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Family: Rutgers Grad Severely Beaten In Cancun

PHILADELPHIA (CBS 3) — Three weeks ago, Joseph "Zeke" Rucker was worried about which law school he would attend. Now, the 21-year-old from Sewell, New Jersey is fighting for his life after apparently being severely beaten while on a trip to Mexico.

Rucker went to Cancun with a friend to celebrate his graduation from Rutgers University. The pre-law student arrived in Cancun on March 15 and went out for an evening on the town.

His friend tells Eyewitness News he and Rucker parted ways to return to their rooms for the night. Rucker, however, decided to sleep on a lounge chair near the hotel's swimming pool.

Rucker's friend said the hotel told him that a security guard talked to Rucker at about 3 a.m. and he said he was told Rucker was found injured in the grass 30 to 40 feet away from the pool at 4 a.m. on March 16.

Rucker suffered severe head trauma and after spending several days in a hospital in Mexico, he was flown to the Ryder Trauma Center at Jackson Memorial in Miami where he remains in a coma.

"He has two huge skull fractures in the back of his head and he has internal bleeding in his brain and hematoma," Rucker's father Joseph explained.

His family has been at his side ever since, hoping and praying, he will recover. For now though, they just want him to wake up.

"It's heartbreaking. His eyes are open, but not focused. We don't know if he even knows who we are," Rucker's mom Anne said.

At this time, what really happened to Zeke remains unknown. His parents believe he was beaten.

The only thing Zeke's parents know is certain, is their family will never travel to Mexico again.



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The family of Joseph "Zeke" Rucker, a Rutgers University graduate, claims he was severely beaten while on a trip to Cancun. CBS

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