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UNMH drops resident with homicide in his past



Christopher Nabors

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By: Reed Upton

A University of New Mexico Hospital resident on his way to becoming a practicing doctor has been dropped from the program after a background check uncovered he has been convicted of vehicular homicide.

In September of this year, the New Mexico Medical Board granted 39-year-old Christopher Nabors a residency license and Nabors subsequently was taken into the UNMH residency program.

What UNMH officials didn't know at the time was that Nabors was paroled last year after being sentenced to 15 years in 1995 for vehicular homicide. At the time, Nabors was in the process of pursuing his medical education at Louisiana State University.

Officials say Nabors drove a car into a bayou in New Orleans in 1995. He escaped from the car, but 25-year-old Michelle Haensel, who was strapped in her seat, did not.

After the accident, Nabors reportedly told police, "I don't know the bitch's name. I just picked her up at a bar."

After the state medical board granted Nabors a residency license, UNMH took him into its residency program, contingent on a background check. When the background check was completed, and the criminal history uncovered, Nabors was released.

UNMH officials say Nabors was never on the payroll and never saw a patient. They add, however, that they anticipate Nabors will appeal his dismissal.

A spokesperson for the New Mexico Medical Board says it's not uncommon for doctors with criminal backgrounds to seek licenses in New Mexico and there's often pressure on the board to grant licenses because of the doctor shortage in the state.

Last year, five out of 21 doctors with criminal backgrounds were successful in getting licenses from the state.