

# Downers Grove man dies fighting Washington fires

SUBURBAN LIFE MEDIA

**DOWNERS GROVE** – A Downers Grove native was one of three firefighters who died Aug. 19 after their vehicle crashed while battling a fire in Twisp, Wash., according to media reports.

Andrew Zajac, 26, died Aug. 19 after his engine crew's vehicle crashed and was overtaken by fire. Two other men, Tom Zbyszewski, 20, and Richard

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Wheeler, 31, also died in the incident, according to media reports.

Zajac graduated from Downers

Grove North and attended Case Western University before taking a job with the U.S. Forest Service. He was married and lived in Winthrop, Wash., according to media reports.

Drought and heat have made this one of the most active fire seasons in the United States in recent years. Firefighters are battling about 100 blazes in the western states of Idaho, Oregon, Washington and California, according to media reports.