

Former Morgan Stanley Executive Alleges Termination Due to His Ethnicity



In a lawsuit filed on Tuesday in Manhattan federal court, Kevin Meyersburg, a white former managing director at Morgan Stanley & Co, has asserted that he was dismissed to pave the way for a less-qualified Black woman. This alleged move was supposedly made as the investment bank aimed to enhance diversity within its senior leadership.

Meyersburg's legal complaint contends that despite a noteworthy track record of accomplishments, he was pushed out of his role in May. This alleged action coincided with Morgan Stanley's pursuit of bolstering diversity and inclusion initiatives. Throughout his three-year tenure as managing director and head of executive services, Meyersburg claims he was supportive of these initiatives. However, earlier this year, he was replaced in his role by the head of Morgan Stanley's financial wellness team.

The lawsuit highlights Meyersburg's assertion that while the appointed Wellness Director might indeed possess corporate acumen, her experience and background allegedly did not measure up to justify the decision to replace him. A spokesperson for Morgan Stanley refrained from immediate commentary on the matter.

This legal action emerges at a time when several experts anticipate a rise in reverse-discrimination lawsuits. This anticipation stems from a June ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that invalidated race-conscious college admissions policies. Though the ruling doesn't directly apply to employers, opponents of corporate diversity initiatives have already seized on it to reinforce their arguments.

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Earlier this month, Gannett Co Inc faced a proposed class action that accused it of biased treatment against white employees across its nationwide newsrooms. The lawsuit cited excerpts from the recent Supreme Court decision. Gannett denied any wrongdoing.

In the past year, the conservative nonprofit organization America First Legal filed a complaint with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) against Morgan Stanley. The complaint alleged that the investment bank's training and apprenticeship program, designed for Black, Hispanic, Native American, and LGBTQ college students, violated federal laws prohibiting workplace discrimination. Morgan Stanley declined to comment on this matter.

America First Legal, established by former officials from the Trump administration, has lodged similar complaints against diversity programs at numerous other companies, including Starbucks Corp, McDonald's Corp, and Kellogg Co. As of now, it remains unclear whether the EEOC is investigating these complaints.

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Meyersburg's lawsuit points to an incident in April, a month preceding his termination, where he was reportedly tasked with compiling a list of employees who might be terminated due to underperformance. According to the lawsuit, Morgan Stanley rejected his suggestion to terminate a woman and two minority employees.

The legal action by Meyersburg sheds light on the ongoing tensions surrounding diversity initiatives in corporate settings, raising questions about whether well-intentioned efforts to promote inclusivity could potentially result in allegations of discrimination. As the case unfolds, it may contribute to broader conversations about the complexities of achieving workplace diversity while ensuring fairness and transparency in personnel decisions.

Don't be a silent ninja! Let us know your thoughts in the comment section below.