

Student Awarded University Accolade After Saving the Life of Rugby Volunteer



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A student who saved the life of a popular Bristol rugby fan and volunteer 'water-boy' during a game over Easter has been awarded her University's prestigious Vice Chancellor's Medal.

Sarah Shaw, a University of Worcester student from Kidderminster, was on duty as a First Aider for Kingswood Rugby Football Club in Bristol as part of her course placement when Ian Hardwell suffered a serious cardiac arrest.

Sarah responded immediately by administering CPR until paramedics arrived, and her actions contributed to Mr Hardwell making a 'complete a recovery as is possible'.

The club celebrated its 60th anniversary at an annual awards dinner on Friday, during which the University of Worcester presented a certificate to Sarah announcing that she would be formally awarded the Vice Chancellor's Medal when she graduates in November in front of a packed Worcester Cathedral.

The incident took place on March 28th, during a fixture between the club's first XI and Widden Old Boys. Lifelong supporter and water-boy Mr Hardwell, known affectionately as Dar, collapsed after carrying water onto the pitch for players.

Sarah responded immediately, administering CPR until the paramedics arrived 10 minutes later. Mr Hardwell was then treated on the scene for over an hour before being taken to the Bristol Royal Infirmary where he underwent major surgery.

Sarah, 22, says: "There had been a number of injuries during the game so I had been on and off the pitch and had just gone back to the side-lines. It was quite late in the game and the other team had secured a conversion. Ian ran on with the water for the players then I saw everyone crowding round him and they shouted me over – I thought it was a twisted ankle or something.

"When I got there he was on his knees and from his breathing I knew that he was having a cardiac arrest and from my training, I knew what was going to happen.

"The First Aid and CPR training on my [Sports Therapy](#) course is very intense, it's drummed into you," she adds. "And now I know why, you just never know when something's going to happen. I was just doing what I was trained to do and what I was there to do."

[Professor David Green, Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive of the University of Worcester](#), explains: "At the University, we set out to give students every opportunity to thrive and realise their full potential. Our graduates are educated to a very high standard. This results in thousands of our graduates making a truly positive, meaningful contribution to society and Sarah has certainly used her skills to wonderful effect.

"Sarah has exemplified this ethos during her time with us. Not only has she received scholarships in recognition of her outstanding grades, she has also raised thousands of pounds for charity by competing in several endurance races.

"Although, I'm sure, she will say that anyone in her position would have reacted in the same way when faced with a medical emergency, her actions demonstrate what an exceptional person she is, and we are very proud she is one of our students."

He adds: "We are delighted to hear that Mr Hardwell is making a good recovery, and we extend our good wishes to him and his family, as well as to Kingswood RFC, who very generously welcomed Sarah to their 60th anniversary dinner."

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