

Luke Roux, Farmington teen killed in crash, leaves legacy of kindness, faith and discipline

Luke Roux was just 2 miles away from home, and two months away from starting his adult life at the University of Connecticut when another vehicle collided with his on a summer night in Farmington, cutting his young life short. The future he'd planned and prepared for, gone in an instant.

Roux, 17, graduated from Farmington High School just last month. At the ceremony, he smiled proudly at his parents in his maroon cap and gown, chords of honor draped around his neck marking his achievements.

In August, he was set to join his two older brothers Nathan and Edison Roux in Storrs and "was wildly optimistic about what came next."

Roux spent his 17 years in a quiet, close-knit neighborhood where his life was rooted in strong values of kindness, faith and love for his family, friends and many teammates. "A gentle giant," as described by his family.

"He was a young man of few words and when they were needed, they were real: authentically him and always kind," his family, including parents Carri and Stephen Roux, told The Courant.

Although he was quiet, his strong faith and good character were apparent when he spoke and in his abounding interests and talents.

Roux was a disciplined, regimented teen who took care of himself through routines and structure that ensured he was always at peak performance. He was ready, his family said, to be the best version of himself at any moment.

On June 25, Roux woke to his daily 8:30 a.m. alarm and took one of his frequent long walks around the neighborhood with his mother. He practiced disc golf, a newfound passion, and headed off to a summer baseball game in which his team played especially well, winning in just five innings.

Roux was beaming about the win, a teammate told his family.

In his typical habit of serving others any chance he got, Roux stuck around the baseball field to help clean up. He then got in his car to head home, on the same route he always drove, to have his regular postgame snack and a chocolate milk.

But he never made it home.



Luke Roux, 17, graduated from Farmington High School just last month. At the ceremony, he smiled proudly at his parents in his maroon cap and gown. (Courtesy of The Roux Family)



Luke Roux spent his last hours where he spent much of his life: on the playing field alongside his summer baseball teammates. (Courtesy of The Roux Family)

Another vehicle collided with Roux's on Colt Highway at the intersection of Fienemann Road about 8:30 p.m., according to the Farmington Police Department.

Roux was pronounced dead at John Dempsey Hospital not long after the crash, police said.

An enthusiastic athlete, Roux spent his last hours where he spent much of his life: on the playing field alongside his teammates. Roux played baseball, ice hockey and tennis, swam and competed in esports, his family said.

Aaron Jainchill, a neighbor and longtime baseball coach of Roux's, said that the teen's sportsmanship was legendary in their town.

"All of Luke's baseball coaches will tell you the same thing: Luke was a very good player, but more importantly, an ideal teammate and model person," said Jainchill. "Luke always put forth his best effort on every play, did whatever was asked of him to help the team and was always positive toward his teammates."

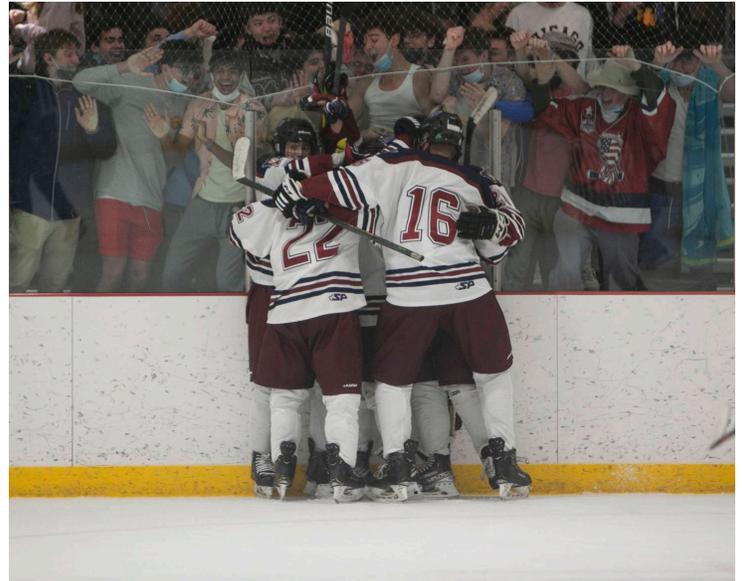
Roux's hockey coach, Kevin Miller, said that he hesitated to call himself Roux's coach because the teen taught him just as much about life as the coach taught the teen about the game.

"Coaching is a strong word as I think I learned more from him over that time than the other way around," said Miller of his years as Roux's coach.

"Luke exuded kindness toward others in every way while successfully balancing that with discipline and a competitive edge on the ice. He set a great example for his peers and coaches every day on how to act and treat others."

Roux's discipline was something he was known for. His friends, his family said, often joked that he had a "government-mandated bedtime."

His everyday decisions about his diet, sleep and activities "were executed with consistency and precision," his family wrote. "Luke took great care of himself, so that he could be his best so that he could help anyone at any time. We would all benefit from living our lives more like Luke did."



Luke Roux's ice hockey coach said he balanced kindness toward others with discipline and a competitive edge on the ice. According to family, Farmington High School plans to retire his jersey, No. 16. (Courtesy of The Roux Family)

His discipline was clear in the long list of talents he curated.

Roux was a gifted drummer, with family photos showing a towhead toddler banging on a drum set much larger than him, and also played the violin, keyboard and guitar with a love for an eclectic mix of progressive rock.

He was an accomplished scholar who excelled in math and made a profound impact on his peers, teachers and administrators during his years in Farmington schools.

His close friend, Michael Sama, said the two made lifelong memories over the years at school, on the baseball field, playing video games and beyond.

"He was such a kind, caring, and gentle friend, and I am so grateful that I was able to spend as much time with him as I did," said Sama.

Though he made countless friends in his life, Roux was not flashy, his family said, opting for real-life good deeds over a more public social media presence.

“He was who he was. Action not words. Luke was a reflection to others of his love and faith in Christ,” the family wrote.

The teen belonged to Bethany Lutheran Church in West Hartford and, according to his loved ones, “represented all the best facets of Christianity living a simple life rooted in love and kindness for those around him.”

His family who planned to help him pack for his move to Storrs this summer, instead found themselves planning his funeral and grappling with how to honor his legacy of kindness.

The teen, his family said, died at a time when he was preparing to build his life and legacy.

“Luke left us at a time when he was wildly optimistic about the future, a future in which he would have helped so many more people,” they said. He was ready to build a new community in Storrs and to continue spreading kind words, service and friendliness to all those he met on campus and beyond.

To try to emulate the impact Roux would have made on the world, his family started the Luke Roux Memorial Fund. Funds donated will be used to directly support future graduates of Luke’s alma mater; sports teams Roux valued such as the Farmington Valley Generals hockey team, West Hartford Youth Hockey, Farmington Little League and disc golf in the state; autism awareness and support; and organizations committed to the awareness and prevention of destructive driving.

His family said that although Roux’s life was cut short, his character will continue to guide them.

“Luke will remain present with us every day, through every small gesture and interaction we have with others,” his family said in a statement. “We will emulate the example he set and are committed to spreading love, hope and kindness toward others. We wish the same for everyone who knew him. Together, we will indefinitely spread kindness one step at a time, for Luke.”

Roux will be remembered at the Molloy Funeral Home at 906 Farmington Avenue in West Hartford from 4 to 7 p.m. on Thursday and during a memorial service at 11 a.m. on Friday at Roux’s church, Bethany Lutheran Church, at 1655 Boulevard in West Hartford.

In lieu of flowers, the family is asking for donations to the memorial fund <https://lukerouxmemorialfund.com>.