

Dear Interlochen Community,

Today, we are sharing the outcome of the [external investigation](#) into historical reports of sexual abuse at Interlochen. The investigation began in the summer of 2024 after alumni concerns came to light.

We believe in the critically important role of artists in society. Artists often make the invisible visible and inspire needed change. In this investigation, we apply the same standard to Interlochen through a discerning examination, public acknowledgment, and honest reckoning with past harms reported by our alumni and other members of our community.

We are grateful to everyone who participated in the external investigation, to those who spoke directly with us, and to those who entrusted us with sobering accounts of their experiences. Many of you described direct impacts on your time as students or campers, often reflecting lifelong effects that disrupted your sense of self, trust, relationships, and careers. You have manifested true courage in sharing your experiences and, by doing so, strengthened us as a community and as an institution.

On behalf of Interlochen, we are deeply sorry for the harm experienced by members of our community and extend our apologies to those impacted by abuse at Interlochen. We also want to say clearly: Interlochen will not tolerate predators or those who enable them. Our campus exists to protect, educate, and empower every student.

As an institution, and as leaders, we have a responsibility to respond to what we have learned with candor and to do everything we can to ensure students in our care are safe. We understand that no words may ever be sufficient. As we work toward repair through acknowledgment and accountability, please know that we are here, we care, and we are listening.

Interlochen today is fundamentally different from the institution described in this report. Protecting students is central to everything we do, supported by comprehensive safety policies, rigorous hiring and background screenings, mandatory training for all employees, multiple reporting channels, dedicated campus safety resources, regular independent assessments of our protocols, and a culture that prioritizes accountability, transparency, integrity, and continuous improvement.

While the vast majority of the incidents described in the investigation took place many decades ago, and reports of abuse at Interlochen have significantly decreased over the past 25 years, the passage of time does not diminish the experiences of our alumni. Sexual abuse committed by an adult in a position of power or trust against a student is wrong, then and now.

Overview of the External Investigation

Interlochen and the Board of Trustees initiated this investigation in the summer of 2024 after an Academy alumna from the 1970s contacted us to share her experience with a longtime faculty member and administrator. We expanded the scope in June 2025 by inviting all Academy alumni who may have witnessed or experienced abuse, at any time, to participate. The external

investigators also received reports about misconduct at Camp. Separately, we asked the investigators to speak with individuals who may have been impacted by or had knowledge of Jeffrey Epstein through his [past association with Interlochen](#).

To ensure that this investigation would be independent, Interlochen and the Board asked its external counsel to engage Sanghavi Law Office, LLC, to lead it. Elizabeth Sanghavi, a former federal civil rights attorney, and her team have extensive experience investigating historical abuse in a trauma-informed and sensitive manner. They spent hundreds of hours speaking with Academy and Camp alumni and current and former administrators to understand their reported experiences and prepare a comprehensive report. Interlochen cooperated fully with the investigators, inviting alumni to participate and making all of our available historical records and relevant personnel available to them. Sanghavi Law Office prepared this report independently; Interlochen had no direct influence over its content and no role in editing it.

We understand that this report may be a catalyst for additional alumni to come forward. We encourage anyone who has additional information or experiences to share to contact the investigators directly so that our efforts can be as robust and complete as possible. Elizabeth Sanghavi is available through October 2026 to receive additional reports at elizabeth@sanghavalawoffice.com or 617-505-3010. After that date, reports can be made directly to Interlochen at investigation@interlochen.org.

For general questions about the investigation, please contact investigation@interlochen.org.

Investigation Outcomes

The report covers accounts of sexual misconduct from the 1950s through the 2010s, ranging from inappropriate comments and violations of professional boundaries to egregious acts of sexual abuse or violence by adults employed by or affiliated with Interlochen. It includes accounts of misconduct by Academy and Camp faculty, residential life staff and Camp counselors, visiting artists, and board members who abused their positions of power and authority.

The report largely describes interactions that occurred prior to 2000, and also reflects that there were very few reported incidents of abuse in the past 25 years. Many of the individuals accused of misconduct are now deceased, and none are currently employed by Interlochen.

Sharing the information in the report with our community is an important step in promoting accountability for those who harmed young people. We have provided the names of all individuals accused of misconduct to the Grand Traverse County Prosecuting Attorney's Office and the Grand Traverse County Sheriff's Office, which will determine if there is a viable pathway to prosecution or other steps that could be taken to promote accountability or minimize current risk to students at other institutions. To ensure that our actions in no way undermine the integrity of any law enforcement investigation or action, the report does not identify any of these individuals by name. This also helps protect the privacy of the alumni who participated in the investigation.

In a handful of instances, where it would not impact any law enforcement action because the accused individuals are deceased, and where the investigators received multiple firsthand accounts reflecting repeated and pervasive conduct, we made the decision to identify those individuals by name:

- Byron Hanson [Respondent 1] was a faculty member and administrator from 1960 to 2015 and the initial subject of this investigation. The investigative team received seven independent direct reports of sexual misconduct involving Hanson in the 1960s and 1970s, with multiple corroborating accounts by other alumni.
- John "Jack" Hood [Respondent 8] was a faculty member and administrator from 1963 to 1979 who later returned in seasonal roles until 2004. The investigative team received four independent direct reports of sexual misconduct involving Hood.
- Charlie McWhorter [Respondent 19] was a former trustee from 1970 to 1999 with two independent direct reports of sexual misconduct and multiple corroborating accounts by other alumni.

Additionally, in one instance, the accused individual has already been criminally convicted, and the name is part of the public record:

- Thomas Clower, an arts faculty member from 2003 to 2005, was convicted of criminal sexual conduct in 2005 after Interlochen reported his conduct to law enforcement and terminated his employment.

Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell have been the subjects of intense national scrutiny. Epstein was a donor to Interlochen from 1990 to 2003, and we have previously shared information about Interlochen's [past connection to Epstein](#). The report includes information about additional conduct by Epstein involving two alumni who reported sexual contact by Epstein after meeting him through Interlochen more than five years before his first criminal conviction.

The abuse described in the report is heartbreaking and is contrary to everything Interlochen stands for. We cannot change the past, but we can be unequivocal in stating that this behavior has no place at the Interlochen we care for, not then, not now, and not in the future.

Actions We Are Taking in Response to the Investigation's Outcomes

In consultation with, and at the request of, many of the impacted alumni, we are taking a series of concrete steps. Many of these safety changes have been implemented over the years as part of our commitment to continuously evaluating and strengthening our student safety protocols.

Reports to Law Enforcement

Throughout the investigation, we maintained contact with local law enforcement and developed a protocol for sharing relevant information. As mentioned above, we have turned over all names of individuals accused of misconduct to the Grand Traverse County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. This ensures the information is in the hands of external authorities who are best positioned to evaluate if there are other reports involving the same individual, if there is a viable pathway for prosecution, and if there are

other steps that should be taken to promote accountability or minimize current risk to students at other institutions.

Counseling and Support Resources

Interlochen has established a counseling support fund to help cover future therapeutic care for impacted individuals. The fund is overseen and administered by an independent third party, Michael Riley, a licensed therapist (MSW, MBA, LPC, LCSW, LMHC) with extensive experience working with survivors of abuse. Mike is available to provide support, help identify counseling resources in your area, and guide you through the process for accessing financial assistance. Mike will retain this information as confidential, and Interlochen will not receive any information about the nature of the counseling services accessed by participants or any details regarding their therapeutic care. If you would like to explore this resource confidentially, please contact Mike Riley at (469) 552-5022 or interlochen@mhradvising.org.

We also heard from many impacted alumni a desire to connect with one another and to create a dedicated space for this interaction. We will be working with an external partner to facilitate opportunities for dialogue and support within our community at our 2026 Academy reunion and online. For any alumni interested in participating in one of the facilitated online sessions, please [pre-register here](#) for more information.

Reporting, Investigation, and Information Systems

This investigation reinforced that concerns involving sexual misconduct must be elevated and addressed at an institutional level, not within any single department or office. In response, Interlochen is further strengthening organization-wide systems for reporting, review, and follow-through, which ensure all concerns are handled consistently and with clear institutional accountability. To support greater transparency and accessibility, we are updating and expanding a centralized, publicly available online resource hub that will bring together training materials, policies, reporting options, and information on healthy boundaries and student safety, making it easier for our community to understand resources and access reporting pathways.

Community Education

Creating a safe, healthy, and supportive community requires ongoing education, prevention, and engagement. Many of these efforts are already embedded in the Interlochen experience and involve students, employees, and families. These include a structured social-emotional learning curriculum featuring guest speakers such as [Lisa Damour](#) and [Donna Hicks](#), education on topics including healthy relationships, consent, and sexual health in partnership with [Sex Discussed Here!](#), and training for all employees on their responsibilities as [mandated reporters](#).

We also regularly engage families through educational programming and resources designed to strengthen partnerships in supporting student well-being. Interlochen has partnered with [ATIXA](#) over the past seven years to strengthen our policies, training, and practices related to sexual misconduct and student safety. The outcome of the external investigation reinforces the importance of continuing this work.

- Building on that strong foundation, we will partner with the [Stanley King Institute](#) to provide additional training for employees focused on deep listening and recognizing signs that a student may need support.
- We will welcome guest speaker [Ethan Kross](#) to work with all students, employees, and families during the 2026-27 school year.
- As part of our professional development programming, we have invited violinist, educator, and advocate Lara St. John to campus to share her film, [Dear Lara](#), and work with faculty and educational leadership as the keynote orientation speaker for the 2027-28 school year.

Removing Naming Recognition

Interlochen is reviewing naming recognitions associated with individuals whose conduct does not reflect our values. Through our formal naming policy, each recognition will be evaluated through a consistent, principled process to determine whether it remains appropriate.

Creating an Arts Installation

Developed through a collaborative process with alumni, faculty, and students, Interlochen will commission an arts installation to honor survivors and communicate the shared commitment we have to the safety of our students and campers.

Interlochen Today: Student Safety Protocols

Nothing is more important than the safety and well-being of the young people entrusted to our care. That responsibility shapes every aspect of how Interlochen operates today. We maintain a publicly available overview of our student safety practices and resources [here](#).

Over many years, we have built a comprehensive, institution-wide child protection program that emphasizes prevention, encourages reporting, responds swiftly to concerns, and holds individuals accountable. Guided by Board oversight, dedicated leadership, and clearly defined responsibilities across every area of the institution, this work continues to evolve as we strengthen our policies, practices, and culture of accountability. Notably, any safety improvements made to the Academy continue to inform our safety protocols for Camp and vice versa.

Protecting students requires more than policies alone. It requires a culture, systems, and practices that work together every day to create a safe and supportive environment. These safeguards include:

- Rigorous hiring practices, comprehensive background checks, and mandatory annual training for employees and volunteers
- Clear professional boundary standards, mandated reporting responsibilities, and expectations for all adults who interact with students
- Multiple reporting pathways for students, families, faculty, and staff, ensuring concerns can be raised through trusted channels

- Coordinated supervision and response protocols involving Residence Life, Student Support Services, Health Services, Campus Safety, and school leadership
- Regular independent assessments of our safety policies, procedures, and emergency preparedness to ensure our practices continue to evolve and strengthen

Today, our policies and procedures are clear: we respond to any report of suspected abuse through a consistent process that prioritizes care for the impacted student, reporting to external authorities, a thorough investigation, and appropriate action and accountability.

We know this work is never finished. Protecting students requires constant vigilance, continuous improvement, and an unwavering commitment to earning and maintaining the trust placed in us by our students and their families.

Conclusion

While we have established a strong foundation for student safety, the outcome of the external investigation provides additional opportunities to incorporate its themes and lessons into today's practices. We owe it to our students, families, alumni, employees, and supporters to listen, learn, and act, and we remain committed to continuously strengthening the systems, culture, and safeguards that help protect our community.

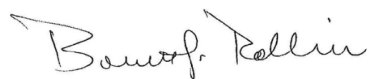
We remain incredibly grateful to those of you who came forward to share your experiences as part of this investigation. Artists have always understood that what is seen cannot be unseen and that naming truth changes what is possible. That understanding must now extend beyond art to guide us as we continue to shape and safeguard this community. Art is a powerful tool for inspiring change, and we recognize when that change needs to be applied to our own institution.

We carry this responsibility forward with integrity and care, guided by an unwavering commitment to do what is right for our students, alumni, and families who make this place what it is.

With Respect,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Trey Devey', with a large, loopy flourish at the end.

Trey Devey
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Barrett Rollins', with a stylized, cursive script.

Barrett Rollins
Chair of the Board

Content Warning: The External Investigation Report includes accounts of sexual abuse, trauma, and other difficult experiences. We recognize this material may be upsetting for some readers. Please take care as you read and seek support if needed.

The full report is available on our website [here](#). Additional information is available in our [FAQ](#).

