City of Lexington, the State of Kentucky, and Cardiac Crusade Announce Major Life-Saving AED Mapping Initiative

Joint News Conference Scheduled for Oct. 5 with Mayor Linda Gorton Ahead of Official Public Campaign Launch Event on Oct. 16

LEXINGTON, KY, UNITED STATES, October 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The City of Lexington, in partnership with national nonprofit Cardiac Crusade, the Lexington Fire Department, e911, UK HealthCare, and the American Heart Association, is launching a major public safety initiative to turn the Bluegrass Region into a HEARTSafe community.

> CPR buys time, but AEDs restore life. Mapping these devices empowers everyday citizens to step up. Anyone with a smartphone can help us turn Lexington into a heart safe community."
>
> *Charlotte Callan*

Supported by an endorsement from Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear, the "Restart a Heart: Lexington" initiative aims to map over 1,000 Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) across Lexington and Fayette County on the PulsePoint database, making them instantly visible to 911 dispatchers during sudden cardiac arrest emergencies.

"Nine out of ten cardiac arrest victims who receive a shock from an AED in the first minute will survive," said Governor Andy Beshear. "Every second counts during a cardiac arrest. So we're asking folks in Lexington to download the PulsePoint AED (NEAR) app and visit the Cardiac Crusade website to learn more. AEDs save lives."

Official News Conference: Monday, October 5 at 10:00 AM
City leaders, emergency personnel, and medical advocates will gather for an official news conference to outline the program and urge local businesses to register their devices:

What: Cardiac CATS / Cardiac Crusade Official News Conference
When: Monday, October 5, 2026, from 10:00 AM – 10:20 AM EDT
Where: Fire Station 1 (The Big House), 219 E. Third Street, Lexington.
Speakers Include: Lexington Mayor Linda Gorton (Emcee), representatives from the Lexington Fire Department, UK HealthCare, Cardiac Crusade Lexington Lead Sarah Katzenmaier, and CPR

hero Charlotte Callan.
Standing Supporters: Representatives from e911, the American Heart Association, Lexington City Council members, and Cardiac CATS Volunteers.



Charlotte Callan and Sarah Katzenmaier at Spirit of Lexington Ceremony at City Hall

The goal of the news conference is to call on all Lexington business owners, property managers, and community spaces to submit their AEDs online before the campaign kickoff. Submitting an AED places it on the map in "grey" status; trained volunteer verifiers then visit the device to confirm its location, turning it "gold"—making it fully active and actionable for 911 dispatchers.

Official Campaign Launch Party & Hybrid Auction: Friday, October 16
Following the news conference, the campaign will celebrate its official public launch on National Restart a Heart Day:

What: Restart a Heart: Lexington Campaign Launch Event
When: Friday, October 16, 2026, from 5PM – 7:00 PM EDT
Where: West Sixth Brewing, 501 West Sixth Street, Lexington, KY 40508
Highlights: Inspirational speeches from SCA survivors and medical leaders, volunteer sign-ups, campaign recognitions, and a hybrid auction featuring items from University of Kentucky sports teams. Free tickets and event registration are available at http://tinyurl.com/MapAEDsInKY .

The Grim Reality vs. The San Diego Blueprint
Out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) takes over 350,000 lives annually in the U.S., with national survival rates averaging just 10%. However, when an AED shock is administered within 60 seconds, survival rates jump to 90%. In municipalities like San Diego, where over 2,600 AEDs are mapped and integrated into 911 dispatching, survival rates reach 50% to 70%.

"In almost every city, 90% of AEDs sit hidden in closets or behind front desks where nobody knows they exist," said Greg Coon, Co-Founder of Cardiac Crusade. "My wife, Julie, survived a cardiac arrest because an AED was applied in under two minutes. Our volunteer network has verified over 12,000 AEDs nationwide—statistically saving 18 lives every single year. We are bringing that proven model to Lexington."

From 'Zombie' to Survivor: Sarah & Charlotte's Story

The Lexington movement is led locally by SCA survivor Sarah Katzenmaier and CPR hero Charlotte Callan.

On October 24, 2021, Sarah collapsed in sudden cardiac arrest while dressed as a zombie during Lexington's annual Thriller Parade outside the Kentucky Theatre. Because emergency vehicles were delayed navigating a crowd of 10,000 spectators, Charlotte Callan— who was, at the time, a UK HealthCare and pre-med student, now has an M.S in medical science—stepped up and performed continuous CPR for nearly 10 minutes until paramedics arrived. Her heroic actions saved Sarah's life and earned Charlotte an official Spirit of Lexington award, designating February 17th as Charlotte Callan Day in Lexington.

At the time, there was not an AED at the Kentucky Theater, located just yards away. Fred Mills,has since added an AED. "If there was an AED there at the time and had been mapped, someone could have grabbed it off the wall in under 60 seconds," said Sarah Katzenmaier. "I was saved by CPR, but no survivor should have to rely on a miracle when the technology to save them is right around the corner. In January, we had just 25 verified AEDs in Lexington; today we have over 125, and our goal is to surpass 1,100 by Valentine's Day 2027."

"CPR buys time, but AEDs restore life," added Charlotte Callan. "Mapping these devices empowers everyday citizens to step up as a community safety net. Anyone with a smartphone can help us turn Lexington into a heart safe community."

How the Community Can Get Involved
Register an AED (For Businesses & Property Owners): Go to http://tinyurl.com/MapAEDsInKY and click “Does Your Business Have an AED? Get it on the map today” to submit your AED details.
Become a Certified Verifier ("Cardiac CAT"): Visit http://tinyurl.com/MapAEDsInKY and click "START TRAINING NOW" to complete a free 25-minute online course. Once certified, volunteers receive an official t-shirt and can begin verifying AEDs for immediate 911 use.
Sponsor the Campaign: Local businesses can sponsor volunteer kits, signage, and outreach materials to support the goal of mapping 1,000+ AEDs.

Media Availability & Assets
Live Press Interviews: Sarah Katzenmaier (SCA Survivor) and Charlotte Callan (CPR Hero/Rescue Advocate) are available for live in-studio, remote, or on-site interviews upon request. Contact Greg Coon or Sarah Katzenmaier below.
Photo Album: High-resolution event photos, Thriller parade archival visuals, are available for download via Cardiac Crusade's media press kit: https://photos.app.goo.gl/hx9uaJ3duKBfgVkq8
Picture of Charlotte Callan (first responder) and Sarah Katzenmaier (SCA Survivor) at Spirit of Lexington Ceremony at City Hall https://photos.app.goo.gl/VjKuQcSDQhEGnCVh9

About Cardiac Crusade
Cardiac Crusade is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to saving lives from sudden cardiac arrest by ensuring Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are visible, accessible, and actionable when every second counts.

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