

Page Printed From:

<https://www.law.com/newyorklawjournal/2022/11/28/ex-hedge-fund-ceo-leon-black-accused-of-rape-in-lawsuit-under-adult-survivor-act/>

NOT FOR REPRINT

Ex-Hedge Fund CEO Leon Black Accused of Rape in Lawsuit Under Adult Survivor Act

The allegations, in a complaint filed by a lawyer at Wigdor LLP, stem from an encounter orchestrated by Jeffrey Epstein. The complaint also included allegations that Dechert prepared a sham report on behalf of Black.

November 28, 2022 at 05:04 PM

Personal Injury



Emily Saul

A Virginia woman on Monday filed a lawsuit against ex-Apollo Global Management CEO Leon Black, claiming he raped her during a 2002 encounter orchestrated by Jeffrey Epstein.

Cheri Pierson claimed that when she was a 22-year-old single mother, she was violently raped by Black in a third-floor massage room in Epstein's Upper East Side mansion, according to court papers.

Following the rape, Black allegedly gave her \$5,000 in \$100-dollar bills, saying the money was to help with her debt, according to the lawsuit. She then declined to see him again.

The action is admissible under the new Adult Survivors Act, which allows those whose cases fall outside the statute of limitations a one-year look-back window during which they can sue.

The 30-page complaint was filed in Manhattan Supreme Court by attorneys Jeanne M. Christensen and Renan F. Vargese of Wigdor Law.

The complaint dedicates a section alleging that a 2021 report prepared by Dechert LLP, which Black had hired to look into the relationship between himself, Epstein, and Apollo, included falsehoods.

"Although the Report had the appearance of a legitimate independent investigation, as Dechert must admit, any 'conclusions' contained in the Report were based on nothing more than voluntary statements provided by (unnamed) voluntary participants, who likely prepared heavily with counsel about what they said and produced to Dechert, and may have even had counsel present when they spoke to Dechert," the suit reads, adding none of the participants testified under oath.

The lawsuit goes on to say that the "Good Samaritans" who spoke to Dechert included lawyers and financial professionals with ties to Black.

Dechert did not immediately return a request for comment.

Black has maintained that he was not aware that Epstein was engaged in sexual relationships with minors.

The lawsuit charges Black with sexual assault, sexual battery, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and gender-motivated violence for the accused attack.

Epstein's estate and executors Darren Indyke and Richard Kahn are also named in the suit, which accuses them of negligence.

Lawyers for Black and Kahn did not immediately return messages. Daniel H. Weiner of Hughes Hubbard & Reed, who represents Indyke, declined to comment.

“Thanks to the passage of the Adult Survivor’s Act, survivors of sexual violence like our client Ms. Pierson can seek the justice they deserve no matter how many years ago their trauma was suffered,” Christensen said in a statement. “We look forward to holding Black and Epstein’s estate accountable for their appalling unlawful conduct as alleged in the complaint by our client.”

Christensen also represents Russian model Guzel Genieva, who has separately accused Black of rape. Black has claimed Ganeiva is a Russian spy and that her allegations are an attempt to extort him.

Pierson’s lawsuit follows two actions filed last week under the ASA accusing Deutsche Bank and JP Morgan of enabling and profiting from Epstein’s sex trafficking operation.

NOT FOR REPRINT

Copyright © 2022 ALM Global, LLC. All Rights Reserved.