

# Recruiter Major, Lindsey & Africa sued by lawyer claiming she was 'blackballed'

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Pedestrians walk through an office building in Tokyo January 8, 2009. Deepening economic problems are forcing the government to prioritise spending to support the economy rather than steps to restore its tattered finances. REUTERS/Yuriko Nakao(JAPAN) [Purchase Licensing Rights](#) [opens new tab](#)

April 2 (Reuters) - A Black lawyer on Tuesday sued Major, Lindsey & Africa, alleging that the legal recruiting firm is "blackballing" her after she sued her former law firm, [Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders](#), for racial discrimination earlier this year.

In a [22-page lawsuit](#) [opens new tab](#) filed in Maryland federal court, Gita Sankano alleged that prominent leaders at MLA warned her not to sue Troutman Pepper, and that a day after she did so, MLA informed her that a position she was seeking at a different firm was no longer available.


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The firm also allegedly told Sankano it would no longer represent her in finding a new job. The lawsuit cites an internal email sent by MLA managing director Andy Ufberg the day after Sankano sued Troutman Pepper, identifying Sankano as his candidate but that "we won't work with her now."



MLA in a statement said it plans to "defend this matter vigorously" and that diversity is one of its core values. The recruiting firm said it gave Sankano "our best professional advice and to convey a basic principle of our industry: that law firms may be wary of hiring someone who is suing another law firm."

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Sankano's lawsuit also names Ufberg, managing director Randi Lewis and MLA associate practice group leader Eliza Stoker as defendants.

Sankano [said](#) , [opens new tab](#) she was fired from Troutman Pepper in November in retaliation for filing an internal discrimination complaint against a partner who demeaned and demoralized her. She said this was part of a pattern of alleged mistreatment since her 2019 hiring.

Troutman Pepper [answered](#) , [opens new tab](#) Sankano's lawsuit in D.C. federal court last month. The firm asserted Sankano was "terminated solely for performance reasons, plain and simple," and that her claims are meritless.

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A spokesperson for Troutman Pepper did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The case is Gita Sankano v. Major, Lindsey & Africa, et al., U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland, 8:24-cv-00951

For Gita Sankano: Michael Willemin, of Wigdor LLP, and Gregg Greenberg, of Zipin, Amster & Greenberg LLC

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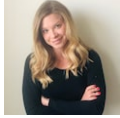
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