Written by Steve Frank
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University Police at Appalachian State University has concluded its investigation into the drowning death of 19-year-old sophomore Tyler Blalock of Charlotte from the early morning hours of last Saturday. Their release says; A walker discovered Blalock's body face down in a creek running through Durham Park on campus at 7:55 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 29. University Police secured the area and their investigation found no signs of a struggle or injuries to Blalock other than a cut on his forehead. From the condition of the body, police officers concluded he had been dead for several hours. Officers found a wallet in Blalock's pants containing two IDs with conflicting information. One was a university AppCard with his name, and the other was a N.C. driver's license belonging to another individual. While other documents in the wallet led police to believe the deceased was Blalock, the photo on the N.C. driver's license also bore a strong resemblance to him. As a result, a family member was contacted to make a positive identification of the body at Watauga Medical Center. After interviewing several friends of Blalock, police were able to trace some of his activities Friday night into early Saturday morning. Blalock had attended a party off campus around 8 p.m. Sept. 28 and was reported in a "somewhat intoxicated state." He later purchased beer at a local store and returned to the party. Around 11:30 a.m. Sept. 29, he left the party with friends for a nearby bar. Witnesses reported to University Police that Blalock appeared very intoxicated. Witnesses told police that Blalock left the bar at approximately 2 a.m. and was last seen walking toward campus. The medical examiner has estimated Blalock's death to have occurred around 2:30 Saturday morning and the cause of death was drowning. University Police have shared information from their investigation with the N.C. Department of Public Safety's Alcohol Law Enforcement division, which is conducting an independent investigation to determine if any alcohol laws were violated.

University administrators would like to remind students and others of Appalachian's "It's Up to Me" initiative in which students are encouraged to say something if they observe behavior that could put them or another student at risk. Information about the initiative is online at http://appcares.appstate.edu/.