

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Victim in Gow School sex abuse lawsuit speaks publicly for the first time

NEW YORK, NY (December 15, 2020) — A former student who was sexually abused at a private school in the Buffalo area spoke publicly for the first time today about his experience.

Aaron James Worby of Columbus, Ohio attended The Gow School in South Wales, N.Y. from 1993 until 1995 to receive special education for his speech-related learning disability. During his time at the school Worby, 41, was befriended by Thomas Simmeth, a former teacher, who sexually abused him.

After years of silence, Worby came forward with his allegations in a lawsuit filed late last year in hopes of encouraging other survivors to break their silence.

“I’m going to show this to people in my recovery program and they are going to see how I stood up to my trauma,” said Worby.

Worby’s lawsuit was filed by Greenstein & Milbauer, which filed two other lawsuits earlier this year on behalf of two alumni of The Gow School. All three lawsuits allege negligence by the school for its failure to protect the children from two staffers, one of whom was subsequently accused of indecent assault against a child in a Massachusetts school for disabled children.

“This lawsuit is part of the healing process for him and other victims,” said Robert Greenstein, Worby’s attorney. “It’s important for survivors to come forward so that we hold these schools accountable.”

The Gow School’s own internal investigation has identified 12 individuals who have accused at least five former staffers of abuse or misconduct. Since the Worby lawsuit was filed, Greenstein has received complaints from parents of recent Gow students who have also alleged abuse.

Worby’s lawsuit alleges that prior to the sexual abuse of this boy, The Gow School knew or should have known that Thomas Simmeth was not fit to work with children.

According to The Gow School’s own investigation, at least three former students or their parents accused Simmeth of abuse. The school’s investigator found that after Simmeth left Gow, he worked at a defunct boys private school in Massachusetts, where in 2003 Simmeth was accused of indecent assault and battery of a child.

Greenstein & Milbauer’s two other lawsuits are by victims who accused former English teacher Jack Jackson of sexual abuse. When one of the victims reported the abuse to

another teacher, that individual failed to report the abuse to school administrators or to the police. According to The Gow School's internal report on the allegations against Jackson, the teacher who received the abuse complaint still works at the school.

Greenstein & Milbauer's lawsuits were filed under New York's Child Victims Act, which provides victims of child sexual abuse the opportunity to seek compensation and hold their perpetrators accountable. Prior to the enactment of the Child Victims Act, the statute of limitations would have expired for the three sexual abuse victims.

Greenstein & Milbauer, LLP handles children's sexual abuse claims involving sexual abuse at private and public schools, prep and boarding school and residential treatment centers. Anyone with information about sexual abuse at The Gow School or in any other place should contact Greenstein & Milbauer LLP.

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