
BRIDGEPORT – A 20-year veteran of the Trumbull police force Tuesday began serving a 30-month prison term Tuesday for repeatedly sexually assaulting a teenaged girl he met through the department's explorer program.

Sniffing back tears, William Ruscoe told Superior Court Judge Robert Devlin Friday he was sorry for his actions.

"I stand here today humble, heartbroken. I'm sorry I turned your life upside down, I should have known better," Ruscoe said, facing the now 18-year-old girl who sat huddled with her mother in a courtroom pew a few away. Turning to the back of the courtroom where several teenaged police cadets sat, Ruscoe continued: "I hope you can forgive me for bringing disgrace to a wonderful program."

The 45-year-old Ruscoe, who resigned from the police department following his arrest and later pleaded guilty to second-degree sexual assault, blamed his crime on financial problems that made it hard to support his wife and two children and a lack of support from the state's criminal justice system- he claimed a man who threatened him with a gun was released on probation.

"Please show them (his children) the justice system their daddy worked to uphold for nearly 20 years is also fair and compassionate," Ruscoe urged the judge.

During the emotion-packed hearing the victim urged the judge to impose the plea bargained 5-year prison term on Ruscoe.

"I was completely betrayed by someone I looked up to as a role model," the girl told the judge. "I still wake up in a pool of sweat after having a nightmare where I yell stop and no, the two words I yelled that night at him."

State's Attorney John Smriga added that five years was the appropriate sentence.

"It's not that he (Ruscoe) just had a bad day, this was an action that was planned out," he said.

But Devlin, while acknowledging that children need to be protected said he was giving Ruscoe credit for his years of good service with the police department.

"I know you have really been traumatized by this situation," the judge told the victim and her family. "But I ask you when you walk out of this courtroom, leave it here. There is a path forward for you and you have what you need to go forward."

Following the 30-month prison term, which Ruscoe began serving at the Bridgeport Community Correctional Center, the judge ordered him placed on 10 years' probation and to register as a sex offender. He is represented by Michael Fitzpatrick.

Ruscoe, who joined the Trumbull Police Department in June 1994, resigned in March. He has served as an advisor for the Trumbull Police Department's police explorer program, now known as the Trumbull Police Cadet Post.

That teen told state police that Ruscoe expressed his desire to have a sexual relationship with her after she had taken her physical assessment exam with the cadets in March 2013.

She said Ruscoe began texting her that he loved her and described in detail things he wanted to do with her sexually, according to the affidavit.

In mid-June 2013, Ruscoe picked the teen up at her home and drove her to a scenic overlook near Marnick's restaurant in Stratford where he gave her a silver bracelet that read, "Made with Love," and then tried to kiss her, the affidavit states. On another occasion, the teen said Ruscoe showed up drunk at her home and groped her.

The affidavit states that in the fall of 2013 after she and Ruscoe had worked as security at the Battle of the Bands event at Trumbull High School Ruscoe had driven her to his Trumbull home. When she balked at having sex with him, the affidavit states Ruscoe plunked his service weapon down on the kitchen counter in front of her and then ordered her upstairs to his bedroom, grabbing his handcuffs on the way up the stairs.

Once in the bedroom he pulled off the teen's cadet uniform and, over her many protests, sexually assaulted her, the affidavit states.

Police said Ruscoe later told the teen that he was concerned about getting arrested for what he did to her but would kill himself rather than going to jail.

The affidavit states detectives found at least two dozen photos of the teen in various stages of undress in Ruscoe's cell phone as well as nude photos he had taken of himself.

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