

The State of Iowa Medical Examiners Office has released its findings regarding the death of "Nabby" Baffour-Awuah, who was found deceased on the Luther College campus on January 1, 2011. The medical examiner has ruled the cause of death accidental as the result of exposure/Hypothermia. Toxicology results released by the Medical Examiner's Office indicated a blood alcohol level of .174 and a trace amount of THC (Marijuana) in Baffour-Awuah's system. There were no other potential causes of death identified.

The Decorah Police Department reports that the Medical Examiner's findings appear to be consistent with the investigation completed by the Decorah Police Department and the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigations. The Decorah Police Department received a 911 call from Baffour-Awuah at about 1:45 AM on January 1, 2011. Baffour-Awuah seemed to be in distress and was seeking help. He had identified his location as the Luther College campus. Police officers, Luther College Security and a Winneshiek Medical Center paramedic unit searched the campus and surrounding neighborhood extensively for approximately 2 ½ hours, but were unable to locate Baffour-Awuah. A passerby found Baffour-Awuah unresponsive near the College baseball field at about 8:00 AM on January 1, 2011. Police responded to the scene and found Baffour-Awuah deceased. Baffour-Awuah was wearing long pants and two t-shirts at the time he was found. Investigation at the scene did not suggest signs of foul play.

Interviews with witnesses determined that Baffour-Awuah had arrived at a party at a residence at 214 East St. at about 9:00 PM on December 31, 2010 and left at about 1:00 AM on January 1, 2011. Baffour-Awuah was seen at Decorah Mart on College Drive at about 1:15 AM. Baffour-Awuah left Decorah Mart in a taxi at about 1:35 AM and was given a ride to Luther College, where he left the taxi on the lower campus road near Miller Hall. Further investigation revealed that the Baffour-Awuah's dormitory was locked and that he did not have keys with him to get into the dormitory.

During the course of the investigation many people, including those who were present at the house party and Decorah Mart were interviewed as was the taxi driver and a passenger in the taxi. Interviews conducted by law enforcement officers with those who had contact with Baffour-Awuah throughout the evening confirmed that Baffour-Awuah had been consuming alcohol earlier in the evening. A subsequent search of the Luther College campus determined that Baffour-Awuah had descended a wooded, snow covered embankment from the rear of Ylvisaker Hall to the lower Regents Center parking lot area. There was only one set of tracks left in the snow where Baffour-Awuah made his way from Ylvisaker down the embankment.

The State Medical Examiner's Office advised that the consumption of alcohol increases susceptibility to hypothermia. Hypothermia also may quickly lead to disorientation and unusual conduct by a person exposed to extremely cold temperatures, and these conditions can occur in a matter of 20 minutes or less.

The case has been investigated by the Decorah Police Department and the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation, with the assistance of the Winneshiek County Attorney's Office and Luther College.

The Decorah Police Department continues to be interested in speaking with anyone who had contact with Baffour-Awuah during the New Year's Eve late evening/early morning hours or have other information concerning this matter, and would ask that you call us at 563-382-3667.