

City news

Batavia High School teacher hospitalized in Costa Rica

by Michael McCulloh

A Batavia High School Spanish teacher remains hospitalized in Costa Rica following a white-water rafting accident on Saturday, April 1.

Joy Vaughn, 24, of Naperville, has been joined by her parents at a hospital in Costa Rica, although details regarding the seriousness of her condition are not available, said Batavia School District Superintendent Ed Cave.

However, Batavia High School Principal David Booth said he has heard that Vaughn's vital signs are improving.

Vaughn was an adult chaperone of an independent student trip for spring break sponsored by the American Council for International Studies (ACIS), based in Boston. She was accompanied by fellow foreign language teacher Julie Johnson and nine students. But there were no injuries to the other members of this group, he said.

All of the students are now back in Batavia, and counselors have been arranged for those who need their help, Cave said.

There also have been conflicting reports as to how the accident occurred, so no official statement has been released, Cave said.

Booth said that although students were involved, the incident happened so fast that it is hard to determine exactly what happened.

Johnson remains in Costa Rica with Vaughn and her parents, he said.

"We're very concerned for Joy and hope her condition continues to improve and that she and her parents come home soon," Cave said. He added that the school district staff is very grateful Johnson and the students were not injured as well.

Booth said he gives the students credit, because most are back in school trying to get re-involved, despite the tragedy.

Michael Eizenberg, president of ACIS, said that the rafting accident was not in a high risk area. Hundreds of people take this excursion every day and are not hurt, he said.

"This was not in the wilds of Costa Rica," he said. The main concern is making sure Vaughn and her parents arrive back in the United States as soon as possible, he said.

Cave said cards or letters for Vaughn can be sent in care of Batavia High School, 1200 W. Wilson St., Batavia, IL, 60510.

Also, students have started a fund to assist Vaughn with medical expenses, which can be dropped off in the main office at the school, Booth said.

Vaughn is in her second year teaching at Batavia High School.

