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Empowered students bring Skills 4 Life to the workforce



ELAINE CAMPBELL

school's CPR training program.

Alexandria is one of 2.6 million high school students across Canada to have received CPR training provided by the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation of Canada, a national charitable organization that is helping establish free CPR and defibrillator training programs in

Last year, Alex-

andria, helped save her father's life. At just 17 years old, she acted quickly when her father went into cardiac arrest, applying the skills she had recently learned through her high school's CPR training program.

Cardiovascular events, such as heart attack and stroke, touch the lives of millions of Canadians every day. In fact, the Heart and Stroke Foundation estimates that there are 40,000 cardiac arrests each year — that's about one every 12 minutes. Recently, the ACT Foundation kicked-off a new local fundraising campaign — Skills 4 Life: Empowering Peel-Halton Students with Life-Saving CPR and Defibrillator Skills — aimed at securing the funds needed to deliver its High School CPR and Defibrillator Training Program in the Peel-Halton region. The campaign seeks to raise \$350,000 which will supply schools with the training tools needed to ensure that no student is left untrained. As business leaders, we understand

that building a healthy community is linked to building a healthy business. The action of supporting the communities in which we work, and operate may seem simple, however I believe they are intrinsically tied to our success and that it truly makes a difference. The ACT program has made a significant impact in the lives of students and Canadian communities. This is a program that goes beyond skills training and saving lives — it is about empowerment and confidence building. This may seem like a lofty outcome, however I've seen it in action.

Recently, students from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Secondary School came into the AstraZeneca offices to provide our employees with CPR and defibrillation training. What we saw were students who

were confident, poised, and composed, help make this program a reality for Peel-Halton high schools by donating today. We are committed to working with the ACT Foundation to help achieve its goal, and believe that other businesses in our community can also pledge their support to help ensure the more than 18,000 high school students in our region have access to this training starting in September.

I firmly believe that we all have a role to play in helping to build healthy communities and that we will never have a better opportunity to take action than right now. The program still needs more than 80 per cent of the funds required to ensure it is ready for the 2014/2015 school season. AstraZeneca has pledged \$50,000 to help kick-start the Skills 4 Life campaign. We're pleased to see Mississauga-based Roche Canada also pledge its support, and I call upon other local business leaders to

Elaine Campbell is president of Mississauga-based AstraZeneca Canada Inc., a leading pharmaceutical company, and a member of the ACT Foundation board.