

Good afternoon Chair Cutrona, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and other members of the Health Provider Services Committee...

My name is Ralen Cleveland. I currently serve as the safety and security coordinator at Columbus Academy. My job is to help ensure the safety of all Columbus Academy students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Jan 12, 2023 is a day that I will never forget. Here is a portion of my incident report so that I can paint a picture for you. I must warn you there are some graphic details.

“At approximately 1825 while overseeing the 8th-grade basketball game, I witnessed referee Richard Roll collapse head first. I immediately ran to Roll and began assessing the injuries with Assistant Athletic trainer, Casey Lober. Roll sustained a two-inch indent on his forehead which was pooling with blood. After determining the severity of Rolls' condition I motioned for all non-essential personnel to leave the gym. Upon checking Roll's airway was clear I checked his pulse and determined that there were none. Roll was in cardiac arrest. Roll started to turn purple. Lober and I called for an AED and started sternum rubs while radioing for Officer Sanders who was on post in the athletic parking lot. I instructed Sanders to call 911 for a medical emergency and to escort them to the Jones Gym entrance.

After administering sternum rubs, they proved ineffective. At this time Dr. Ritu Bakhru assisted me with buddy team compressions. Bakhru and I did four rounds of compressions with no change to Rolls' condition. During the compressions, I injured Rolls' ribs in the process. Strength & Conditioning Coach, Shelby Reichle placed the AED Adult pads on Roll and initiated the shock with Head Athletic Trainer, Jake Devlin. The AED shock had no effect. I started another round of compressions and Roll became stable. I asked Roll a few cognitive questions and he answered them correctly. I explained to Roll that he had experienced a fall and that EMS was on the way. Mifflin Township, Gahanna Police, and Columbus Fire arrived shortly after. Roll continued to talk with EMS as they escorted him off the property. The athletics leadership and I cleaned up the blood and sanitized the floors. The incident was over at 1904.”

It is my belief that if there was not a working AED and trained staff, Richard Roll would not be alive today. It never happens how you think it will. You always think you'll have plenty of time to think or that you'll receive plenty of warning signs but you don't. You will think someone else will take action or someone else will be trained. But what if they are not? I believe that CPR training and medical emergency equipment should be readily available because they could change the course of action when mere seconds count. Just like in this situation, Fortunately, Richard is on the long road to recovery.

Thank you for your time,

Ralen C. Cleveland
Columbus Academy Safety & Security Coordinator