



## *News Release*

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## **Two 916 Students Who Helped Century Instructor Meet Her at Hospital**

Two Intermediate School District 916 students from Mounds View who came to the aid of a Century College instructor severely injured in a traffic accident met her at Bethesda Hospital on April 26.

It was the first time the students – Chad Maxwell of the EMT program and Logan Schmitt of the truck diesel program - had seen instructor Xochitl (pronounced SO-chull) Grant since her accident. Grant, who suffered a neck injury that resulted in paralysis from the chest down, thanked the boys for their help.

“You did a brave thing,” said Grant, who teaches in Century’s English for Speakers of Other Languages program. “Thank you very much.”

The morning of the accident on Feb. 2 was dark, windy, icy and below freezing. The boys – both seniors in high school - were driving separate cars to their 916 programs at Century College when they saw a car in the ditch with the air bag deployed and a person inside. They could have driven by, as everyone else

was doing in the morning rush-hour traffic. Instead, they both pulled over and stopped near the White Bear Avenue exit off I-694.

Tapping on the window, they could see that Grant was in distress, struggling to breathe and slumped over the wheel. Her car door was locked, and she was unable to open it.

Thinking fast, the boys managed to pry the door open with their hands just far enough to reach in and unlock the door. Then Logan got a knife from his car and Chad slit Grant's seatbelt so that she could breathe more easily. Chad then put his Emergency Medical Technician training into use. He climbed into the back seat and held her head between his hands, stabilizing her neck until the paramedics arrived.

Logan stayed until the State Trooper arrived.

"It was very icy that day," recalled Chad. "I saw Logan almost go into the ditch and I spun out and landed part-way in the ditch. But I drove out. Then I saw the accident."

Grant had spun on the ice and collided head-on with another vehicle before landing in the ditch with her rear wheels on the shoulder.

Grant was talking when the boys got her car door open. She said she was having trouble breathing, and she also said one more thing that she didn't remember until the boys reminded her of it in the hospital. She said, "I don't want to be paralyzed."

Chad kept talking to her as he held her head. She said she was going to her job at Century College, and the boys realized that they had something in common with the woman they were assisting. Logan took her through a breathing exercise he learned in Boy Scouts, and he urged her to breathe in, breathe out. Her breathing became more regular and less erratic.

It took the ambulance about 15 minutes to reach the scene, though it seemed much longer to Chad. The adrenalin pumping through his body kept him from being too conscious of the cold. The wind was

freezing, and he was only wearing a t-shirt and jeans, having shed his sweatshirt while trying to get the vehicle door open.

“It was a weird situation,” said Chad. “It was hectic, but I felt calm.”

“We figured that if we got worried, she would get more worried,” said Logan.

Chad and Logan both downplay how much they helped at the accident scene. “It did make me want to be an EMT more,” said Chad, who plans to enter the Century EMT program after graduating from the 916 program. Logan is on track to enter the Marine Corps in May.

After being treated at Regions Hospital, Grant is currently recuperating at Bethesda Hospital in downtown St. Paul. She is undergoing physical therapy, building up strength in her arms. While her recovery often leaves her exhausted, she has enjoyed frequent visits from her Century College colleagues, as well as former colleagues from the University of Minnesota and church friends from Christ Church International in South Minneapolis, where she lives.