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Church Leader Arrested

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Son Minh Rockstroh

He admitted in a police interview that he had molested the girl three times, records show.



A Memorial High School art teacher was suspended from duty Monday after his weekend arrest on complaints of raping a 13-year-old girl.

Son Minh Rockstroh, 48, was arrested Saturday on three counts of rape by instrumentation and one count of lewd molestation of a child. He was jailed about 2 a.m. Saturday and is being held in lieu of \$200,000 bail.

Tulsa Public Schools hired Rockstroh as an art teacher for Memorial in September 2001. He was put on administrative leave Monday, district officials said.

The allegations have no apparent link to his work as a schoolteacher but to his leadership of a small religious group called Church Life, Tulsa police said.

The victim and her mother met Rockstroh through Church Life, whose members meet in each others' homes, Detective Chuck Haywood said.

"There is not a pastor of the church, but everyone considered him to be the guy in charge," Haywood said of Rockstroh.

During an interview with police, Rockstroh admitted that he had molested the girl on three occasions, jail records show.

Two of the assaults were alleged to have occurred at the victim's house, while the third assault was alleged to have hap- [4] pened at another church member's house, Haywood said.

The 13-year-old girl told police that on Oct. 19, Rockstroh, a man she knew as her pastor, molested her at her home.

"The victim reported that the suspect claimed he did this to determine if she was a virgin and to instruct her on how to perform a self breast exam," Haywood wrote in the report.

Rockstroh also told police that he had touched the girl's breasts and had shown her how to do a breast exam but admitted to having no medical training.

The girl told police that the man also took nude photographs of her and then told her not to tell anyone about the encounter.

Rockstroh was alleged to have molested her, shaved her pubic area and inserted a cotton swab

into her vagina on Nov. 2. He reportedly told her "he was doing this to obtain DNA samples and to check her for germs," according to the arrest report.

Rockstroh said he brought along a DNA kit because he needed DNA samples and fingerprints from her in case something happened to her, Haywood said.

Three days later, the girl and Rockstroh reportedly were at another church member's home.

"The suspect inspected her buttocks after she received a spanking" and then molested her, according to records and police.

Rockstroh's teaching career in Tulsa-area public schools dates to 1998, according to the application he filed with Tulsa Public Schools.

On his March 2001 application, Rockstroh said he taught at Vandever Elementary School in Broken Arrow from "August 1999 to present."

Broken Arrow Public Schools officials confirmed that Rockstroh had worked as an art teacher at Vandever but only from August 1999 until his voluntary resignation on April 4, 2000.

The girl's allegations against Rockstroh are not the first, according to Broken Arrow police.

On April 3, 2000 -- the day before his resignation from Broken Arrow Public Schools -- an adult in a community education art class Rockstroh taught filed a police report alleging sexual battery against him, Sgt. John Zoller said.

"An adult -- not a child -- claimed to be inappropriately touched," Zoller said. "A report was taken. It was investigated by a detective, but the victim did not wish to pursue charges. They were satisfied to learn that he would no longer be around children at his teaching job."

Rockstroh was never arrested in connection with the complaint, Zoller said.

Rockstroh's other teaching experience included substitute math and art teaching at Union Intermediate High School and substitute art teaching at Cherokee Elementary School in Catoosa -- both in the 1998-1999 academic year, according to his Tulsa Public Schools application.

District officials in both Union and Catoosa confirmed his employment as a substitute there.

Tulsa Public Schools relies on the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation for background checks of prospective employees, district spokesman John Hamill said.

"It is my understanding that OSBI checks for arrests, charges and disposition of charges," Hamill said.

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