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19-year-old Rock Island football player dies

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Travis Hearn, a former Rock Island football player who was paralyzed from the neck down during a game and whose story caught the attention of President-elect Barack Obama and former Bears coach Mike Ditka, has died. He was 19.

Hearn's family says he died at Trinity Medical Center's West Campus on Thursday. He'd been at the hospital since the end of November.

Hearn was paralyzed after a collision in September 2006 game. The community raised thousands of dollars to offset medical costs and build an accessible home.

In April 2007, Ditka waived a speaking fee and wrote a \$5,000 check to Hearn's fund. This summer, Obama spoke of Hearn during a campaign stop in Davenport, Iowa.

Funeral arrangements are pending.

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