



Conn. Boarding School Faces 3rd Sexual Abuse Suit In Two Years

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LAKEVILLE, Conn. (CBSNewYork) For the third time in less than two years, a former student has filed a federal lawsuit alleging sexual abuse at the Indian Mountain School in Lakeville, Connecticut.

The most recent one, filed by Matthew Bernstein, details allegations of systematic and brutal sexual abuse when he was a boarding student in the 1980s, WCBS 880's Fran Schneidau reported.

Former English teacher Christopher Simonds, now deceased, is named in the suit.

The suit alleges former English teacher Christopher Simons sexually abused several students at the school, while also feeding them drugs and alcohol, Antonio Ponvert, Bernstein's attorney said.

"It was really a reign of terror perpetrated by Simonds under the noses of the school's administrators for more than a decade," Ponvert said.

Former student Peter Buck [claimed in a 2015 lawsuit](#) that he was sexually abused and assaulted dozens of times by three school officials, Simonds, from 1982 to 1984. In that suit, Ponvert alleged other faculty knew of the assaults, but no one ever alerted authorities.

A federal lawsuit was also filed in by another former student who claimed routine abuse of students at the hands of staff, including sex assaults by the now-deceased headmaster.

Simonds has since passed away.

Ponvert says that Simonds had testified in earlier cases and had admitted “very graphically” to the sexual abuse he initiated against a dozen children.

The Indian Mountain School has called the allegations of faculty behavior back in the 80s “heartwrenching.”

The school said it plans to face these allegations.

Indian Mountain School is a private boarding and day school for children in kindergarten through grade 9.

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Indian Mountain School sued again for sexual abuse

SALISBURY -- A prestigious boarding school is facing a third lawsuit in less than two years by a former student who said he was molested and sexually abused.



Indian Mountain School in Lakeville.

The student attended Indian Mountain School from 1980 to 1983 when he was between the ages of 12 and 15.

The lawsuit, which was filed today in U.S. District Court, details abuse the victim endured by the former English teacher Christopher Simonds.

Two similar suits were filed in 2015; all allege that the school failed and refused to stop teachers as well as the school's headmaster from "predatory sexual assaults and pedophilia" inflicted on minor boys, "including fellatio, anal sex, sodomy, voyeurism, fondling and forced masturbation."

"The monstrous sexual abuse perpetrated by the school and its nest of child molesters inflicted torture and suffering on Matthew that began when he was a defenseless, innocent little boy, and that continues to this day," said Bernstein's attorney, Antonio Ponvert III of the Bridgeport-based law firm Koskoff Koskoff & Bieder. "Like other Plaintiffs who filed complaints against the school last year, Matthew was subjected to sexual abuse and exploitation by the very adults who had pledged to protect him."