



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Vail Ski and Snowboard Academy and Starting Hearts Complete Historic Certification Program**

### **Entire Student Body and Staff Receive American Red Cross Certification**

Minturn, CO, December 8, 2018, 10:00am. In a program believed to be the first of its kind in the nation, Starting Hearts and Vail Ski and Snowboard Academy (VSSA) cooperated in completing a Red Cross certification of the entire student body and staff in CPR/DEFIB training.

On October 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, and November 1<sup>st</sup>, three instructors from Starting Hearts conducted the training to all age groups at the school, including teachers and staff. The course was delivered in two parts using the unique "blended learning" program from American Red Cross, consisting of 1 ½ hours of online study and a 1 ½ hour skills session in class. Each student who demonstrated command of the material and proper hands-on skills received a two-year certification from American Red Cross.

Lynn Blake, founder of Starting Hearts stated, "It has been our goal to teach leadership and lifesaving skills to an entire generation. This program with VSSA takes our community to an entirely new level with certifications for hundreds of students and adults, making our home all the more prepared to save precious lives. We are so excited to partner with VSSA in such an exciting and historic initiative."

Wade Hill, Principal at VSSA stated, "We are so excited to be the first school in the nation to certify the entire student body and staff. Partnering with Starting Hearts to bring these life-saving skills to our students was such an amazing learning experience."

Mike McGee, Starting Hearts lead instructor for this initiative, stated, "The students are not only attentive and eager to learn, but are also extremely capable of processing serious and life threatening emergencies. Their ability to assess a situation, respond appropriately, and remember the steps learned in training is impressive."

#### **For further information, please contact:**

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### **About Starting Hearts**

Starting Hearts is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Avon, CO. Its mission is to save the lives of sudden cardiac arrest victims through free CPR and defibrillator education, widespread distribution of lifesaving defibrillators everywhere in public, activation of citizen first responders, and broad stakeholder cooperation in the communities we serve. Since inception in 2010, Starting Hearts has educated more than 18,000 citizens in lifesaving and leadership skills, as well as increased the number of defibrillators in Eagle County, CO to more than 400, or one for every 130 citizens, one of the highest per capita rates in the nation. The organization is now expanding its programs through affiliations across Colorado and encourages interested parties to contact us. For more information, please visit [www.startinghearts.org](http://www.startinghearts.org).

### **About Vail Ski and Snowboard Academy**

Vail Ski & Snowboard Academy provides a challenging secondary and college preparatory academic program while supporting the athletic and personal goals of our students. In partnership with Ski & Snowboard Club Vail we facilitates the attainment of our students' dreams by offering challenging academics, flexible scheduling and individualized attention.

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