

◆ IN THE COURTS

Suit Accuses Citigroup Of Discrimination

Six current and former female employees sued **Citigroup** Inc. on Wednesday, claiming the company operates at an outdated "boys club" and turns a blind eye to discrimination against women.

The lawsuit was filed in federal court in Manhattan by five women who formerly worked in the company's Public Finance Department and a current employee in the company's Asset Finance Group.

The complaint, which is seeking class-action status, alleges company-wide layoffs in November 2008 had a "disparate impact" on the company's female employees, with thousands of well-qualified women being let go, while less qualified men were retained. The five women in the Public Finance Department were lost their jobs as part of the 2008 layoffs.

The lawsuit also alleges the woman working in the Asset Finance Group was subjected to "inappropriate and offensive comments" and demoted to a "less prestigious and less lucrative" position after she returned from maternity leave in January.

In a statement, a Citigroup spokeswoman said the women who lost their jobs were selected based on legitimate business reasons, not based on their gender.

The spokeswoman said the decisions affecting the employment of the woman in the Asset Finance Group were "based on legitimate business decisions."

Chad Bray