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Orinda teacher charged with sexual abuse of a minor

By Nick Marnell



Kyle Ann Wood Courtesy Lafayette Police Dept

Detectives from the Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff Jan. 8 arrested Miramonte High School teacher Kyle Ann Wood, who was subsequently charged with two counts of felony sexual abuse of a minor by the District Attorney's office. According to the criminal complaint, the abuse occurred between October 1997 and June 1998 while Wood was a teacher and the victims were students at Acalanes High School. One of the two students has passed away.

Colleen Gleason, sexual assault/child abuse unit supervisor with the DA's office, said that the accuser came forward to law enforcement in October and the sheriff's office immediately began its investigation. "They knew that Wood was still a teacher and they worked hard to wrap up the case over the holiday break," Gleason said. "We were able to file charges because there was independent evidence that clearly and convincingly corroborated the victim's allegations." Wood has pleaded not guilty to both counts.

John Nickerson, superintendent of the Acalanes Union High School District, confirmed that Wood has been a teacher with the district since 1994 and said that she was immediately placed on administrative leave. Wood taught at Acalanes High School until 2009 when she was transferred to Miramonte. "It was not a disciplinary transfer," Nickerson said.

On the Miramonte High School website, Wood is listed as teaching ninth grade and 10th grade physical education. "I enjoy hiking, surfing, and photography. I played high school and college basketball, swam and played summer softball," Wood wrote in her profile. Julie Parks, Miramonte High School principal, did not respond to a request for confirmation.

"We hold student well-being as our greatest priority, and whenever we hear about situations that are counter to this value, it is of the greatest concern. I assure you that our district office will cooperate fully with law enforcement in this ongoing investigation," Nickerson said in a statement.

Though no one from the sheriff's office or DA's office would comment on the motivation or timing of the allegations, it should be noted that Assembly Bill 218, which Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Oct. 13, gives those who experienced childhood sexual abuse until age 40, or five years from discovery of the abuse, to file civil lawsuits. Survivors also have a three-year period starting this January in which sexual abuse claims that have since passed the statute of limitations can be pursued.

The DA's office was not aware of a civil suit filed by the accuser.

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