

Yale doctor who 'sexually harassed a female colleague' was promoted after bosses dismissed complaint

 [dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8106177/Yale-doctor-sexually-harassed-female-colleague-promoted-bosses-](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8106177/Yale-doctor-sexually-harassed-female-colleague-promoted-bosses-)

March 12,
2020

- **Dr. Manuel Lopes Fontes was promoted to be Yale's Vice Chair of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within the school's anesthesiology department in August**
- **Prior to his promotion, the department chair dismissed an allegation made by a colleague against Fontes, according to a lawsuit she filed on Thursday**
- **The suit alleges Fontes had made advances and gave her unwanted massages, and that the department head brushed off the complaint**
- **Dr. Roberta Hines, who heads the department, said 'boys will be boys', in response to the allegation made against Fontes, according to the suit**
- **The doctor is joined by five other female physicians who've made similar allegations against Fontes and are seeking an unspecified amount in damages**
- **Fontes, through his lawyer, has denied the charges, while a Yale spokesperson says the doctors never filed 'formal complaints' against him over his actions**

A lawsuit filed against Yale University claims six female doctors were sexually harassed by a male physician who was promoted to lead inclusion and diversity efforts within a school department, despite one of their complaints of abuse.

The suit filed against the Ivy League school Thursday alleges that Dr. Manuel Lopes Fontes was promoted to be Vice Chair of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within the school's anaesthesiology department, even though a colleague complained he flirted with her at a work dinner last May, pressured her to drink more alcohol and tried to kiss her on the lips.

Similar abuse was alleged over two other occasions.





A new lawsuit filed against Yale University by six female physicians alleges Dr. Manuel Lopes Fontes was promoted to head a school department's diversity and inclusion efforts in August, despite a complaint that he had sexually harassed a female colleague



The suit filed against the Ivy League school Thursday alleges that Dr. Manuel Lopes Fontes got his promotion, even though a colleague complained he flirted with her at a work dinner last May, pressured her to drink more alcohol and tried to kiss her on the lips

The colleague was left so 'uncomfortable' and 'disgusted' by Fontes' behavior, the suit says, that she reported the incidents to two supervisors, who then told the department chair.

Dr. Roberta Hines, however, dismissed the complaint saying 'boys will be boys,' according to the lawsuit.

Fontes was then given his promotion in August, says the suit.

'It seems as though Yale has yet to take the same steps as the rest of society,' said Michael J. Willemin, one of the women's attorneys, referring to the #MeToo movement's workplace reckoning.

The legal action seeks an unmet amount for damages on behalf of the doctor and five others who have come forward with similar allegations.

Fontes, through his lawyer, has denied the accusations, reports [NBC](#).

Attorney Robert B. Mitchell, who is representing Fontes, said that he 'has been vilified without a fair opportunity to defend himself against what has been a vindictive backroom campaign of scandalous and vicious falsehood, rumor, and innuendo.



Fontes' colleague was so 'uncomfortable' and 'disgusted' by his behavior, the suit says, that she reported the incidents to two supervisors, who then told the department chair. Dr. Roberta Hines, however, dismissed the complaint saying 'boys will be boys,' according to the lawsuit

'This will be remedied now that his accusers have decided to come out into the open,' Mitchell explained

'Dr. Fontes will respond and the truth will shame them as well as those who have prejudged him without affording him even a hint of due process.'

A Yale spokeswoman was not immediately available when DailyMail.com reached.

The spokeswoman previously told NBC that none of the plaintiffs in the case had made formal complaints against Fontes.

'None of the plaintiffs chose to file a formal complaint; Yale has nonetheless been working to resolve the issues raised. As in all such cases, Yale is working to ensure that the processes we use to find and act on facts are fair to all involved parties.'

The spokeswoman also noted to NBC that 'in the summer of 2019, the university was approached by three of the six plaintiffs and took appropriate action, offering them Yale's Title IX resources of support, inclusive of guidance on filing a complaint with the university.'

Hines, who is not named as a defendant in the suit, did not immediately respond when DailyMail.com reached out.

Fontes, a high-ranking professor who was division chief of cardiac anesthesiology at Yale New Haven Hospital and director of clinical research for Yale School of Medicine's anesthesiology department,

Yale no longer has Fontes working in any leadership roles, and he is now listed only as a professor of anesthesiology.

Yale also removed Fontes from his role leading diversity and inclusion efforts, after his accusers hired lawyers, according to the women's attorneys, NBC reports.