

Lewis and Clark nursing alum rescues injured hiker

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COLORADO – There's no question nurses save lives every day. It's less common for a life to be saved at the bottom of an isolated Colorado gorge.

Last December, L&C alumnus Robert Rogers, an emergency room nurse, did just that when he and a friend, respiratory therapist Tyson Lockhart, decided to take a late-season rafting trip along the Gunnison River in western Colorado, where Rogers now resides.

After a late start, the two men were about three miles into their trip when they heard calls for help.

Adam Wright, a teacher and avid outdoorsman, had been hiking along the Gunnison Gorge, on his way to his favorite fishing spot, when he took a 50-foot fall and landed on a patch of ground in the river.

"He said he was lying on the ground for about 35 minutes," Rogers said. "If we hadn't gotten a late start, we would have missed him."

They found Wright holding his head over the water. He had a lacerated face, two broken wrists and a broken leg. Since Rogers and Lockhart didn't know if there was a spinal injury, they used a raft frame as a stretcher to transport Wright back down the river until they found a place where a helicopter could land and Wright could be airlifted.

Given the time of year, hikers and rafters are rare and rescue operations typically take much longer.

"Who falls at around 12:30 and is in the ER at 4?" Rogers said. "There's just a half-million things that lined up perfectly."

The three men reunited in February. Rogers reports Wright is on his way to a full recovery.

"Robert was a very positive student who always had a smile on his face," said L&C Director of Nursing Sheri Banovic. "The nursing faculty were proud to hear how he has expanded on the education he received here."

Learn more about the L&C Nursing program at www.lc.edu/nursing.