

"I'm not dead!" Student fights to prove he's alive

by Josh Egbert

Story Created: Apr 30, 2012 at 5:57 PM CDT

Story Updated: May 1, 2012 at 9:42 AM CDT

A local high school senior is set to graduate and is preparing for college. But at a time when most teenagers are having fun and looking forward to the future, his plans are on hold.

A simple trip to the bank revealed a couple alerts on Corbin Russell's credit score and those alerts have his future in jeopardy.

Life was good for Corbin Russell. The Harvard High School senior will graduate in just a few days and this fall go to college. But those college plans may be derailed.

"I had been dead for the past couple of years," said Corbin.

A simple trip to the bank to get a car loan had turned Corbin's world upside down.

"I was shocked. I really couldn't believe it because I had been getting a bunch of tax returns back from when I was working," Corbin said.

His social security number came back flagged.

"After they ran a credit check score, it came back with a couple alerts," said Corbin.

Corbin's social security number had been used in a death benefit claim for a man in South Carolina who died in January of 2010.

"Without my social security number credit being correct, right now they have it red flagged. Without it being correct I can't get a loan because I'm deceased," said Corbin.

"How could anybody have death benefits on a senior in high school?" said Corbin's mother Monica Russell.

Now the problem has gone beyond just that car loan.

College scholarship applications have been rejected because of the flagged credit report. And he can't get student loans without a valid Social Security number.

"My social security number - if someone just took a couple minutes of their time and said, hey, look, this social security number doesn't match with this person, we need to fix this, everything could be fixed," said Corbin.

But that could take some time.

"In some cases it's taken two years and he can't go to college until it's fixed," said Monica.

Which has Corbin's mom Monica worried about his future.

"The only thing that scares me is if he waits two years will he still want to go," Monica said.

The family has been trying to get the issue fixed, talking with the Federal Trade Commission and the Social Security Administration in Seattle Washington, but so far, nothing.

"That's all I do is cry on the phone because I can't get nowhere," said Monica.

Corbin will start college in September and with a price tag of nearly \$40,000 and no way to get a loan.

"I really want to try and make it through it, but it may come down to the fact I have to wait a year or two before I can even go before they get it fixed," said Corbin.

News 5 spoke with the Social Security administration Monday. In their records, Corbin is alive and well. The issue lies with the credit bureau.

The three major credit companies say it can be fixed, but they need documentation, to eradicate the situation.

The only problem is that it could take time and time is not on Corbin's side when it comes to school.

News 5 also spoke with Senator Johanns office, they were able to get Corbin's Free Application for Student Aid form approved, which pays for about 1/3 of his school.

<http://www.khastv.com/news/local/f-149577885.html>