Wigdor LLP Represents '60 Minutes' Producer In Gender Discrimination And Retaliation Lawsuit Against CBS

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On Tuesday, December 17, 2019, Wigdor LLP filed a gender discrimination and retaliation lawsuit against CBS Broadcasting, Inc. ("CBS") on behalf of Cassandra Vinograd, an associate producer at CBS's *60 Minutes*. The lawsuit filed in New York State Supreme Court alleges that CBS unlawfully retaliated against Ms. Vinograd after she complained to CBS executives about conduct by her boss, longtime *60 Minutes* producer Michael Gavshon, that she described as "highly inappropriate, unprofessional and upsetting."

CBS has a reported history of protecting its senior male talent when it comes to allegations of sexual harassment and gender discrimination, the lawsuit alleges. Tarnished by numerous allegations of sexual misconduct at the hands of high-level executives and on-camera talent in recent years, CBS attempted to repair its public image by removing several alleged harassers from the workplace and representing to the public that it was committed to providing female employees with a harassment-free workplace, as alleged.

However, as alleged, in September 2019, soon after Ms. Vinograd and Mr. Gavshon returned from a two-week trip to Hungary to film a segment, she received a text message from Mr. Gavshon late at night containing a highly inappropriate and unsolicited photo of himself; more than an hour later, she received another unsolicited text from Mr. Gavshon saying he was "sorry" and that he meant to send the photo to his sister instead.

As set forth in the lawsuit, Ms. Vinograd emailed executives in CBS's Human Resources and legal departments requesting "an investigation and protection from retaliation" in connection with her reporting of Mr. Gavshon's photo and text. Ms. Vinograd also told CBS that on numerous occasions she had to work with Mr. Gavshon while he was drinking alcohol and that he often was drunk and even passed out at work.

Claiming that HR objectively investigated Mr. Gavshon's conduct, as alleged, CBS told Ms. Vinograd that it accepted Mr. Gavshon's explanation that he sent the inappropriate photo by accident. CBS further told Ms. Vinograd that her claims about Mr. Gavshon's drinking were not corroborated.

HR then told Ms. Vinograd that it was her responsibility to mend the relationship with Mr. Gavshon. As alleged, thereafter Mr. Gavshon retaliated against Ms. Vinograd because she complained about him. Ms. Vinograd alleges that immediately Mr. Gavshon left her off work emails, excluded her from meetings and calls, and eventually stripped her of all production responsibilities. Furthermore, as alleged, CBS has failed to give Ms. Vinograd a single new assignment following the investigation and has even removed her from segments that she originated or had been working on.

> NEW: Wigdor LLP has filed a lawsuit against @CBS alleging that the media giant continues to protect senior male talent from allegations of harassment at the expense of junior women. #TIMESUP https://t.co/6CSs3ff6Kp
> — Wigdor LLP (@WigdorLaw) December 17, 2019

Ms. Vinograd is represented by Wigdor LLP Partner Jeanne M. Christensen.

Statement from Jeanne M. Christensen, Partner at Wigdor LLP:

"We look forward to holding CBS accountable for its unlawful conduct as alleged in the complaint by our client Cassandra Vinograd. Contrary to CBS's claims that it is doing the right thing when female employees report gender-related misconduct, as alleged, it appears that no meaningful changes to the culture at CBS have been made. It appears that CBS continues to protect senior male talent at the expense of junior women — business as usual."

Read the Full Complaint Here

HuffPost
"'60 Minutes' Producer Says CBS Retaliated After She Told HR About Her Boss's Misconduct"
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The New York Times
"A Female '60 Minutes' Producer Sues CBS, Claiming Discrimination"
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Variety
"'60 Minutes' Producer Alleges CBS News Ignored Boss' Misconduct"
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New York Daily News
"A `60 Minutes' investigation: CBS producer sues network, says bosses retaliated for gender harassment complaint"
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The Hollywood Reporter

"'60 Minutes' Producer Sues CBS for Gender Discrimination, Retaliation"
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Law360
"'60 Minutes' Producer Alleges Gender Discrimination By CBS"
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TheWrap
"CBS Hit With Gender Discrimination Suit by '60 Minutes' Producer"
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The Hill
"'60 Minutes' producer alleges CBS News retaliated after she reported inappropriate behavior"
December 17, 2019
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Washington Examiner
"60 Minutes producer sues CBS for gender discrimination"
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NBC News
"Senior producer at CBS News' '60 Minutes' accused of gender discrimination and retaliation in lawsuit"
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Reuters
"Producer on U.S. TV show '60 Minutes' sues CBS over gender discrimination"
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The Daily Beast
"'60 Minutes' Producer Sues CBS for Alleged Retaliation Over Her Complaint About Boss' Lewd Pic"
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New York Post
"CBS producer says booze-abusing boss texted her a photo of him peeing: lawsuit"
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Fox News
"'60 Minutes' producer sues CBS after boss allegedly sent 'creepy and gross' photo"
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Daily Mail
"60 Minutes producer sues CBS claiming she was forced out after complaining that her boss drank excessively and had sent her a photo of himself urinating"
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Adweek
"60 Minutes Senior Producer Allegedly Sent Unsolicited, Inappropriate Photo to Show's Associate Producer"
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Mediaite
"60 Minutes Producer Sues CBS Over Response to 'Inappropriate' Photo From Boss"
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