

Duke settles with 3 lacrosse players

by UPI

DURHAM, N.C. - Duke University officials said Monday they have settled with three of the North Carolina school's lacrosse team players falsely accused of rape.

In a statement on the school's Web site, the Duke Board of Trustees and President Richard H. Brodhead said they welcomed the exoneration of David Evans, Collin Finnerty and Reade Seligman, and "deeply regret the difficult year" they and their families endured. However, they did not disclose the nature of the settlement, citing privacy issues.

The three students, in a statement also released by Duke, said their ordeal was caused by a "rogue prosecutor" and it "tore the Duke community apart and forcibly separated us from the university we love." But they said they hope the settlement "will begin to bring the Duke family back together again." They said they look forward to working with the school to prevent future injustices.

The players were accused of raping a hired dancer at a party in March 2006. The state's attorney general cleared them and the district attorney who prosecuted the case, Mike Nifong, was disbarred for ethics and professional misconduct.

The false allegations caused the cancellation of the team's season and cost Coach Mike Pressler his job.

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