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University Relations

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**Cougar basketball teams show support for area high school athlete with UMM ties**

*Summary: Basketball fans donate \$700 in support of Perham athlete Zach Gabbard*

(February 3, 2011)-It has been said that sports do not build character, they reveal it. The local basketball community bore this out recently, rising in support of one of their own fighting for his life. Zach Gabbard, a 17-year-old junior on the Perham Yellowjackets basketball team, collapsed on the court during a game in Glyndon on January 20. Following emergency procedures, he was transferred to Sanford Health Center in Fargo, North Dakota, where he underwent open-heart surgery.

Once stable, Gabbard was moved to the University of Minnesota Medical Center in Minneapolis for more specialized care. A biopsy, however, failed to reveal the cause of his collapse. With the consent of his parents, doctors are keeping him heavily sedated in order for his organs to heal. We would rather have him rest a bit longer versus experience a relapse in his progress, his parents said.

When the University of Minnesota, Morris (UMM) Cougar men's and women's basketball teams hosted St. Scholastica on January 29, women's head coach Tim Grove spoke about Gabbard at halftime of the men's game. The UMM and St. Scholastica fans responded with \$700 to help the family defray medical expenses, an act made more poignant by a UMM connection.

Dave Cresap, Perham boy's basketball head coach, expressed his sincere thanks on behalf of the entire Perham community. Cresap is the father of current UMM women's basketball senior Brandi Cresap.

Gabbard's character, and that of his teammates, is being revealed by the many visitors to his [CaringBridge website](#). "You would be so proud of your teammates and the young men that they are," says one. "They step out onto the court each night and play for you and are carrying you with them on this journey." And a basketball referee captured one of several telling scenes of team spirit: "I was in Bagley last night for a double header and you should have seen the Fosston Boys warm up shirts. [We] refs thought it was pretty cool how they had 11 players all with the same number and last name warming up . . . GABBARD #3."

Information on supporting Zach Gabbard can be found [online](#).

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