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11
12 *in pro per*

13 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
14 FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA
15

16 Kimberly R. Sweidy,
17 Plaintiff,

18 v.

19 Spring Ridge Academy, an Arizona
corporation, Jean Courtney,
20 Suzanne Courtney, Brandon Courtney,
Erin Smith, Leslie Filsinger,
21 Justin Zych, Kate Deily,
Veronica Borges

22 Defendants.
23
24

Case No. CV-21-08013-PCT-SPL

**DECLARATION OF
MOLLY ELIZABETH DICKIN**

25 I, Molly Elizabeth Dickin, under penalty of perjury, hereby declare that I am a former
26 Spring Ridge Academy (“SRA”) student. If called upon to testify as a witness, I would
27 and could competently testify, under penalty of perjury, to the following facts:

28 ///

1. I am Molly Elizabeth Dickin. I attended SRA from August 2014–July 2015.

2. I attended Second Nature Blue Ridge in Georgia for 10.5 weeks prior to SRA.

Prior to Second Nature, I was at Northeast Family Institute in Vermont, which is where I was gooned from.

3. My parents used an educational consultant named Kris Karge. She retired in 2021. I spoke with her in an attempt to receive information about the process. She was rude and refused to answer most of my questions. The only clear answer I got from her was that she was not very familiar with SRA and had sent “maybe one person” prior to recommending SRA to my parents. One of the reasons SRA was chosen was because of their supposedly having a good soccer team and soccer field. However, not once was there a soccer team during my time at SRA.

4. While at SRA, I was forced to take medication for bi-polar disorder. I have never been diagnosed with bi-polar disorder. I did not want or need to be on medication. A psychiatrist who I had never met was responsible for my “diagnosis” and prescription. The psychiatrist was working with SRA.

5. I repeatedly requested a proper appointment with the psychiatrist. When I finally met with the psychiatrist, she gave no medical or psychological interview. She based her opinion on “What she heard.”

6. I have never shown any signs of bi-polar disorder.

7. My medication was frequently increased, once three times in one week, despite adverse side effects.

8. For three years, I have repeatedly requested copies of my records from SRA. I have sent letters and made phone calls. On the telephone, Kate Deily agreed to send my records. They were not sent. I tape recorded that conversation without Kate Deily’s knowledge and/or consent because I expected to be lied to. I was. The records were never sent. I live in Vermont. Vermont doesn’t have its own laws surrounding one party consent for recordings, so Vermont relies on federal law, which is One-Party Consent. Kate Deily was in Arizona, a One-Party Consent state. Regrettably, I no longer has

1 access to the recording because I recorded it in an app on a device that I no longer have.

2 9. My “therapist” at SRA was Cindy Fogel. Until speaking with Ms. Sweidy, the
3 Plaintiff, about this Declaration, I did not know that Cindy Fogel was not a licensed
4 therapist under Arizona law. She operates as a Behavioral Health Technician (“BHT”)
5 under Leslie Filsinger’s license.

6 10. I had no contact with Leslie Filsinger during my time at SRA. I never saw or
7 experienced Cindy Fogel being supervised by Leslie Filsinger.

8 11. SRA withheld my high school graduation diploma as a punishment, even though I
9 completed SRA’s curriculum. I was being punished because I removed myself from SRA
10 after turning 18, as I was legally allowed to do.

11 12. While at SRA, Dr. Ted Whitworth was my chemistry teacher and my academic
12 advisor. I was frequently alone with Dr. Ted. Dr. Ted groomed many SRA girls, though
13 I didn’t understand this at the time.

14 13. Dr. Ted would physically touch me. He would tell me what he “wanted to do to
15 me.” He initiated conversations about my sex life and my past sexual assault trauma. He
16 discussed his marriage and his children with me. He called me “13,” because I “reminded
17 him of a hot, young version of Olivia Wilde.” (“Thirteen” is the nickname of Dr. Remy
18 Hadley, a fictional character played by Olivia Wilde on the television show *House*.)

19 14. Dr. Ted went to my sporting events at SRA.

20 15. Dr. Ted told me he wanted to “use and abuse me.” He told me he wanted to leave
21 me a “crying mess on the floor.”

22 16. He had me take my exams for his class at his desk, sometimes during class and
23 sometimes after class. He would put his hands on me and show me the correct answers.
24 He would put his hands up my skirt.

25 17. Sometimes when he had his hand up my skirt, another teacher would enter the
26 room. The teacher would apologize for interrupting. I am not sure that the other teachers
27 could see where his hands were; however, it was clear that he was inappropriately close to
28 me. On multiple occasions, he requested explicit videos and photos of me. On two

occasions, I did send them, unfortunately, and he did save them. He specifically requested photos up my skirt, as I always wore skirts at SRA.

18. Dr. Ted also behaved inappropriately with SRA student Jillian Anzaldua. On February 7, 2020, Jillian died of a heroin overdose.

19. Since leaving SRA, Dr. Ted has sent me text messages. He wanted me to meet him at a hotel, several times. He said he regretted never having sex with me. He tried to reconnect with me so that we could “grieve over Jillian’s passing together.” I believe that messages from Dr. Ted were found on Jillian’s phone when she died.

20. Dr. Ted slut shamed other SRA students who spoke the truth about him. He said, “The fucking bitches are ruining my life.” He told me that other students were contacting his wife and his current employer (where he had access to minor females). He told me that he knew he could trust me not to tell.

21. Dr. Ted contacted me to say that he, Brandon Courtney, and Marshall Everett, the photography teacher who also worked in the “House” with Jeannie Courtney, were being accused of rape. Dr. Ted said, “Marshall Everett couldn’t rape anyone. He would need a vat of Viagra just to get it up.” Dr. Ted also said, “I don’t recall raping anyone.”

22. In the last few months, I’ve received four messages from Dr. Ted on Instagram. One was “Happy Birthday” to my mom. Another was “Oh wow!” in response to a pictures I posted. Another was “Are you going into medicine?” in response to a picture of me in my work scrubs.

23. I was so trauma bonded to Dr. Ted that I only blocked him a year and a half ago. I thought I owed him loyalty. I thought he was the “least bad” at SRA. He said he cared about me. I believed him. He told me, “SRA is abusive. I’ve got your back. You never deserved what SRA did to you.”

24. I now understand that the only reason that someone with his level of education (PhD) would be working at SRA is because he wanted access to young girls.

<https://www.facebook.com/ted.whitworth.188/friends>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ted-whitworth-ph-d-03515753/>

1 https://twitter.com/PhWhitworth/with_replies

2 <https://www.instagram.com/dr.tedwhitworth/>

3 25. I never told my “therapist” at SRA, Cindy Fogel, because I didn’t trust her. I
4 trusted Dr. Ted more than I trusted her. However, other girls made comments about Dr.
5 Ted.

6 26. I now work every day with psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists, and case
7 workers in my position as a Mental Health Technician at the University of Vermont
8 Medical Center. I now realize that SRA is not even in the same field as I now work in.
9 Nothing about SRA is therapy or mental health.

10 27. At SRA, my “therapist” shared what I told her with my Community Life Director
11 (“CLD”), Angie McFadin. This is a HIPAA violation. Angie McFadin also led me in
12 DBT and CBT therapy sessions, although I am not sure what her qualifications were.

13 28. My “therapist” shared my personal information with other students and staff,
14 including my medications, past trauma, sexual abuse, and written sexual history.

15 29. I was repeatedly given private information about other students that I should not
16 have been told, including their medication, history, rapes, assaults, molestations, and
17 diagnoses.

18 30. In a school-wide meeting with other students and staff, I was forced to role play
19 my rapes. At 15, I was raped twice by an upper classman. At 16, he beat me up and
20 again raped me. I had to act out what happened and what was said.

21 31. I was then forced to explain what I should have done and how I could have
22 prevented what happened to me.

23 32. I had to take accountability for being raped in front of the whole school.

24 33. My “therapist” wrote and sent a letter to my boyfriend, pretending to be me, and
25 broke up with him.

26 34. When my parents reported my rapes to the police, a detective called SRA asking to
27 speak to me. SRA allowed me only a brief time to speak to the detective. Afterward, my
28 “therapist” became angry at me for reporting my rapes to my parents. She said she didn’t

1 want this shared with the outside world. And she insisted that I not be allowed to speak
2 to any detectives again.

3 35. I have no evidence that Leslie Filsinger was ever supervising anything that Cindy
4 Fogel, my “therapist,” was saying or doing.

5 36. Cindy Fogel tried to lead me in EMDR therapy. I wanted to pick a safe place to do
6 it. Cindy said, “No, it must be at SRA.”

7 37. I identify as Bisexual. I had a girlfriend for a short time while at SRA. She was
8 out as a lesbian. I was not out. She was punished and labeled as predator because she
9 was already out as a lesbian and I was not. All we did was hold hands in private. I was
10 told that my girlfriend was “grooming me.” I was told that I was her “victim.” I was told
11 that “she is bad.”

12 38. SRA was extremely homophobic. They practiced gay conversion. If a girl did not
13 dress “feminine” enough for their standards, the girl was forced to dress up in dresses,
14 heels, and makeup and parade around in front of the whole school.

15 39. We were continuously subjected to Attack Therapy in Group Sessions and
16 workshops. On one visit, my parents witnessed an Attack Therapy session and still kept
17 me enrolled at SRA.

18 40. In a school wide session, everyone was encouraged to state why they hated me. I
19 was called a “cunt” and an “anorexic bitch” by students and staff.

20 41. I witnessed Brandon Courtney shove my Dad as my Dad was walking into an SRA
21 workshop.

22 42. One day, Brandon Courtney found me eating at the lunch table and proceeded,
23 unprompted, to explain to me how perverted and erotic he thought SpongeBob was. He
24 said that SpongeBob made him think of girls in bikini bottoms.

25 43. Students were punished for minor infractions, such as taking an apple because they
26 were hungry.

27 44. Students were constantly threatened that they would not graduate or they would be
28 dropped a Phase or they would be put on “Intro” (not allowed to speak) in order to keep

1 students compliant.

2 45. Once my “Intro” punishment was increased from one week of silence to two weeks
3 of silence simply for asking a question of a staff person. I was not allowed to speak for
4 weeks at a time.

5 46. My privacy was revoked, and I was watched even while in the bathroom and
6 shower.

7 47. Students were publicly weighed, including girls with eating disorders. This was
8 mortifying.

9 48. I am diagnosed with a chronic illness called Gastroparesis. I have had it since
10 birth. Part of my stomach is paralyzed. Sometimes I get a fever spike. At SRA, I was
11 denied medical treatment for my diagnosed illness. My temperature was 104 degrees. I
12 could not eat food for a week. I collapsed. I was forced to do physical labor in 115
13 degree heat. I was yelled at if I asked for water. I was throwing up all the time.

14 49. I was told that I was being “dramatic” and “attention seeking.” I was told that I
15 was “trying to get out of work.”

16 50. I was required to move mulch and rocks on many occasions.

17 51. A constant refrain at SRA was that you would die if you left the program and
18 abandoned your sisters. SRA students, rather than my actual siblings, were referred to as
19 my sisters. My actual sister was only referred to only by her name, never as my sister.

20 52. Jeannie Courtney, Kate Deily, Angie McFadin, and Cindy Fogel all lied to me to
21 prevent me from leaving SRA. Before I turned 18, they told me that my parents could not
22 remove me from SRA because my parents have given “legal guardianship” to SRA. After
23 I turned 18, they told me that they still had “legal guardianship” of me, so I could not
24 leave SRA. They also blocked my communication with my parents.

25 53. On a telephone call with my parents, I told my parents something negative about
26 SRA. Kate Deily said to me, “I can make sure that you never speak to your parents
27 again.” Kate Deily then said, “We have to talk to Jeannie.” Jeannie Courtney then told
28 me the same thing about making sure I never spoke to my parents again.

1 54. When I returned home, my parents told me that they had never given “legal
2 guardianship” to SRA.

3 55. When my grandfather was dying, I pulled myself out of SRA training, against
4 SRA’s wishes. My grandfather died as I walked into his hospital room in Boston.

5 56. Against SRA’s wished, I flew to Vermont for the funeral. Even though I was 18
6 years old, Kate Deily and Cindy Fogel told me that I had to return to SRA. They also told
7 me that I was a big disappointment to my (now dead) grandfather, who wanted me at
8 SRA. They berated me for hours on the phone.

9 57. I returned to SRA. Shortly thereafter, I pulled myself permanently.

10 58. At one point, two other students and I ran away from SRA. The Sheriff picked us
11 up and took us back to SRA, ignoring our reports of abusive. We were scared. We were
12 compliant. We simply wanted someone to help us.

13 59. While at SRA, an ex-SRA student died. Her enrollment overlapped with some of
14 the older students. Someone found out that she had died and told the other students.

15 60. We were called into a school-wide meeting. We were told, “She got herself killed
16 by leaving SRA and abandoning her sisters. She was a non-working person. We
17 shouldn’t waste our time or energy on non-working people. We should focus only on
18 working people. Don’t grieve her.” SRA made these statements in front of people who
19 knew her and were her friends.

20 61. SRA loved to use made-up terms, such as “working” and “non-working.”

21 62. While at SRA, I found plans for a mass murder created by one of my SRA
22 roommates. I was on her “hit list,” along with all our roommates and many staff
23 members. It was a long list. It was written on “FYI” note paper. And it fell off a shelf it
24 had been placed on.

25 63. I reported this to staff and then Jeannie Courtney and Kate Deily. I got into trouble
26 for reporting this because the person who created the hit list was very pro-SRA, and many
27 of the people on the hit list were disliked by the SRA establishment. I was told that I was
28 engaged in non-working behaviors such as “snooping” and “reporting.” They liked to

1 threatened to drop me a level and pull my graduation.

2 64. My graduation date was scheduled for August of 2015. I had been accepted to
3 begin college at the end of August, 2015. SRA told my parents that they were not
4 allowed to enroll me in college because I needed to be present at SRA when college
5 started. I was instructed that I should not be thinking about college. My parents deferred
6 my college admission for one year.

7 65. When I started at SRA, I was well liked for two months. Then I started speaking
8 out about what I was experiencing and observing. Then I was attacked constantly in
9 Feedback Circles.

10 66. I was told I was not crying enough. I was told that I had to beat a chair that
11 represented my parents. At one point, Jeannie Courtney stopped the training. She had the
12 students all circle me. Then all the private information that I had disclosed, even my
13 rapes, was used against me until I broke down crying.

14 67. During a workshop exercise, I had to say all the reasons why I deserved to die
15 before I “walked the plank.” This was after an exercise where I had to fall backwards. If
16 my peers caught me, I deserved to live. If my peers did not catch me, and I fell to the
17 floor, I deserved to die.

18
19 Respectfully Submitted,

20
21 February 12, 2023

DocuSigned by:

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Molly Elizabeth Dickin