

Concordia 4 Kirk Fund raiser

Formal Outstanding Student Athlete Paralyzed in Swimming Accident

By Jakob Kounkel

The plans for former Concordia baseball player Kirk Ingram ('09)'s fundraiser have been finalized. It will be called Concordia 4 Kirk Co-Ed Softball Event (don't worry, it's slow pitch), and will be Saturday, September 26 at 9:00 a.m. at Robert E. Barnes baseball field (behind the Ganglehoff Center).

Head Baseball Coach Mark "Lunch" McKenzie and Assistant Baseball Coach Marcus McKenzie are avid supporters of Ingram and his family, and they are the ones orchestrating everything for this fundraiser. Coach McKenzie said, "Kirk is a caring, polite and respectful person. He was a great player for us, but he was a better teammate and person—an unbelievable human being."

Ingram was paralyzed in a swimming accident on Lake Minnetonka on Saturday, August 2, 2015, just two weeks after he and his wife welcomed their daughter Alexa. The CSP community is rallying around Kirk, who was an outstanding person on the field and in the classroom. Ingram earned the NSIC's Britton Award in 2009 and was a two-time "Top 4" student-athlete at Concordia. These two awards are top honors in the NSIC and Concordia; they recognized Ingram for his all-around impact in the classroom, community and on field.

Kirk's father-in-law, John Cornwell, shared these words about Kirk on the family's Caring Bridge site: "Tragedy has struck, but hope remains. Kirk is alive. While enjoying a beautiful summer day with friends on Lake Minnetonka, Kirk playfully dove into the water, and unfortunately struck the bottom, injuring his neck." Cornwell added later that the surgery to stabilize Kirk's spine was successful, but he was left with little to no feeling in his arms

and legs, and that the damage may be permanent.

Cornwell ends the passage with optimism saying, "Those of you who know Kirk, know that he has amazing physical strength and will power. If anyone can defy the odds and overcome this injury, it is Kirk. No one works harder or demands more of himself than Kirk... He remains our hero."

The event cost for participants is \$75 per person. This includes a softball entry, "Concordia 4 Kirk" t-shirt, pizza or hot dogs, a beverage, and admission to CSP vs Bemidji State football. Spectators are encouraged to watch the game for \$20. There are also raffle tickets available for \$5 (or 5 tickets for \$20) with a chance to win great prizes, like a Derek Jeter autographed baseball and more. Marcus McKenzie added, "a lot of the raffle items are like this, and every item in the raffle is something worth having." The McKenzies are well connected with the Twins and Vikings. Brian Dozier, Torii Hunter and Byron Buxton all bought t-shirts to support the cause.

Make sure to come out and support Kirk and Melissa CSP is doing this because we love Kirk and Melissa, and want to help out with medical bills as much as we can. The Ingram family is more than deserving of every penny donated.

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