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### **RUSH SPORTS MEDICINE TEAM RECEIVES DONATION OF 12 AEDS TO BE USED AT LOCAL SCHOOLS**

Because of a generous donation from The Foundation for Rush, The Athletic Trainers of the Rush Sports Medicine Team are now outfitted with a tool that can reverse sudden cardiac arrest. The Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) were given to the Athletic Trainers at a special presentation at Rush Foundation Hospital on Friday, September 7, 2018.

This donation from The Foundation for Rush was made possible by the Going the Extra Mile Club (GEM Club), which is made up of Rush Health Systems employees who provide contributions and other assistance to The Foundation for Rush. "It is very exciting to be able to place these life saving devices in the hands of our Athletic Trainers to be used at our local schools," said Cheri Barry, Executive Director of The Foundation for Rush. "The generosity of the GEM Club truly speaks to the opening words of the Rush Builder's Creed, 'I am my brother's keeper.'"

The Foundation for Rush is a not for profit philanthropic organization that was established in 2015 to encourage charitable gifts that support and advance the quality of healthcare provided by Rush Health Systems. The Foundation for Rush connects the generosity of a caring community with opportunities to improve lives through better healthcare. Employees who are members of the GEM Club take pride in knowing that their contributions directly impact their coworkers, patients and community. "As a

member of the GEM Club, I am excited to see our contributions making such a huge impact in our community,” said Heather Followell, Rush Health Systems employee. “As a mother whose children are involved in football and band, I pray that these devices will never have to be used but take comfort in knowing that if needed, our Athletic Trainers are prepared.”

In addition to helping local athletes excel on the field, Rush Sports Medicine Team Athletic Trainers are dedicated to having a response plan in the case of sudden cardiac arrest. In a cardiac emergency, seconds count. These portable devices will allow the Athletic Trainers to transport the AEDs to the sidelines or dugouts of games so that they are prepared to handle a cardiac emergency.

“This donation gives me piece of mind knowing that our Athletic Trainers have the tools they need to help our athletes, coaches and fans in the event of a sudden cardiac emergency,” said Will Ball, Director of Sports Medicine at Rush Foundation Hospital.

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is an abrupt loss of heart function causing blood to stop flowing to the brain and other vital organs, causing the person to collapse. SCA can occur among people of all ages and is often fatal if not treated within minutes of onset. According to the American Heart Association, each year more than 396,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in the United States. Both the American Heart Association and European Resuscitation Council recommend early defibrillation within three minutes with effective CPR for the best chance at survival.

Rush Health Systems is the largest, most diverse medical system in East Mississippi and West Alabama.

With a 103-year legacy of medical innovation, quality care and service to others, Rush Health Systems is comprised of 7 hospitals and more than 30 clinics, with 250 staff and contracted physicians and 95 advanced-practice providers. Rush is the largest non-governmental employer in the region. Rush Health Systems includes Rush Foundation Hospital in Meridian, MS; The Specialty Hospital of Meridian, MS; Medical Foundation, Inc., Laird Hospital, Union, MS; H.C. Watkins Hospital, Quitman, MS; Scott Regional

Hospital, Morton, MS; John C. Stennis Memorial Hospital, DeKalb, MS, and Choctaw General Hospital in Butler, AL. For more information, please visit [rushhealthsystems.org](http://rushhealthsystems.org) and follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

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