

## Black breast cancer survivor sues Fox News for discrimination

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A third Fox News employee is accusing an executive at the company of engaging in racist conduct for years in an amended lawsuit filed Tuesday against the network in New York State Supreme Court.

Monica Douglas is joining Tichaona Brown and Tabrese Wright in the lawsuit they filed last week and seeking 'redress for the appalling racial discrimination' that she also claims to have suffered while employed by Fox News at the hands of white supervisor Judy Slater, the former Senior Vice President of Accounting and Controller at Fox News, according to their complaint.

Douglas claims that Slater complained about New York by saying there are 'so many more black people now than when I was a kid,' referred to black people as 'your people' when speaking to Brown, and mockingly rubbed her hair to feel the 'texture.'

She also claims that Slater twice kicked her in the butt and would make jokes about the fact that one of her breasts was removed while she was battling cancer, saying they were now 'crooked' and 'different sizes.'

The complaint also states that Slater told Douglas: 'Do not bother going to HR about Slater - I am HR.'

Douglas is being represented by Douglas H. Wigdor and Jeanne Christensen, partners at Wigdor LLP just like the other women, who said in a statement: 'The allegations in the amended complaint make clear that Fox, at the highest levels, was on notice of Ms. Slater's racist conduct for years and unfortunately did nothing about it.'

All three women accuse Fox News of 'top-down racial harassment' in their complaint, claiming that executives including former CEO Roger Ailes and current co-presidents Bill Shine and Jack Abernathy 'allowed this repugnant racial discrimination to go unchecked.'

Among the 'unlawful discriminatory statements and conduct engaged in by Slater' that were previously alleged in the complaint were claims that the executive 'ridiculed black employees by mocking stereotyped speech,' once asked 'Why are all black men women-beaters?' and 'regularly talked about her fear that black people want to physically harm white people.'

A Fox News spokesperson said in a statement in response to the amended complaint: 'We take complaints of this nature very seriously and took prompt and effective remedial action in terminating Judy Slater before Ms. Brown, Ms. Wright and Ms. Douglas sued in court and even before Ms. Wright and Ms. Douglas complained through their lawyer. There is no place for conduct like this at Fox News, which is why Ms. Slater was fired.'

Slater was fired from the company on February 28 after 18 years working for 21st Century Fox.

Brown claims in the complaint that she too was fired as a result of bringing forth this lawsuit, and Wright was demoted as a result.

A Fox News spokesperson claims that is not the case however, and that Brown is still employed while Wright made a 'lateral move' in the company with 'the same title (coordinator), same salary and same benefits.'

In citing specific examples of racial discrimination in their lawsuit, the two women allege: 'Slater told employees that she does not travel north of 90th Street in Manhattan because she is afraid she will be 'jumped' or 'beat up.' For safety reasons, Slater claims to travel there only when accompanied by a black person.'

The comments were not just about black individuals either according to the lawsuit.

'Slater regularly called her commuter train to New Jersey the 'Bombay Express,' due to the number of people of Indian descent who live in New Jersey,' claim the women in the complaint.

Slater also allegedly said that Chinese men have 'small penises' and called day laborers 'cheap Mexicans.'

Both Brown and Wright claim in the complaint that they did not complain over fears they might lose their job at the company.

'Over time, Ms. Brown and Ms. Wright watched other black employees who worked under Slater's supervision simply leave Fox rather than endure Slater's torment another day,' reads the complaint.

'No longer willing to remain silent while Fox treated employees of color as second-class citizens, Ms. Brown and Ms. Wright dared to speak out about the intolerable work environment, including their unequal pay and opportunities for advancement and development as compared to similarly-situated white employees.'

The two women claim that after they did complain Brown was fired and the company demoted White.

'At all times, Defendants' conduct was knowing, malicious, willful and wanton and/or showed a reckless disregard for Ms. Brown and Ms. Wright's rights, warranting an award of punitive damages,' reads the complaint.

'Such conduct has caused, and continues to cause, Ms. Brown and Ms. Wright to suffer substantial monetary damages and severe mental anguish and emotional distress.'

## **FOX NEWS LAWSUIT ALLEGATIONS**

-Slater ridiculed black employees by mocking stereotyped speech and complained, for example, that black employees mispronounce the words 'mother,' 'father,' 'month' and 'ask,' by pronouncing the words as 'muva,' 'fava,' 'monf,' and 'axe,' and incredulously forced black employees to practice saying the words correctly in front of white employees.

-Slater openly claimed that the 'Black Lives Matter' movement is extremely racist and wondered what would happen if there was a parallel 'White Lives Matter' movement.

-Slater disparaged black men in particular. For instance, when a video surfaced on the internet that depicted the black football player, Ray Rice, assaulting his wife in the elevator, Slater said, 'Why are

all black men women-beaters?' In connection with the video, Slater brought up O.J. Simpson, Mike Tyson and Chris Brown as other examples of black male wife-beaters.

- Slater regularly talked about her fear that black people want to physically harm white people, Slater told employees that she does not travel north of 90th Street in Manhattan because she is afraid she will be 'jumped' or 'beat up.' For safety reasons, Slater claims to travel there only when accompanied by a black person.
- Slater blatantly mocked the 'Black Lives Matter' movement. After the August 2014 shooting of Mike Brown, and the onset of the 'Hands Up, Don't Shoot' slogan, when Ms. Brown would stop by Slater's office to say goodbye at the end of the day, Slater responded by raising her hands up in the 'Hands Up, Don't Shoot' movement.
- Slater regularly called her commuter train to New Jersey the 'Bombay Express,' due to the number of people of Indian descent who live in New Jersey.
- Slater openly talked about her belief that all Chinese men have 'small penises.'
- Slater called day laborers 'cheap Mexicans.'
- Due to the number of employees of color in the payroll department, Slater regularly called the payroll department, the 'southern payroll department' and the 'urban payroll department.'
- Slater asked Ms. Brown and Ms. Wright to teach her how to 'beat box.'
- Knowing that Ms. Wright has three children, Slater incredulously asked her if all three children 'were fathered by the same man.'