

# Former Digital Editor Files Discrimination Suit Against New York Post

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A former high-ranking New York Post editor filed a discrimination lawsuit against the publication, alleging she was sexually harassed by former Editor in Chief Col Allan and fired after she told the Post's current editor in chief about it.

Michelle Gotthelf, who until last week was the New York Post's digital editor in chief, said she had been harassed by Mr. Allan on numerous occasions dating back to 2013, including being propositioned for sex, according to the lawsuit. It was filed on Tuesday in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York by Wigdor LLP.

Defendants named in the suit include Keith Poole, the New York Post's current editor in chief; Mr. Allan; the Post's holding company, NYP Holdings Inc.; and News Corp, the parent company of the New York Post and of The Wall Street Journal publisher Dow Jones & Co.

Mr. Poole announced Ms. Gotthelf's departure, which he said was effective Jan. 15, in a memo to staff on Jan. 18. Asked about the allegations made in Ms. Gotthelf's lawsuit, a News Corp spokeswoman said Tuesday: "Any suggestion of wrongdoing related to the management changes announced today is meritless."

Efforts to reach Mr. Allan for comment were unsuccessful.

According to the lawsuit, Mr. Allan told Ms. Gotthelf, "We should sleep together" during an off-site dinner meeting among editors in the fall of 2015. She said she rejected Mr. Allan's advances, but he continued to pursue her, according to the suit.

Ms. Gotthelf didn't immediately report the incident to human resources but eventually did so after Mr. Allan screamed at her while at work, according to the suit. She said she disclosed "the bullying and harassment she experienced" to the then-head of HR, Melinda Goldman, and then-in-house counsel, Jordan Lippner. The suit said that she also complained to Jesse Angelo, the Post's then-publisher and chief executive and that he "promised that Ms. Gotthelf would not be retaliated against and that her complaint would be kept confidential."

Ms. Goldman and Mr. Lippner declined to comment. Mr. Angelo couldn't be reached for comment.

Mr. Allan retired as editor in chief of the New York Post in 2016, but he was brought back as a senior adviser in 2019. He left that position in March of last year.

During a November 2021 meeting between Mr. Poole and Ms. Gotthelf to discuss her contract—which was set to expire—Mr. Poole asked Ms. Gotthelf what had happened between her and Mr. Allan, and she told him he had sexually propositioned her, according to the lawsuit. Two months later, she was fired, the suit said.

A person familiar with the company said Ms. Gotthelf's contract expired on Jan. 15. Mr. Poole announced Ms. Gotthelf's departure on Tuesday in a staff memo, without specifying the reason. "I want to take this opportunity to thank her for all she has done during her 20-plus-year tenure," Mr. Poole said in the memo, which was reviewed by the Journal.

"For more than two decades, I took great pride in my work shaping coverage at one of the most widely read news organizations in the country," Ms. Gotthelf said in a statement Tuesday. "While I never intended to become the news, the truth of what happened to me deserves to be heard."