

Christopher Dawson: Wellspring CEO's Son Accused of Sexual Assault in Lawsuit

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A former employee of Wellspring Capital Management filed a lawsuit in a New York Thursday alleging that the CEO's son, Christopher Dawson, drugged and repeatedly raped her one night in the family's New York apartment.

The woman making the claim is Taylor Lawrence, who worked at Wellspring Capital Management from 2010-2018 as head of marketing and investor relations. According to Lawrence's complaint, she had never met Dawson before she says he assaulted her on the night of December 29, 2014.

At the time Dawson was 18 years old and a student at Kenyon College.

Here's what you need to know:

1. Lawrence Say She Went to the Dawsons' Apartment After Being Stood up by Bill Dawson & That's When She Met Christopher

According to the complaint, Lawrence was supposed to meet Wellspring CEO Bill Dawson at a bar for drinks near his apartment. He was very late and when she contacted him he said he was tied up drinking with his sons.

Eventually, the CEO stopped replying to her so she walked to his apartment at around 11 p.m. The doorman called up to the residence and told her they said she could go to the apartment, which was the only one on the entire floor.

When she entered the apartment the only person she saw was the son, Christopher Dawson, who she'd not met before. He said his dad was sleeping, according to the complaint.

2. Lawrence Claims Dawson Drugged Her & She Was Incapacitated as He Raped Her Multiple Times

The complaint says that the younger Dawson offered Lawrence a drink, which she accepted while she called a cab and waited. That's when the complaint alleges he drugged the drink with "a narcotic" with the intention of sexually assaulting Lawrence.

The court document says that because she was drugged, Lawrence was “incapable of lawfully consenting to any sexual activity.”

Dawson turned pornography on the TV, and Lawrence said she had to go, according to the complaint. Then, it says, he pulled out his erect penis and said, “You’re not going to leave this. You’re not going anywhere.”

The complaint says Dawson pushed Lawrence to the floor and repeatedly raped her both vaginally and anally.

Lawrence said that when she woke up she was only wearing a top and was naked from the waist down. She said she was sore and bruised on her “upper thighs, lower back, buttocks and arms,” according to the lawsuit.

Another brother, William Dawson III, was the one who woke her, she said, and insisted she leave immediately and that she shouldn’t even be there. Lawrence said she couldn’t find her purse but William Dawson said she needed to go, so she left without it.

3. Lawrence Claims She Told Bill Dawson About the Rape but He Said ‘I Will Destroy You. I Will Ruin You’ if She Pursued the Accusations



**WELLSPRING CAPITAL
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According to the claim, “Bill Dawson told Ms. Lawrence that his son, Christopher Dawson, bragged to him ‘he plugged you in the ass.’ Ms. Lawrence told Bill Dawson that it was not consensual.”

Lawrence brought it up another time in front of a managing partner, saying Dawson’s son had raped her, and Bill Dawson responded by saying, “I will destroy you. I will ruin you,” the complaint says.

But the Dawsons deny ever having heard of the incident until this past June, even though Lawrence worked at the company for more than three years after the alleged rape.

The New York Post reported that the family’s statement said:

The complaint is pure fiction intended as a shakedown and we will defend aggressively against it. The alleged event — said to have happened more than five years ago between a then 18- year old boy and a then 34-year old employee of the firm — never happened. Indeed, the employee, who worked at the firm for more than three years after the alleged event, never once mentioned it to the Dawsons, anyone in human resources or the police. The first time we heard anything about this was in June, 2020.

4. The Complaint Says Christopher Dawson ‘Believed’ His Father’s Money ‘Entitled Him to a Cloak of Immunity’

According to the complaint:

Defendant Christopher Dawson comes from a background of privilege and wealth – his father is William (“Bill”) F. Dawson, Jr., the Chief Executive Officer of the private equity firm Wellspring Capital Management LLC (“Wellspring”), and is likely worth well in excess of \$100 million – which Christopher Dawson believed entitled him to a cloak of immunity in which he could sexually assault and anally rape Plaintiff Taylor Lawrence, who was at the time an employee of Wellspring.

Lawrence said she is now coming forward because she doesn’t want Christopher Dawson to continue to “hide behind his father’s wealth and privilege.” She hopes that the lawsuit will mean he is held accountable for what she says he did to her and “make sure no additional women are victimized by his acts of sexual violence,” according to court documents.

Christopher Dawson’s LinkedIn page says he is the Director at SquareFoot, a real estate company that finds office space for commercial enterprises. He graduated from Kenyon College with a degree in Economics in 2018. Dawson started at the school in 2014, the same year he is accused of raping Lawrence.

5. The Amount of Money Lawrence Is Suing for Is Not yet

Established

According to the lawsuit, Lawrence and her attorneys are suing to “compensate Plaintiff for all applicable damages permitted by law ... along with compensatory damages, including, but not limited to, compensation for Plaintiff’s emotional distress, pain and suffering,” including “physical injury, pain and suffering, serious psychological and emotional distress, mental anguish, anxiety, embarrassment and humiliation.”

The amount of those damages is to be determined at the trial, according to the complaint.

The New York Post reported the lawsuit is filed under New York’s Gender-Motivated Violence Act, “which allows sexual assault victims to sue their assailants after the criminal statute of limitations expires.”