

Wisconsin National Guard: Soldier responds to car accident in Texas

Posted on Friday, Apr 29, 2022

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

by Staff Sgt. Katie Theusch

A Wisconsin National Guard Soldier came to the aid of two motorists after responding to a head-on collision near Fort Hood, Texas, in mid-April.

First Lt. Brittni Swanson, a Fitchburg, Wisconsin resident and a logistics officer with the 732nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, was in Texas providing support to the Wisconsin Army National Guard's 107th Maintenance Company during their demobilization process at Fort Hood earlier this month.

On April 12, Swanson was bringing water to a group of Soldiers who had safely arrived back in the United States earlier that day. Storms had been passing through the area throughout the afternoon followed by periods of sunshine. She began her commute to North Fort Hood after the sun had broken through, but it started raining again halfway through her trip.

A car in front of Swanson hit its brakes, swerved, and took a hard left into oncoming traffic, hitting another vehicle. Swanson pulled over, called 9-1-1, and ran up to the vehicles to check on the drivers.

"[The 9-1-1 dispatcher] kept asking where are you, and I said I'm not from around here, I don't know," Swanson said. "So I went up, got the mile marker, ran back, and they're like you've got to get into the vehicle. We need to know how many people are in there."

Both vehicles were locked with all air bags deployed. A woman in a black vehicle involved in the collision had pushed part of her window out, so Swanson peeled the rest of the glass out and lifted the air bag to check on the driver, a female nurse

who was conscious with a severe leg injury.

"I laid the airbag over her lap and told her not to look at it, and I went over to the blue car," Swanson said.

She struggled to get into the blue car but was finally able to after multiple attempts.

"I think the worst part of the whole thing is I wanted to help them so stinking bad, but I couldn't get in the car," Swanson said.

The woman in the blue car was initially unconscious. As Swanson grabbed her hand and talked to her, she began to regain consciousness. The driver was also a nurse and had a traumatic leg injury.

While waiting for first responders, Swanson periodically checked on each driver to ensure they were still alert and not going into shock.

After approximately 5 to 10 minutes, an ambulance arrived. Swanson, a certified nursing assistant for a birthing center, took vitals on the woman in the blue car while the paramedics helped the woman in the black car. Emergency responders had to use the Jaws of Life on both vehicles in order to get the injured drivers out of their cars.

Swanson said her role as a CNA along with her medical training in the Wisconsin Army National Guard, which are part of every Soldier's basic warrior tasks, helped her effectively respond and help both drivers.

"I tenfold appreciate first responders and EMS," Swanson said in reflection.

She added that she hopes to go back to nursing school but is currently pursuing a full-time position with the Wisconsin National Guard, because she enjoys serving in that capacity.