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Alumnus Dies in Daytona Beach Accident

05.12.2007 | Students

Garrett Loiselle, 22, a recent University of Dayton graduate from Normal, Ill., died early this morning in Daytona Beach, Fla.

According to information from the Volusia County Medical Examiner's office, he died after apparently falling and hitting his head inside his hotel room. It appears to be an accidental death. An autopsy will be performed.

"I'm greatly saddened by this tragic accident," said Daniel J. Curran, UD president. "Our prayers and sympathy are with the family and all of Garrett's UD friends. This is a very close community, and a death like this touches us all deeply. In times like these, we come together to support each other."

Loiselle graduated from UD with a bachelor's degree in finance on Sunday, May 6, according to UD's commencement list. His sister, Lauren, just finished her second year at UD.

Officials from Breakaway Tours are meeting with all "Dayton to Daytona" tour participants today to share facts, alleviate rumors and provide grief counseling services. Student Government Association officials are arranging a prayer service at a local Catholic church. In addition, Curran; the Rev. Christopher Wittmann, S.M., director of campus ministry; and Carol Cummins-Collier, assistant vice president for student development, plan to travel to Daytona Beach today to offer the University's support to the students and hold a special Mass on Sunday.

Approximately 2,500 participants, mostly University of Dayton students and recent graduates, signed up for the Breakaway Tours "Dayton to Daytona" trip May 8-14. They make their own travel arrangements, reserve rooms through the tour company and participate in various tour-sponsored activities.

"The thoughts and prayers of the entire Breakaway Tours team are with Garrett, his family and friends," said T.J. Donnelly, president of Breakaway Tours. "Thirty of our team members have been traveling with these students in Daytona Beach, Fla., and have actively engaged since the accident this morning. We're doing everything we can to help students, friends and family cope with and respond to the tragedy."

Friends remember Loiselle as quiet and courteous. "He was one of the most genuine people I've ever met," said Brendan O'Grady, a recent UD graduate who made the trip.

Funeral arrangements are pending. UD plans to hold a campus memorial service, but a date hasn't been set yet. The Dayton Flyers baseball team will offer a moment of silence in Loiselle's memory before its noon home game at Time Warner Cable Stadium on Sunday.

Contact Rachelle Khalaf, Breakaway Tours, at 416-625-1808 or Teri Rizvi, University of Dayton, at 937-229-3255 or 367-2878.