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## *For Immediate Release*

### **From “I-19” to “I-Saved a Life”**

#### ***President Obama Recognizes Two Plano Women for Saving a Life at a Bingo Game***

DALLAS, TX...May 29, 2009...With ink blotters and multiple cards in hand, regular Saturday Bingo players gathered at the Plano Senior Recreation Center last July, each with hopes of winning the big jackpot. Sara Deats and Maria Ramirez, both City of Plano employees, showed up for work expecting an ordinary day. Nothing could have been further from the truth.

During the game, a player appeared to have passed out. In reality, his heart had stopped beating. Deats and Ramirez joined forces and called 9-1-1 while retrieving an AED (automated external defibrillator). While Deats began administering CPR, Ramirez prepared the AED and administered shocks to the victim. This dynamic duo continued their lifesaving skills until EMS arrived. Without a doubt, if Deats and Ramirez had not been on duty that night, and if they had not been trained in an American Red Cross CPR/AED course, the victim would have died.

Because of their heroic act, President Barack Obama has recognized them with a special medal and a hand-signed Certificate of Merit, the first issued under his new administration. The Certificate of Merit is the highest award given by the American Red Cross to someone who saves a life because of the skills they learned in an American Red Cross Health & Safety Course.

Deats and Ramirez will be presented with their medals and their hand-signed Certificates of Merit at a special ceremony:

- **WHEN: Wednesday, June 3, 2009**
- **TIME: 1:00p.m.**
- **WHERE: American Red Cross-Dallas Area Chapter  
4800 Harry Hines Blvd., Dallas, Texas**

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For their lifesaving efforts, fellow City of Plano employees Amy Fortenberry and Pamela Perry are also being presented with this esteemed honor.

Amy Fortenberry was faced with anyone's worst nightmare. In a work-related training course, her instructor suddenly dropped face forward into the base of the podium. He wasn't breathing. Fortenberry and another classmate sprang into action and began administering CPR while others went to locate the AED. Fortenberry continued CPR until the AED arrived and then administered shocks to the victim. She saved her instructors life.

Pamela Perry was at work at the City of Plano when she heard someone yelling down the hallway that a man with heart problems had gone down in the fitness room. Perry grabbed the on-site AED and raced to the area. She began CPR until a nurse arrived. The nurse took over CPR while Perry prepared the AED to administer shocks. Together, they saved the life of their co-worker.

"If there were a contest to determine who has the best trained staff in CPR, the City of Plano would come out the winner," said Kevin Billings, director of Preparedness, American Red Cross-Dallas Area Chapter. "To have four employees presented with this presidential award in the same year is amazing. Imagine what would have happened to the victims if the City of Plano didn't take training their employees seriously."

The American Red Cross urges at least one person in every family to know how to perform CPR. In honor of National CPR and AED Week, June 1-7, the Dallas Area Chapter is offering 2-for-1 pricing for Adult CPR/AED certification on Friday, June 7, 2009. Course hours are from 8:00a.m.-12:30p.m. or from 1:00p.m.-5:30p.m. Take advantage of the 2-for-1 special pricing and bring a friend for \$40 each! To enroll in a course, go to [www.redcrossdallas.org](http://www.redcrossdallas.org) and register online.

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and counsels victims of disasters; provides nearly half of the nation's blood supply; teaches lifesaving skills; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its humanitarian mission. For more information, please visit [www.redcrossdallas.org](http://www.redcrossdallas.org) or join our blog at [www.redcrossdallas.blogspot.com](http://www.redcrossdallas.blogspot.com).