

PANAMA CITY, Fla. - Future University of Notre Dame student-athlete Matt James died Friday evening after falling from a third-floor balcony at a hotel in Panama City, Fla.

James, a 17-year-old senior at Cincinnati's St. Xavier High School, signed a letter of intent on Feb. 3 to join the Fighting Irish football team. He was on spring break with friends when the accident occurred.

"The Notre Dame football program is in a state of disbelief and incredible sadness with the news of this tragic event," Notre Dame head football coach [Brian Kelly](#) said. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of Matt James in this most trying of times.

"On a personal level, I got to know Matt quite well over the past few years and he was a wonderful young man from a great family. Matt was an extremely talented person who was very bright and possessed a great dry sense of humor. He could not wait to join the Notre Dame family.

"My prayers and deepest condolences go out to the James family as well as the St. Xavier High School and Cincinnati communities."

James was named to USA Today's first-team prep All-America team following his senior season and received All-America accolades from MaxPreps and SuperPrep. A three-year starter for head coach Steve Specht at St. Xavier, James participated in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl and also played basketball at St. Xavier.

Funeral arrangements have not been made but UND.com will be updated with them once they are available.