



Ex-deputy charged with not reporting colleague's sexual acts with teen Explorer

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VICTORVILLE • A former San Bernardino County Sheriff's Victorville deputy is charged with failing to report illegal sexual acts between a fellow deputy and a teen Explorer.

Attorneys began presenting evidence Wednesday in the trial of Erik Alexandro Orduno at Victorville Superior Court. Orduno is charged with one misdemeanor count of failure to report suspected child abuse.

The victim testified Wednesday that she had sent text messages to Orduno about her feelings for former Victorville deputy Anthony James Benjamin and their sexual relationship. She was friends with Orduno

and the defendant advised her to date someone else, the victim said.

Benjamin admitted to investigators he had engaged in sexual acts with the victim and knew she was a minor at the time. According to the complaint, the incidents took place on or about July 1, 2010 through Dec. 18, 2010.

Benjamin pleaded no contest to oral copulation of a person under 18 and was sentenced to 270 days in jail in August.

The victim wrote in her impact statement letter at Benjamin's sentencing that she had been attracted to Benjamin since the first day they met in the Explorer program at the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Victorville station. Benjamin became her mentor, and they went on a ride-along once a week and began flirting in the patrol car.

An anonymous tip to law enforcement about their relationship led to Benjamin's arrest in May.

Cindy Bachman, sheriff's spokeswoman, said both Orduno and Benjamin were no longer with the department as of August. Bachman said she couldn't discuss the details of their departure because it's a personnel issue.

Orduno's trial is scheduled to continue Thursday in Victorville court.

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