



Dean of Yale Engineering Paul Fleury (left) and Barbara Chesler of the Athletics Department are pictured with the new defibrillators and with donor Gintaras Vaisnys '83, and William Glover '50. Glover encouraged the gift in honor of his brother, who died after a cardiac arrest while training in the Payne Whitney Gym.

Alumni donate lifesaving gifts to Engineering, Athletics

The practical applications of a Yale education were underscored recently when two alumni donated a lifesaving device they developed to their alma mater.

The gift of two semi-automatic, external defibrillators was made to Yale Engineering and the Athletics Department by Gintaras Vaisnys '83 B.S. and Glenn Laub '78 B.S., co-founders of Defibtech LLC of Guilford, Connecticut.

The two men became friends when they met in the laboratory of the late Professor Csaba Horváth in the 1970s. Vaisnys was then a gifted math student from Notre Dame High School who was taking accelerated courses at Yale, and Laub was an undergraduate. Vaisnys later became an engineer, and Laub went on to become a cardiac surgeon. In 1999, they formed Defibtech LLC and began a collaboration to combine innovative engineering, cardiac expertise and lifesaving technology.

The company's Lifeline™ Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a portable, self-contained, self-monitoring system that is designed for simple and effective emergency use. The instructions are voice recordings and pictures that allow even an inexperienced individual to use the device effectively. In addition to being compact and easy to handle,

it provides a personalized shock to defibrillate; it runs electrocardiogram measurements before and after the treatment and runs all necessary internal mechanical self-tests.

Sudden cardiac arrest strikes and kills more than 400,000 people each year, most with no warning. Unless victims receive treatment within minutes of the attack, the survival rate is 2%-5%; rapid treatment increases the survival rate to well over 50%.

Defibtech defibrillators are now routinely found on airplanes, in police and fire departments and on basic emergency vehicles. They are becoming available to businesses, athletic venues, schools and individuals.

"Engineering is not just problem sets; it is real world feedback that pays off in lives saved," said Paul Fleury, dean of Yale Engineering and the Frederick W. Beinecke Professor of Engineering & Applied Physics, on accepting the AED.

Barbara Chesler, senior associate director of varsity sports, accepted the AED on behalf of the Athletics Department. This gift was encouraged by Guilford resident William Glover, a member of the Class of 1950E, who is currently a volunteer in Yale Engineering. It honors his brother who died after a cardiac arrest as he trained for the Olympics in 1956 at the Payne Whitney Gymnasium.