

'Second-Class Citizens': Black Amazon Manager Sues Company Over Alleged Racial Discrimination, Harassment

 thedailybeast.com/black-amazon-manager-sues-company-over-alleged-racial-discrimination-harassment

Amazon allegedly “de-levels” Black employees, hiring them at a lower position than they applied for and creating pay disparities throughout the company, according to a race discrimination and unequal pay lawsuit filed in D.C. district court on Monday. The plaintiff, Charlotte Newman, a Black woman and the company’s Head of Underrepresented Founder Startup Business Development, claimed the practice deprives Black employees of millions in pay over their tenure. Newman also accused the workplace of fostering persistent racial discrimination and sexual harassment. In the complaint, she alleges her supervisor dealt in stereotypes, calling her “aggressive,” “too direct” and “just scary;” that another co-worker said she looked “like a gorilla;” and that a senior colleague had propositioned her for sex, in addition to at various times, groping her thighs, pulling on her braids in front of their peers and saying, mid-hug, “Let’s pretend to be boyfriend and girlfriend.”

Newman’s complaint points to unanswered employee efforts for better conditions, including an equitable treatment proposal from 2019, and a letter from April 2020, alleging the company’s General Counsel “openly mocked and planned character assassination” of an Amazon worker who’d been fired for protesting unsafe conditions. “Despite its emphasis on innovation, Amazon still treats Black employees like second-class citizens,” Newman’s attorney Douglas Wigdor said in a statement. Amazon did not immediately respond to requests for comment.