

Starting Hearts Announces New Advisory Board Member, Maggie Seldeen, Founder of High Rockies Harm Reduction



Vail, Colorado Nov 4, 2022 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Starting Hearts announced today the appointment of Maggie Seldeen to the Advisory Board. As Founder of High Rockies Harm Reduction, a nonprofit organization whose mission it is to reduce overdose deaths from drug abuse, Maggie will help direct and advise Starting Hearts as they expand their efforts to save more lives in the community.

"We are so grateful that Maggie has joined Starting Hearts in an advisory capacity," expressed Alan Himelfarb, Starting Hearts Executive Director. "As more cardiac arrests occur because of opioid overdoses, it's more and more important to understand how the event occurs, and the most effective way to respond to help more sudden cardiac victims survive. Maggie brings a level of expertise and practical knowledge that will help us save precious lives."

Maggie founded High Rockies Harm Reduction (HRHR) in November 2020, with a mission to reduce overdose deaths and other negative consequences of substance use through the expansion of harm reduction programming in rural western Colorado. The organization works to increase access to care for victims of substance abuse, and Maggie works closely with community agencies and stakeholders to best meet the unique needs of each rural town.

"I am so happy to collaborate with Starting Hearts, such an important organization in Eagle and Summit Counties that teaches people how to save lives, it's one of the most natural partnerships I've found," stated Maggie. "Most people don't realize that when someone overdoses on opioids or drugs laced with fentanyl, what kills them is that their heart stops beating due to lack of oxygen, and they die from cardiac arrest. Working together will allow us to potentially save more lives of drug overdose-related cardiac arrests."

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is the nation's number one killer that can happen to anyone, with over 475,000 in 2021 alone, according to the American Heart Association. SCA is caused by an electrical issue in the heart, such as the result of a drug overdose. During an opioid overdose, the body's parasympathetic nervous system slows down to a stop, resulting in the absence of breathing in the victim. When the body is no longer receiving oxygen, the heart stops, and cardiac arrest occurs.

The importance of responding properly and quickly to an SCA victim is a matter of life and death. Organizations like Maggie's provide Naloxone (Narcan, Kloxxado) and teach bystanders how to efficiently administer it to the victim. Starting Hearts teaches individuals how to respond to a cardiac arrest victim by providing life-saving steps with Call.Push.Shock.TM: 1) Call 911 2) Begin Chest Compressions 3) Administer an AED (automated external defibrillator). Combining the use of Naloxone with CPR and a defibrillator is by far the most effective way to help save a life until EMS arrives.

Starting Hearts is currently developing informational materials on drug use prevention to be incorporated into programming in schools and other educational venues. Additionally, the nonprofit is planning to place Naloxone nasal spray in more than 450 AED cabinets across Eagle County, to make the lifesaving drug significantly more accessible in public spaces in the community.

About High Rockies Harm Reduction

HRHR currently provides a variety of safe drug-related items, including free Naloxone and fentanyl test strips, and is contracted by several local organizations, including public health and school-based

organizations to provide training and education. To learn more about HRHR, visit <https://highrockiesharmreduction.com>.

About Starting Hearts

Starting Hearts is a nonprofit dedicated to saving the lives of Sudden Cardiac Arrest victims through free CPR and AED training and access programs. Their mission is to provide a platform for citizens, supporters, and community stakeholders to improve outcomes for sudden cardiac arrest victims through empowering education, widespread distribution of defibrillators in public locations, and activation of citizen first responders to confidently and capably provide early care when needed. To learn more about Starting Hearts, visit <https://startinghearts.org>

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