

# SIMILKAMEEN **SPOTLIGHT**

## Teachers, then students get CPR training

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**DIERRA MAYNARD**

Spotlight Reporter

CPR is a life-saving technique that has proven its value over and over again. Everyday CPR saves lives. The impressive efforts of a program called ACT (Advanced Coronary Treatment) High School CPR Program is working to teach more students the life saving skills. The program has been implemented to train teachers CPR who will in turn train their students.



School District #58 became another district to embrace the program whole-heartedly on Friday, February 20 as one of the important activities many of the teachers took part in on the Professional Day. Twelve teachers participated – 9 from Princeton and 3 from Merritt and 50% of BC's high schools are now certified under the ACT program. There are 120 schools left. ACT spokesperson, Sandra Clarke, said we will do 40 schools each year for the next 3 years until we have hit them all.

It is our ultimate goal to have this program in every high school in Canada.

The ACT High School Program looks for community support to pull the program together for each district. Local partners supply funding for the high schools to purchase mannequins, educational material and qualified CPR teachers to help set up the program.

The mannequins become high school property, as do the training manuals. The teachers finish the day with new skills, new equipment and new training. For School District #58 funding was received from Interior Savings Credit Union. The grant money in the amount of \$5,360 bought 50 practice mannequins and the curriculum material. Interior Savings Credit Union generously donated a total of \$36,800 to the Okanagan-Similkameen, Nicola-Similkameen and Kamloops-Thompson school districts.

The British Columbia Ambulance Service is, also, a big part of the program and has agreed to work as a partner with the ACT Foundation to train participating teachers. Rob Sanderson was the teacher for School District #58.

AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb Canada, Pfizer Canada and sanofi-aventis are the national research based pharmaceutical company supporters.

With more than one-fifth of all deaths in BC, cardiovascular and CPR response the most important first step to survival, the efforts of ACT become monumental. With every high school student, eventually, trained in CPR the odds of survival increase. Right now, only about 15% of BC's population knows CPR. Over 1,200 schools across Canada have completed the ACT program with over 900,000 student graduates. Alberta is the first province to have every high school trained in CPR with all the rest in different steps of learning. ACT is a charitable organization that has set its sights high and is reaching its goals along with a smarter more empowered life-saving youth.