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PRESS RELEASE

Former Church Farm School Teacher Charged with Sexual Abuse of a Minor

The Chester County District Attorney's Office and West Whiteland Township Police Department announced the arrest of Marc V. Spera for multiple counts of statutory sexual assault, unlawful contact with a minor, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse and related offenses. The defendant worked as a teacher at the Church Farm School in Exton, where he also lived on campus, from 1995-2010.

The defendant also worked as a teacher at the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge from 1993-1995, the Robinson School in Puerto Rico from 2010-2012, the Hampshire Country School in New Hampshire from 2013-2015, the Squaw Valley Academy in California from 2015-2016, and the Admiral Farragut Academy in St. Petersburg, Florida. The defendant volunteered with the Boy Scouts of America from 1980-present all over the country.

District Attorney Deb Ryan stated, "Our office will continue to root out all child predators until this community is safe. When anyone, especially a teacher who is in a position of authority and trust, abuses a child, we know the life-long damage that can occur. We will hold all of those accountable who perpetrate crimes against our vulnerable youth."

The allegations from the criminal complaint¹ are as follows:

On December 7, 2019, an adult reported that he was sexually abused by the defendant when he was a boarding student at the Church Farm School while he was in 7th and 8th grades from 2008-2010. The victim stated that the sexual abuse occurred in the defendant's apartment, which was located on campus at the school. The victim further said that the defendant would often give him back and body rubs in the defendant's apartment. He later gave the victim a video game console, a headset and a video game. The victim reported that while they were apart during the summer months between 7th and 8th grade they would remain in constant contact through text messages, social media and while playing video games.

When the victim returned to school for 8th grade in the fall, the defendant was his computer teacher. He stated that over the course of his 8th grade year at school the defendant performed oral sex on him and he touched the victim's genitals with his hands on more than 10 occasions. Other sexual assaults happened throughout the school year in the defendant's apartment.

The victim reported that the defendant gave him a better grade than he deserved in computer class and he was given a brand new computer system and other items by the defendant throughout the school year. During a recent conversation with the victim, the defendant admitted to engaging in sexual acts with the victim.

The defendant is 57 years old and resides in St. Petersburg, Florida.

“We thank the West Whiteland Township Police Department for all of their successful efforts in this case, as well as the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the St. Petersburg Police Department for their assistance. We are also grateful for the full cooperation of the Church Farm School,” Ryan said.

The defendant was arrested on June 2, 2020, in St. Petersburg, Florida by agents with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement by a warrant issued by Chester County. He waived extradition and will be brought back to Chester County on June 12, 2020 by the West Whiteland Township Police Department.

¹ A criminal defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in court.

This case was investigated by the West Whiteland Township Police Department. It is assigned to Deputy District Attorney Erin O'Brien of the Child Abuse Unit. Anyone with information regarding this or other incidents involving the defendant should contact Detective Michael Buchmann at (484) 875-6022.

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Approved for release:

Deborah Ryan
District Attorney

