



Mar 22, 2004

--CONTENT--

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News



The injured student was crossing N. Charles St. around 4 p.m. Saturday when he was hit by a SUV. (Jeff Katzenstein / News-Letter)

Student injured by SUV in 'Death' Lane

By Justin Roberts
March 12, 2004

A freshman in the crowd trickling back from the Hopkins vs. Princeton lacrosse game was hit by a car in the single Southbound lane of N. Charles St.

The accident occurred in the "Death' lane of N. Charles St. at approximately 3:30 p.m. as the student was crossing the street directly in front of the Eisenhower Library. According to witnesses, he was struck on his left side and rolled onto the hood of a Chevrolet Suburban before falling to the pavement and crawling towards the grassy median between the service lane and regular southbound lane of N. Charles St.

The driver of the sports utility vehicle involved in the southbound accident was a person unaffiliated with the University. According to eyewitnesses the car appeared to be traveling at a speed of approximately 25 mph when it hit the Hopkins freshman. It is unclear whether Baltimore City Police plan to cite the driver for negligence in the accident.

Students from the Hopkins Emergency Response Unit (HERU) were the first medical personnel on the scene to treat the victim.

Sophomore Fareed Rayiz, the first HERU member to arrive on the scene, said that the student was "sitting on the median normally, holding his leg and arm. His arm had been visibly scraped and there was a sizeable cut above his left eyebrow."

HERU members tended to the most obvious of the student's wounds and monitored his vital statistics while waiting for advanced emergency care.

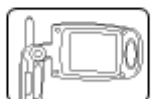
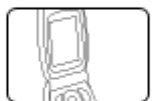
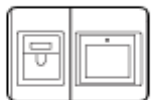
An ambulance from the Baltimore City Fire Department arrived minutes later and the injured student was taken to Union Memorial hospital.

The student stayed overnight at Union Memorial before being released to his parents and other relatives.

The single lane adjacent to Charles Street has long been a danger to Hopkins students and members of the community, according to Hopkins Security Investigator Dennis Rosemary.

There have been several similar instances in recent years when students have been struck by oncoming traffic as well as a number of close calls.

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The single lane is closed for the majority of each week but is opened to accommodate traffic driving south on weekday mornings and can also be opened temporarily on the weekends.

When the lane is closed, a red "X" sign signals drivers to take a different route, but accidents have been caused in years past by motorists who failed to follow the sign and drove in the closed lane.

Rosemary warned students about the dangerous traffic pattern.

"We all know that it is a very dangerous situation on Charles Street, even if it is closed you can not take it for granted that no cars are coming down it."

This is not the first time a Hopkins student has been hit by a car on N. Charles Street.

In the fall of 1999 there were multiple incidents, including one in which a local woman was struck and killed crossing Charles Street while jogging.

In another case, a Hopkins student was hit by a car and suffered broken bones.

The traffic pattern on Charles Street is a result of city planning that took place when Hopkins was constructed in 1914. The city planner at the time, Frederick Law Olmsted, proposed a central two-lane road with a service lane on the east side of the road. The partition and separate lane, which is today the southbound lane, were formerly a trolley-car path.

The Charles Village Project has made changing the traffic pattern one of its main goals, according to the Project's website. They plan to "prioritize pedestrian travel safety and comfort - especially along Charles Street and at major intersections," a goal aimed solely at preventing situations like the one which occurred on Saturday.

The developers in charge of the Charles Village Project, which is set to begin construction on June 1, hope to rectify the hazardous traffic pattern.



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