

[Share 0](#) [Tweet](#) [G+](#) [Email](#) [Print](#) [Favorite](#) [Share](#)

SCENE & HEARD

Wednesday, June 17, 2015

Jury Awards Plaintiffs \$392,750 in Sexual Abuse Cover-Up Case Involving Chagrin Falls Nanny School

Posted By Doug Brown on Wed, Jun 17, 2015 at 12:45 pm

Update: A jury in the case against the English Nanny and Governess school found for the plaintiffs this week, awarding \$392,750 plus attorneys' fees for Christina Cruz and Heidi Kaiser (\$150,000 compensatory and \$168,750 punitive for Cruz, and \$20,000



compensatory and \$54,000 punitive for Kaiser). The ENGS is owned and operated by Sheilagh Roth and Bradford Gaylord.

The details of the case are grisly (the school retaliating against Cruz, who was a student, and Kaiser, who was an employee, for bringing to the attention of the school's owners a case of sexual abuse involving a client and his daughter. (More on that in the original story below.)

“The jury’s verdict affirms the importance of the strict standard for reporting child abuse,” said the plaintiffs’ attorney Peter Pattakos. “If you see something, say something. This case shows why we are called to such a high standard. As we’ve seen here, and in other high-profile cases across the country, it can be all too easy to look the other way when a child’s safety is at risk.”

(Original story, 3/31/2015): A Chagrin Falls "nanny school" that trains nannies before placing them with rich families is in court this week, three and a half years after a former student and former employee filed a lawsuit, saying the school’s owners retaliated after the student reported she saw a wealthy client sexually abuse his daughter in 2011.

The **English Nanny and Governess School** and its unsurprisingly-named

owners Bradford Gaylord and Sheilagh Roth are accused of trying to suppress a report made by Christina Cruz, an ENGS student, who said she witnessed a wealthy Philadelphia-area businessman sexually abuse his 9-year-old daughter while she was on a three-day "extended interview" with the family following her completion of the school's three-month program. Gaylord and Roth urged Cruz not to say anything — emphasizing that reporting child abuse “can ruin lives” and that her “her career prospects would suffer if she made the report, including by communicating that her access to job opportunities through their placement service would be contingent on whether she made the report or not,” Cruz's lawyers say. They were worried about losing business of "high-caliber clientele" and the public image of the school if she went through with it.

“What is this mess?” Roth is accused of saying to Cruz. "You're not going to be reporting anybody, you're not a professional, you're not going to report our client.”

After Cruz made the report, which she was likely to have been required to make by state law and the school's own teachings and policy, Gaylord and Roth are accused of engaging in a smear campaign to discredit her and limit her job prospects by saying that she was mentally "unstable" because she previously saw a therapist and her parents had divorced and remarried.

“Mrs. Roth said that Christina's parents had several marriages and of course that creates an unstable person,” a then-employee recorded in the following weeks. They stopped responding to Cruz's inquiries and stopped attempting to place her with other clients, which they are contractually required to do for its students, the suit states.

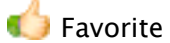
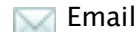
The other plaintiff in the case is former ENGS placement director Heidi Kaiser, who was fired after she “refused to participate” in Gaylord and Roth's “attempt to suppress Cruz's report.” Just weeks before the incident Roth wrote to an acquaintance how glad she was to have her at the school (“I hired her immediately and she is a wonderful asset to [ENGS].”) When Kaiser didn't play ball with them following the incident — and refused to place other nannies with the client whom Cruz said abused his daughter — the owners are accused of saying she had an alcohol problem and didn't do a menial task as pretext to fire her.

A Chester County (PA) detective — a witness for the plaintiffs — wrote an affidavit saying he did not find anything in his investigation that was “inconsistent” with what Cruz reported. He also stated there was a previous complaint of child abuse against the man based on a cell phone video taken by his youngest daughter of him in bed with his naked older daughter.

Because of Cruz's report and subsequent investigation by the detective and the Chester County Office of Children and Family Services, the two children were removed from his custody, and the case remains open.

At issue in the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas this week are Cruz's claim of intentional infliction of emotional distress against Roth and Gaylord, Cruz's complaint against ENGS for breach of contract, and Kaiser's claim of wrongful termination.

Jump to comments (56)



SPEAKING OF...



Big Win for Plaintiffs in Nanny School Sex Abuse Case, Plus Victory for First Amendment
Jun 9, 2017



The English Nanny & Governess School Wants a Lawyer Sanctioned For Telling Scene About His Clients' Sex Abuse Cover Up Lawsuit Against the School
Oct 1, 2015

[MORE »](#)

[« Demolition Forestalled! Metroparks...](#) |

[Tickets Still Available for Celebri...](#) »

[Archives](#) | [RSS](#)

COMMENTS (56)

Sort **(Oldest to Newest)** ▾

Showing 1-50 of 56

[add a comment](#)



I almost went to this school but heard nothing but bad things about it and to stay clear of it. What a shame.

[report](#)

123 likes, 121 dislikes like dislike

Posted by KL on 03/31/2015 at 9:19 AM



I went to this school and let me tell you, when I went I had to opt out of a class because one of the teachers were inappropriate. This place is sad & the owners need to just step down & stop covering up their tracks. This place made me feel uncomfortable & made me really reconsider my love for nannying. Luckily I was able to find my own placement.

[report](#)

122 likes, 126 dislikes like dislike

Posted by Milly on 03/31/2015 at 9:39 AM



I went to this school and it was a complete waste of my time and money. They made me get a \$250 hair cut/color and buy an expensive interview outfit so that I could "present myself properly" to clients, but then refused to ever let me interview with anyone. After months of school and thousands of dollars in tuition, I never got a job and had to move back home and return to college for a masters degree. I'm surprised nothing like this has happened to Roth and Gaylord before now.

[report](#)

123 likes, 121 dislikes like dislike

Posted by CL on 03/31/2015 at 11:46 AM



My daughter went to ENGS. I was appauled at the lack of professionalism and down right immaturity of all the staff. Especially Gaylord and Roth. Total waste of what could be a wonderful opportunity for young women. They should be ashamed of themselves. This story doesn't surprise me a bit.

[report](#)

124 likes, 121 dislikes like dislike

Posted by Mom of an ENGS Grad on 03/31/2015 at 6:01 PM



They have a horrible reputation locally. Poor girl. I'm so sorry she's going through this.

[report](#)

120 likes, 121 dislikes like dislike