




Lawsuits claim Ledyard Boy Scout leader assaulted boys

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By **Julia Bergman** (/apps/pbcs.dll/personalia?ID=j.bergman) Day staff writer

✉ j.bergman@theday.com (mailto:j.bergman@theday.com)  [JuliaSBergman](https://www.twitter.com/JuliaSBergman)
(<http://www.twitter.com/JuliaSBergman>)

Two separate lawsuits have been filed in Hartford Superior Court against the Connecticut Rivers Council Inc., Boy Scouts of America and the Boy Scouts of America Corporation on behalf of two victims who allege they were sexually assaulted by former Ledyard Boy Scout leader Joseph J. Dabrow.

Dabrow previously was charged with molesting teenage boys under his care, and was sentenced by a New London Superior Court judge to a seven-year suspended sentence and five years of probation in 2000.

The first lawsuit was filed on Sept. 28 on behalf of plaintiff John Doe. The second lawsuit was filed on Dec. 7 on behalf of plaintiff James Doe. Both plaintiffs are being represented by attorney Paul A. Slager of Silver Golub and Teitell LLP of Stamford.

The Sept. 28 lawsuit alleges that in the mid- to late 1990s, when John Doe was 11 to 13 years old, Dabrow sexually assaulted and battered him at least once during a trip to the Naval Submarine Base pool.

The Dec. 7 lawsuit alleges that Dabrow sexually assaulted and battered James Doe several times when he was 9 to 12 years old in the mid- to late 1990s. The alleged assault happened at the Troop No. 42 clubhouse on 56 Highland Drive, Ledyard, where Dabrow lived and where regular troop meetings and activities took place. The lawsuit also alleges that Dabrow took pictures and/or videos of the minor for personal gratification and to distribute to other child pornographers.

The lawsuit alleges that the Boy Scouts of America "was aware of the dangers of sexual misconduct in Boy Scout activities" prior to James Doe being assaulted, and that it "did not take appropriate precautions" to protect him from being a victim of sexual misconduct. Instead, Boy Scouts of America "concealed information about widespread sexual abuse during Boy Scout activities from local councils," the lawsuit states. The plaintiff is seeking punitive damages against Boy Scouts of America for "willful, wanton and reckless conduct."

The Sept. 28 lawsuit makes similar claims.

A statement from Steven Smith, CEO of the Connecticut Rivers Council, reads, "The behavior included in these allegations runs counter to everything for which the BSA stands. Upon learning of this individual's arrest in 1998, we took immediate action to remove this individual and preclude him from any further participation in our programs. Recognizing youth protection requires sustained vigilance, in the years since these incidents took place we have continued to develop and enhance our efforts to protect youth, regularly consulting with experts from law enforcement, child safety, psychology, and other disciplines to ensure its efforts consistently evolve along with the ever-changing awareness of the dangers and challenges facing youth."

j.bergman@theday.com (mailto:j.bergman@theday.com)

