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EDUCATION PROFILE

Transforming Lives and Saving Lives

I work in higher education because I am committed to transforming the lives of others, but I never thought I would literally save a life. I was enjoying a moment of solitude on a lunch break in my office, when unbeknownst to me, Kathleen, who works in my office, had the unfortunate experience of choking on food, just a few feet away in the outer office. Kathleen was chatting, took a bite of food, and accidentally swallowed without chewing. She went into the kitchen to try to spit the food out of her mouth but she couldn't catch her breath. Her coworkers ran into the kitchen asking Kathleen if she needed help, and all she could do was shake her head 'yes' in agreement. Unfortunately, no one could perform the Heimlich. Someone called Public Security and another member of my team, Karen, ran into my office



Kingsborough Community College President Dr. Claudia V. Schrader, left, administered abdominal thrusts to save staffer Kathleen Klemm.

and alerted me that Kathleen was choking.

My instincts and previous training immediately kicked in when I saw her choking. I stood behind Kathleen, gave her a couple of abdominal thrusts, and the food dislodged from her throat.

"It probably all hap-

pened in a few seconds but it seemed like a longtime," says Kathleen.

I'm happy to say that Kathleen is fine but it was a terrifying moment that could have turned into a tragedy. When a person is choking, time is of the essence to assist. Abdominal thrusts, formerly known

as the Heimlich maneuver, is a technique that relies on having a reserve of air in the lungs; the air must be pushed out by a quick upward thrust on the diaphragm with enough force to expel the obstructing object.

It's a simple technique that most people can eas-

ily learn and is offered at Kingsborough Community College. In this class, students receive knowledge and basic skills necessary to meet respiratory and cardiac emergencies in adults, children and infants. Upon successful completion of this course, students receive the American Red Cross Certificate for Community CPR.

Everyone in my office will soon receive our Community CPR training. It's a small investment of time, to save a life, like Kathleen's.

Dr. Claudia V. Schrader is president of Kingsborough Community College (KCC) located in beautiful Manhattan Beach, Brooklyn. Kingsborough Community College is committed to enhancing learning opportunities for the Brooklyn community. Visit www.kbcc.cuny.edu to learn about the classes, certifications and degree programs offered at KCC.

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