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MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: 4/24/2019	CONTACT: Bridget Coit
TIME: 3:00 p.m.	PHONE: 715-839-4981
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SUBJECT: 19PD08653	 @EauClairePD  @EauClairePD  @EauClairePD

On April 23rd, 2019 at 7:28 p.m. the Eau Claire Police Department was notified of a person in the Chippewa River near Domer Park. The initial information was a teenage male was swimming in the river and struggling. Officers and personnel from the Eau Claire Fire Department (ECFD) responded to the area.

The river and surrounding area was immediately searched. Rescue personnel were unable to locate the missing person. Officers were able to review public safety camera footage and locate the teen in the water and observed where he was last seen. Eau Claire Police Officers contacted and interviewed the missing person's friends. Officers learned the teen and three acquaintances were jumping off the cliffs at Mount Simon Park into the Chippewa River. The missing teen swam further into the river, became distressed and could be heard calling for help. Sight was lost of the missing teen and rescue personnel were immediately called.

The missing teenager was identified as Williamefipanio G. Hessel DOB 7/4/2001. Hessel is a City of Eau Claire resident and student in the Eau Claire Area School District.

The search efforts for Hessel are active and ongoing. These efforts are being coordinated by the Eau Claire Fire Department and Eau Claire Police Department. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Bruce's Legacy (a volunteer organization) are also providing assistance.

Counseling and support services are being coordinated by the Eau Claire Area School District.

Our thoughts remain with Hessel, his family and friends. We will continue investigating until Hessel is located.

Media inquiries should be directed to:
Lieutenant Ryan Dahlgren
715-839-8682
Eau Claire Police Department