

## Long Island CEO sued by VP he fired for reporting his misconduct

BY Christina Carrega Victoria Bekiempis

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(Designatronics Inc.)

Robert Kufner, president and CEO of Designatronics Inc.

Talk about the boss from hell.

The CEO of a Long Island gear-and-sprockets company spewed the N-word and degraded women in the office — when he wasn't playing video games during working hours, a new lawsuit claims.

And when a company vice president complained, the bad boss allegedly turned

around and canned him.

The VP, Wayne Martin, has filed a wrongful termination suit against Hicksville-based company, Designatronics Inc., and its president and CEO, Robert Kufner.

Martin, who was vice president of operations, was fired on July 10, after nearly four years on the job.

His lawsuit, filed in Brooklyn Federal Court, alleges Kufner, who like Martin is white, used racial slurs, referred to women as "fat slobs," touched them "without their consent" and commented on employees' sexual orientations.

Kufner, who became CEO in mid-2013, also boasted about being protected by the higher-ups at parent company Dyson, Dyson & Dunn, the suit claims.

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Kufner did not return requests for comment, and repeated messages left with Designatronics, nor Dyson, Dyson & Dunn were not returned.



(Obtained by Daily News)

The VP, Wayne Martin (pictured), has filed a wrongful termination suit against Hicksville-based company, Designatronics Inc., and its president and CEO, Robert Kufner.

Kufner allegedly told the onetime head of human resources that "Man, f---ing n---ers are the worst" in reference to a football game, according to the suit.

"Mr. Kufner made similar remarks to (the former HR head) about black members of the crowd as well," Martin claimed. "Mr. Kufner invoked the

same hateful racial epithet three to four more times in this conversation, and ended by saying that he had to leave the game early because 'the f---ing n---ers were so horrible.'"

Even when Kufner wasn't insulting people, he was a terrible worker, the lawsuit contends.

"He would sit on his computer all day and play shooting games," Martin told the Daily News.

Martin said he and several other employees repeatedly filed complaints with HR about Kufner, who never changed his ways.

Martin thought the complaints paid off when Kufner was fired in April. But to the "absolute shock of everyone," he said, Kufner got his job back on July 10 — and ousted Martin that same day.

Martin was a top contender for CEO.



And "while Mr. Kufner's friends at the company may protect him, we believe a jury will be appalled by his blatant retaliatory conduct," Gottlieb said.

Martin is seeking unspecified damages.

The manufacturing company, at 250 Duffy Ave. in Hicksville, opened in 1950 and has about 250 employees, according to its website.

"We value and nurture the strengths, talents and even the differences in our team leaders, managers, supervisors, and employees," its website says. "We promote a culture that is built on respect, merit, dignity and trust."

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