

## Vigils to take place for Grand Prairie grad who died after Cancun boat trip

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By SCOTT FARWELL / The Dallas Morning News  
[sfarwell@dallasnews.com](mailto:sfarwell@dallasnews.com)

A South Grand Prairie High School graduate died Tuesday, three days after she and other students jumped from a sinking tour boat in Mexico.



AP

Men are seen onboard the Sea Star tourist boat at a beach in Cancun, Mexico, on Monday. Police said they are investigating whether the boat was overloaded when it sank on Saturday, June 7 between Cancun and Isla Mujeres.

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Lisa Chung, 18, apparently was trapped under a rescue vessel in the chaotic scene about 200 yards off Cancun. By the time rescuers pulled her to the surface, the honor student had suffered heart and lung failure.

The captain of the Sea Star ordered a half-dozen North Texas students and more than 100 other passengers to jump into the ocean when the boat began sinking Saturday afternoon. Ms. Chung and another student, Loren Dailey, bobbed toward the surface as another boat slid over them.

"We had life vests on so we were coming back up, and the next thing we know when we come back up there was a boat on top of us," Ms. Dailey said Tuesday. "And not like pinning us down, but I mean, that's all I could feel. I believe it's a rescue boat that came in and didn't know we were underneath the water."

Ms. Chung, who had planned to attend Baylor University in the fall, was left brain-dead and had been on a respirator since Saturday. Her death at a North Texas hospital was confirmed Tuesday by the Dallas County medical examiner's office.

Carson Wiggs, one of Ms. Chung's classmates on the post-graduation trip, said, the event "was supposed to be a time of fun and celebration, and it turned out in tragedy."

Several of the North Texas students returned to Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport on Monday night. Hours later, they gathered in the Dailey family's living room, praying, weeping and reliving an experience they said they'll never forget.

"It was still very raw and tender," said Patricia Dailey, Loren's mother. "There are a lot of emotions involved, and the kids are just getting back with their families and adjusting."

Two vigils have been scheduled for Ms. Chung, at 8:30 tonight and 7:30 p.m. Friday, said Sam Buchmeyer, spokesman for the Grand Prairie school district. Both are to be at South Grand Prairie High School, 301 Warrior Trail, he said.

An air ambulance flew Ms. Chung and her relatives to Dallas on Tuesday, according to Luis Raymundo Canche, assistant prosecutor for the state of Quintana Roo.

Mexican officials and a representative of GradCity, a Massachusetts-based company that booked the weeklong graduation celebration, said investigators are trying to figure out what went wrong.

"We know it was a new boat, about 6 months old, it was insured and it was a licensed vendor," said Jason Chute, director of operations for the company that specializes in booking student trips. "There are a lot of rumors."

Among them, he said, are accusations that the snorkeling boat's crew abandoned the vacationers after the boat foundered.

"That's not actually the case," Mr. Chute said. He said he did not want to elaborate because it would perpetuate inaccuracies.

Authorities said they were investigating whether the vessel was overloaded.

A preliminary report by the port captain said that the boat appeared to be carrying 126 people and that it is authorized to carry 80. But its captain, Agustin Cituk, said it can carry 250 people.

*WFAA-TV (Channel 8), staff writer Dan X. McGraw and The Associated Press contributed to this report.*