Lucia was prescribed an implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) to manage any future heart rhythm irregularities.

Laura Seibert is incredibly grateful for all of the friends and strangers who stepped forward to help at Ice World that afternoon. "The biggest thing that stands out to me was that we were meant to be there. Lucia could have been out on a soccer field instead," Laura explains. Because Ice World had AEDs on site, those friends and strangers were able to help before EMS arrived. "Here she got the care she needed," Laura says.



Sudden cardiac arrest survivor Lucia Seibert