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Utah youth counselor charged with sexually abusing troubled teens

By
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Eric Allen Glosson

(Credit: KSL)

(CBS/AP/KSL) SALT LAKE CITY - A counselor at a southern Utah residential center for troubled teens has been charged with eight counts of forcible sex abuse for reported assaults on as many as seven children.

Garfield County prosecutors filed a total of 10 criminal charges against Eric Allen Glosson, 28, of Tucson, Ariz., on Monday, a day after his arrest at the Silverado Academy in Panguitch, Utah, about 250 miles south of Salt Lake City.

By Thursday, the Academy, which is owned by former Utah U.S. Senate candidate Tim Bridgewater, had also been sued in Utah's federal court by the families of three boys from Georgia, Michigan, and Nevada who claim they were abused by Glosson.

The lawsuit contends the boarding school failed to adequately supervise Glosson or protect the children.

Glosson, who had already been fired once from the academy in 2009 for having inappropriate relations with students, was recently rehired, the lawsuit claims, and had unsupervised access to the teens that he shouldn't have, reported [CBS affiliate KSL](#).

Glosson, who is being held on \$130,000 cash bond in the Garfield County Jail, is not named in the civil lawsuit.

In addition to the eight second-degree felonies, he is charged with an additional second-degree felony count of custodial sexual relations with a youth receiving state services and a third-degree felony charge of dealing in materials harmful to minors.

A preliminary hearing is set for July 7 in Panguitch's 6th District Court.

Court papers filed by Garfield County prosecutors contend that Glosson had sexual contact with youth residents on at least nine occasions between April 10 and June 18.

Garfield County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Becky Bronson said she believes investigators have identified seven victims, all boys, and are continuing to conduct interviews with Silverado's youth residents.

Glosson passed a criminal background check, which included an examination of the state child and elder abuse databases on May 11, said Utah Department of Health and Human Services spokeswoman Elizabeth Sollis. The checks are required for employees of any state licensed facility where employees work with or have contact with children, she said.

The allegations of abuse will prompt an investigation of both Glosson and Silverado, which also secures its licensing to operate through the human services department, Sollis said.

Sollis said Silverado's facility for boys has been licensed since 2006 and one for girls was licensed in 2009. All licenses are current and the state has never taken disciplinary or formal corrective actions against the facilities, she said.

The civil complaint states Glosson was hired as a coach at Silverado sometime before 2010, despite having no formal training.

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