

Wright State trustee reprimanded over son's hiring

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Josh Sweigart Staff Writer 5:24 p.m Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2017 Crime

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Wright State University trustee Michael Bridges.

The Ohio Ethics Commission publicly reprimanded Michael Bridges, president of the Wright State University Board of Trustees, for his role in the hiring of his son at the university's research arm.

Ethics commission investigators found Bridges emailed his son David's resume to two administrators and helped set up a meeting between David and Wright State Research Institute Director Dennis Andersh, who later recommended creating a new position for the trustee president's son after interviewing him in January 2015.

Michael Bridges then voted to approve David's hiring in the same May 2015 meeting where he was voted board chairman.

Bridges reported himself to the Ohio Ethics Commission after the I-Team asked him about the hiring in December 2015.

The ethics commission found that Bridges potentially broke state law when he emailed his son's resume and helped schedule interview times. But it also said Bridges was cooperative with the investigation and "the investigation found no evidence that Bridges used the authority of his public position to secure the hire of his son" when he voted on his son's hire.

The settlement agreement says Bridges accepts a "public reprimand from the commission," and agrees "to not participate in any employment matters related to his son or any other family member employed by WSU." The commission did not "refer the matter for prosecution," but said charges could be brought if Bridges violates the agreement.

Bridges provided the I-Team with a copy of a Dec. 20 letter to his fellow trustees apologizing for "bringing this negative attention to the university I love and respect" and saying he looks forward to "all the great things we will accomplish together on the board of trustees."

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