
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
November 15, 2007

Ministry of Health

HONOURED FOR SAVING A LIFE

VICTORIA – BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) presented Vital Link Awards to a bystander and two Victoria Police Officers yesterday, for using CPR that helped save the life of a stranger.

“Their training and willingness to act ultimately helped save the patients life,” said Paul Leslie, Projects Director, Medical Programs for the BCAS. “It’s important to recognize the benefits of knowing CPR and encourage others to learn this skill.”

On February 27, 2007 Dario Pretto, a City Works Employee was driving to work when he saw a man lying face down on the sidewalk. He quickly stopped and told his colleague to call 911 while he checked the patients vitals. Recognizing the signs of cardiac arrest Pretto began CPR. Victoria Police Officers Sean Cowperthwaite and Joan Elliot arrived on scene shortly after and assisted Pretto with performing CPR until the paramedics arrived and could take over.

“I have never had to use my training before this,” said Dario Pretto. “It was so surreal and I couldn’t believe that I was actually doing it.” Through work, Dario updates his first aid and CPR training every two years.

The BCAS Vital Link Award is presented to individuals who are involved in successful cardio-pulmonary resuscitation efforts. Aside from providing some much deserved recognition, the Vital Link Award represents an important opportunity to further community awareness about the benefits of learning and using CPR.

Cardiovascular disease is the second leading cause of death and accounts for more than one-fifth of all deaths in B.C. A cardiac arrest victim is four times more likely to survive if CPR is administered while waiting for further medical care.

The awards were presented at the Victoria Police Department to Victoria City Police Sean Cowperthwaite, Joan Elliot and City Works Dario Pretto.

-30-

Contact: Sarah Taylor
Communications Officer
250 953.3125