

Staten Island Advance

\$1.50 SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2017



BREAKING & LOCAL NEWS AT silive.com



Wagner College administrators turned a blind eye to sexual harassment, a lawsuit charges. *Staten Island Advance*

STATE SUPREME COURT

Lawsuit alleges sex harassment in the stacks

Librarian says his boss at Wagner College groped him and propositioned him

Frank Donnelly fdonnelly@siadvance.com

His former supervisor made sexually inappropriate comments to him, suggested they engage in sex and groped him, yet Wagner College allowed the behavior to continue despite his complaints, a librarian alleges in an explosive lawsuit.

Roger McSorley said his ex-boss, Timothy Hickey, continually harassed him over the course of three years even though he had rejected his superior's unwelcome sexual advances, creating a hostile work environment and causing him emotional and physical stress.

"It is amazing how an academic institution in this day and age could tolerate such

SEE COLLEGE, A8

COLLEGE

FROM A1

egregious conduct and not protect the plaintiff the way he is entitled to be protected under the law," said Bruce Baron, McSorley's Brooklyn-based lawyer.

McSorley sued Wagner College, Hickey and Jazzmine Clark-Glover, who, according to suit papers, heads the school's Human Resources Department.

Filed in state Supreme Court, St. George, the suit alleges sexual harassment, retaliation, discrimination under the city's Human Rights Law, negligent supervision, and intentional infliction of emotional distress, in addition to a hostile work environment.

McSorley, who public records indicate is 53, seeks unspecified monetary damages.

He still works at Wagner, Baron said.

Lee Manchester, a Wagner College spokesman, said the school doesn't comment on pending litigation.

Hickey did not immediately respond to a note left at his home.

HIRED IN 2007

According to his civil complaint, McSorley was hired by Wagner in October 2007 to work part-time as a librarian for Access Services in the school's Horrman Library.

He was given a full-time position in October 2014 and placed under Hickey's supervision, the complaint said. Public records indicate Hickey is 41.

Almost immediately, Hickey began asking him inappropriate questions about his sex life and whether he had performed gay sexual acts, said the complaint.

McSorley told Hickey the

remarks made him uncomfortable and asked him several times to stop, the complaint said. He even asked Hickey to stop talking to him unless the matter was work-related.

However, Hickey, kept it up, typically harassing McSorley between the hours of noon and 1 p.m., when they were alone in the office, the complaint said.

Hickey called McSorley a "closet case" and "want-to-be homo" despite the plaintiff's informing the supervisor he was not gay, said the complaint.

McSorley told Hickey such talk "made him feel dirty and uncomfortable," said the complaint.

On one occasion, in July 2016, Hickey grabbed McSorley's inner thigh and crotch, and McSorley pushed him away, the complaint alleges. A few months later, Hickey rubbed his groin area against the back of McSorley's arm, the complaint alleges.

On another occasion, Hickey told McSorley he tingled every time he saw the plaintiff and said, "You know, there are rooms in the back that lock; we can go into one," alleges the complaint.

Hickey also texted a sexually suggestive picture of himself to McSorley one night, the complaint said.

In October 2016, McSorley filed a sexual harassment claim against Hickey with Clark-Glover at Wagner's Human Resources Department.

He was advised the next day that Hickey was trying to get him fired for insubordination, the complaint said.

McSorley was told later that day the college wasn't going to investigate Hickey's claim of insubordination. Clark-Glover also informed him his complaint against Hickey was investigated, and it was determined he had not been sexually harassed, said the complaint.

McSorley was told Hickey had exhibited "inappropriate behavior" and would be placed on probation, said the complaint.

Several months later, McSorley complained to superiors that Hickey had continued harassing and cursing at him. He asked that Hickey be removed, said the complaint.

EEOC COMPLAINT

Earlier this year, McSorley filed a complaint with the city Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

In June, the EEOC determined there was reasonable cause to believe that gender discrimination had occurred, according to the civil complaint.

The board determined Hickey had "sexually harassed" McSorley and had also created a hostile work atmosphere and retaliated against him in response to McSorley's complaints, the complaint said.

The EEOC also found that Wagner failed to correct and failed to take prompt remedial action against the hostile work environment, said the complaint.

The board gave McSorley permission to sue.

James Ryan, an EEOC spokesman, said the agency is prohibited by confidentiality laws from confirming, denying or commenting on complaints or resulting investigation.

Hickey was fired in late August, the complaint alleges.

Manchester, the Wagner spokesman, couldn't confirm or deny Hickey's employment status, saying the school doesn't comment on personnel issues due to privacy concerns.

A message left at Hickey's home was not immediately returned.