

# Elon student hospitalized after accident involving high-speed chase

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Assistant News Editor

Elon University sophomore Laura Levitt is being treated at Duke Medical Center after an automobile accident on I-85 Monday, April 5.

According to Greg Mitchell, an N.C. highway patrol officer, Durham County Deputies were chasing DeMarcus Griggs, 22, when he hit Levitt's car at more than 100 miles per hour. Her vehicle flipped an estimated eight to 10 times.

Mitchell said Levitt landed on the shoulder of the highway, and witnesses proceeded to help her until the deputy arrived at the scene. She was then airlifted to the hospital.

Griggs initially ran into the woods but was eventually taken into custody and is being held at the Durham county jail on a \$300,000 bond. He is charged with a felony hit-and-run, in addition to other charges.

Chris Levitt, her brother, said she was originally being treated in the ICU, but has since stabilized.

He said she was moved from the ICU on Saturday, April 12.

"Her recovery has been incredibly swift thus far, and that is really a testament to her willpower," he said. "Despite her physical pain and weakness, she has managed to maintain mental and emotional strength."

Laura was underwent surgery on her knee April 12, because it was damaged by asphalt and glass.

"Laura is tired from the surgery, but she is recovering well," Chris said. "Unfortunately, the doctors found a few more minor fractures in her leg and are fairly certain she has broken her collarbone as well, but all in all,

she is continuing to recover very well."

Christ Levitt said Laura is aware that she will have permanent visible scarring on her feet and legs from extensive stitches, but she said she doesn't mind.

"She feels truly lucky to be alive," he said. "She seems thrilled by the support she has received from the Elon community, but at this point I think the support has been most beneficial for my parents."

Kristi Ferguson, a sophomore at Virginia Tech and Levitt's best friend, created a Facebook page entitled "Pray for Laura Levitt," which has grown from 574 members Wednesday afternoon to 970 members at press time.

"When Laura first came off of the anesthesia and was allowed to be awake most of the day, her family read her quotes from the group and Laura was smiling and happy to see that so many people love her and are praying for her," Ferguson said.

Though Levitt's memory is foggy, Ferguson said she is focused on getting better and out of the hospital.

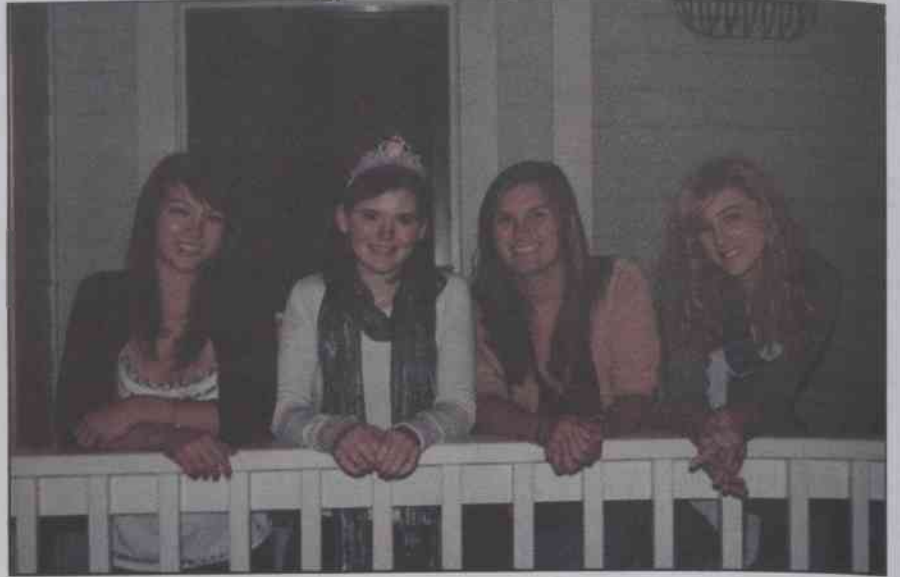
"I don't think anyone knows the time frame in terms of her eventual release from the hospital and total recovery just yet," Chris said.

He said the Elon administration has been understanding of Levitt's condition.

"It seems that they will work with Laura to ensure that this term still counts and to make sure she graduates on time," he said.

Ferguson said she is confident that Levitt will regain her strength.

"She really is an amazing woman and she is healing at an incredible rate," she said.



Laura Levitt is located second from left.



Photos courtesy of the "Pray for Laura Levitt" Facebook group. The group was created by Kristi Ferguson, a sophomore at Virginia Tech and Levitt's best friend. The group has grown from 574 members Wednesday, April 7 to 970 Monday, April 12.

Cards and flowers can be sent to Room 2321 in Duke Hospital or through "send a card to a patient" at [www.dukehealth.org](http://www.dukehealth.org).

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