

# Goldman Sued by Gay Vice President Claiming Discrimination

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Bob Van Voris

Goldman Sachs Group Inc. was sued by a former vice president who claims the bank discriminated against him for being gay and then fired him after he complained about it.

William Littleton, who worked in the Specialty Solutions team within Goldman's Product Strategy Group, sued the bank Wednesday in a New York state court. Littleton claims he was fired after eight years of superior performance reviews and despite holding a position of leadership among gay and lesbian employees at the firm.

Among the mistreatment alleged in the lawsuit, Littleton, 31, said he was excluded from a call with a Goldman client because "he sounded too gay," and a supervisor once asked, "What's wrong with you? Do you act this way because you're gay?"

Megan Riley, a Goldman Sachs spokeswoman, had no immediate comment on the suit.

Littleton claims his experience demonstrates "larger institutional problems" at Goldman.

"Unfortunately, Mr. Littleton's termination at Goldman is not an isolated incident or exception to the rule at the bank or on Wall Street more broadly," according to the complaint, filed in Manhattan. "The bank does little more than provide lip-service to LGBTQ diversity."

Littleton claims he was subjected to demeaning remarks and that his compensation decreased in his later years at the bank, despite promotions and increased responsibilities. He complained to the bank's employee relations department in May 2018. Months later he received a performance review with criticisms he claims were part of "a belated attempt to create a paper trail" and was told his last day at the bank would be Jan. 31, 2019, according to the complaint.

Also named as defendants are Rachel Schnoll, a managing director and head of the Product Strategy Group, and Sirion Skulpone, the former head of Littleton's team.

Littleton said that while he was at the bank he was involved as a leader in Goldman's LGBT network. He started as a Goldman analyst after graduating from Amherst College in 2010.

"Mr. Littleton was one of the most proud, active and vocal LGBTQ leaders at Goldman throughout his tenure," according to the complaint.

Littleton, who lives in Manhattan, claims Goldman's treatment of him violated New York

state and city anti-discrimination laws. He's seeking unspecified compensation from the bank plus punitive damages.

A November press release announcing the bank's 2018 partner class boasted that 26% were women and 6% black, the highest percentage of new partners from those groups to date, according to the complaint. The statement made no mention of LGBTQ partners in the class and said that only 1% of Goldman partners -- about five out of 500 -- identify as LGBTQ.