

Press Release

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## Dallas Jury: AT&T Created Hostile Environment for Minority Employee at Arlington Call Center

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### The Drinnon Law Firm Announces \$411,339 Jury Verdict Following Nine Internal Racial Discrimination Complaints

DALLAS, TX--(MARKET WIRE)--Jul 31, 2008 -- A Dallas County jury awarded \$411,339 to an AT&T call center employee this week after finding that race was a motivating factor in the company's repeated failure to promote her. Additionally, the jury agreed that AT&T had created a hostile work environment and retaliated against her when she complained.

The lawsuit filed by AT&T sales representative Lakecious Edwards is one of nine complaints by employees at an AT&T office located 20 miles west of Dallas. Attorney Stephen Drinnon of The Drinnon Law Firm represents the employees and says one lawsuit stemming from the complaints has settled, and one remains active.

According to court testimony, Ms. Edwards, an eight-year veteran AT&T employee, was passed over on three separate occasions for promotions that went to Caucasian employees, two of whom were under disciplinary review. When another job opening was posted, the manager intentionally told other AT&T managers that Ms. Edwards wasn't interested in the job. The unfair

treatment grew worse after she filed an internal complaint about her treatment.

Mr. Drinnon presented evidence showing that AT&T encouraged employees to quietly file complaints internally rather than to the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Center but performed little, if any, investigation. In Ms. Edwards' case, the manager named in the complaint was not interviewed by investigators or reprimanded for her actions. AT&T ultimately ruled "no finding of discrimination" for all 9 complaints and closed them without notifying the employees.

"Ms. Edwards and her coworkers suffered pervasive discrimination and did everything they could to work within AT&T's system," Mr. Drinnon says. "Because of the company's refusal to take these complaints seriously, these loyal employees were forced to seek justice through the courts."

Mr. Drinnon also presented evidence that despite AT&T's publicity campaigns touting its commitment to a diverse workplace, employees and managers received little or no training in workplace diversity issues. Evidence also showed that the same procedures to respond to internal complaints of racial discrimination that failed in Arlington are followed throughout the AT&T organization.

"We're pleased that independent jurors saw this company's reprehensible conduct for what it was," Mr. Drinnon says. "We hope that this verdict sends a message to AT&T that these complaints need to be taken seriously, and their diversity commitment needs to be more than window dressing."

To speak with Stephen Drinnon about this lawsuit, please call Robert Tharp at 800-559-4534 or

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