

Former Kean University Administrator Sues for Race, Gender Discrimination

Lawsuit alleges that Kean University engaged in a pattern of harassing, demoting, and/or terminating African-American female administrators and faculty for the last several years.

East Brunswick, NJ ([PRWeb](#)) August 16, 2008 -- Beverly Berry Baker worked for Kean University, Union, New Jersey, as the Director of its Exceptional Educational Opportunities ("EEO") Program for almost 40 years. According to the Complaint recently filed in the Superior Court of New Jersey, Union County, entitled Beverly Berry Baker v. Kean University, Docket No. UNN-L-2646-08, Ms. Baker's employment took a "sudden and drastic turn for the worse" after the Kean hired Dr. Dawood Farahi as its President in 2003. Ms. Baker alleges that shortly after Dr. Farahi became University President, Kean began harassing and discriminating against herself and other African-American female administrators and faculty. Kean terminated Ms. Baker from her administrative position in December 2007.

According to the lawsuit, Ms. Baker devoted the better part of three decades to Kean University and its EEO Program, a state-funded program which helps disadvantaged students enroll in and finish college. Ms. Baker alleges that, beginning in 2004, Kean subjected her office to three unnecessary audits, all of which revealed no financial impropriety, suspended her without pay for 30 days, gave her the three worst job performance reviews in her career and refused her annual salary increases. According to Ms. Baker, these actions are inconsistent with the fact that the Kean EEO Program received the State's highest rating in recent years.

Ms. Baker's Complaint alleges that when Ms. Baker informed Kean she would need a brief medical leave in August 2007, the University terminated her from her position as Director of the EEO Program and replaced her with a younger non-African American male with no prior EEO experience. Ms. Baker alleges that when she returned to work in November 2007, Kean terminated her from its administrative staff and placed her in a junior faculty position at two-thirds her former salary. Ms. Baker claims that the University then placed her on an involuntary sabbatical for the Spring 2008 semester, causing her to lose her ability to use accrued sick and vacation days. Ms. Baker alleges that these actions constituted a "constructive discharge," meaning that she was forced to resign. Ms. Baker's lawsuit alleges that the University has subjected at least nine other African-American female professors and administrators to similar conduct since 2004.

Ms. Baker's attorney, Steven Siegler, Esq., of East Brunswick, NJ, stated that the facts of this case are "extremely sad . . . and at the same time maddening. Here was a woman who gave Kean University almost 40 years of her life, helping thousands of disadvantaged students achieve the dream of graduating from college, who was stripped of her reputation, her dignity, and her means of supporting herself, for no legitimate reason. We think the taxpayers of this State should be outraged at how this publicly-funded university apparently operates."

About The Law Office of Steven Siegler, Esq.:

The Law Office of Steven Siegler, Esq. represents New Jersey's professional and executive workforce in all areas of employment law, including discrimination on the basis of age, gender, pregnancy, race, religion, or disability, sexual harassment, whistleblower retaliation, severance package negotiations, breach of contract, non-compete agreements, wage and hour claims, and civil rights violations. For more information visit www.njemploymentattorney.com or www.njemploymentlawyerblog.com.



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