

ETBU mourns student killed in automobile crash

January 16, 2009

MARSHALL—A student at East Texas Baptist University was killed in a two-vehicle wreck just east of Hallsville on U.S. Highway 80 Jan. 15. Senior Jessica Teutsch, age 21, of Haughton, La., was traveling to her student teaching assignment at Hallsville Junior High when the fatal crash occurred.

“The ETBU campus is devastated by the loss of Jessica,” said ETBU President Bob Riley. “Accidents such as this one truly make us appreciate that we are in a community of faith. Our faith assures that God is in control of things we truly do not understand.

“Our prayers are for Jessica’s family and friends that must cope with this tragic loss.”

On Thursday evening, Baker Auditorium, where ETBU holds Jessica Teutsch chapel, was open for staff, faculty and students to gather, share stories about Teutsch and pray for her immediate family.

Teutsch was in her final semester at ETBU and scheduled to graduate in May with a bachelor of music degree.

Her wall on Facebook is covered with tributes to her life by many ETBU students and longtime friends after hearing about her death. Her last Facebook status update from Tuesday, Jan. 13 at 4:43 p.m. reads, “Jessica got to teach today.”

Paul Vickers, assistant professor of teacher education at ETBU, recalled:

"In one of her assignments she wrote, 'I want my students to be successful in everything they do. I want them to know that the sky is the limit, and anything is possible in my classroom.'"

Vickers characterized her as "simply not a teacher by training, but a teacher by design."

Teutsch was a member of the ETBU Concert Choir, and she was involved in Baptist Student Ministry, serving on the "Barnabas" encouraging team. She was a 2005 graduate of Haughton High School.

"Jessica was a joyful presence in the music program," said Tom Webster, dean of the School of Fine Arts at ETBU. "She had a gift for handling the challenges of college life with grace and a smile, and she also shared the stress and challenges that her friends faced as well, helping them through the difficulties of life."

Webster called her a delightful student, musically gifted and committed to doing her best in every task.

"I will miss her, as will as our faculty and students. But I rejoice in her life that was lived for God's pleasure. She was truly the embodiment of God's love," Webster said.

She is survived by her parents, Scott and Lisa Teutsch, and two younger siblings. Her father is the pastor of Eastwood Baptist Church of Haughton, La.

Funeral services will be held Sunday, Jan. 18, at First Baptist Church of Bossier City, La., in the Faith Chapel at 2:00 p.m. Visitation will be held Saturday, Jan. 17, at Hillcrest Funeral Home in Haughton, La., from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

ETBU will hold a tribute to Jessica Teutsch's life at the beginning of chapel on Monday, Jan. 19, at 10 a.m.

