

Good Afternoon. My name is Jean Alabre and I am employed as a Judicial Marshal in the Hartford Judicial District. I have been employed in this capacity since 1996 and worked under the old sheriff system at that time. I was born and raised in Haiti and came to the United States in 1984. I am proud to be a U.S. citizen. I thank you for this opportunity to speak to you about my work experiences as a Judicial Marshal.

I spent the majority of my career, almost nine years, assigned to the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters in Hartford. While working there, I was entrusted with the duties of a Field Training Officer providing training to newly hired Sheriffs/Marshals assigned to 920 Broad Street. On some occasions, I was given supervisory responsibilities when my Supervisor was not working.

Around 2003, Mr. Brian Clemens arrived as Lead Marshal at this Juvenile Court. Almost immediately, he began acting in an unprofessional manner toward me. As time progressed, his rude comments and belittlement directed toward me became almost constant. Threats were made that he could suspend me from my position for no reason or transfer me to another facility. I began to fear that I might lose my job even though I had seven years of experience at that time.

Common examples of the rude treatment displayed by Mr. Brian Clemens included ignoring me when I talked to him and demeaning my ethnicity by laughing at my accent when I spoke. On one occasion in 2003, Mr. Brian Clemens threw away my coffee and said that I brought roaches into the office. There were many incidents that I will not mention in this brief statement.

In September, 2003, I complained to Chief Lawrence Callahan through my union representative about unfair and racially motivated treatment by Mr. Brian Clemens. The events giving rise to that complaint at that time included being assigned on a permanent basis to the parking booth, being the only marshal required to obtain permission to use the bathroom and being harassed because of my language accent. When I was assigned to the parking booth, the air conditioning unit wasn't functioning for a period of several weeks. Mr. Brian Clemens would not permit me to step out of the booth to get fresh air, even in the extreme heat. Chief Callahan did not correct the situation.

In May, 2004, Mr. Brian Clemens changed my work schedule without any notice and without discussing the reason for the change. Mr. Clemens knew that this change would present a hardship for me and my family as I was responsible for picking up my young daughter after school. He knew that I had written permission from Chief Callahan to work hours that would permit me to transport my young daughter from school, and even though Mr. Clemens knew of my family needs, I again informed him of my family situation. Another Marshal with less seniority was assigned to work my previously assigned hours. This abrupt change in my work schedule occurred on the next working day after I complained to Mr. Clemens that he was not treating me fairly with respect to work assignments. Mr. Clemens angrily responded by saying "You are getting on my nerves" and then threatened to assign me to work wherever he wants. He also said, "Jean, you need to quit if you don't like this job." At that time, I was the

only black marshal assigned to 920 Broad Street.

At that same time in May, 2004, my personal papers that I kept in the Marshal's cabinet in the Court were stolen. Papers and records belonging to several other Marshals were in this same cabinet and were not disturbed. Included in these stolen personal papers was the written permission from Chief Callahan approving of my working hours for family reasons. I reported this theft and the other related suspicious circumstances to Mr. Brian Clemens. Mr. Clemens ordered me, the victim of the theft, to write an incident report. To my knowledge, this crime has not been investigated and it was not referred to the Connecticut State Police for handling as is the practice when there are instances of criminal activity in this facility.

I went to Chief Lawrence Callahan's office at 101 Lafayette Street to complain about Mr. Clemens, the recent change in my working hours, and the theft. Chief Callahan refused to shake my hand when I approached him. In my presence, Chief Callahan spoke on the telephone to Mr. Clemens. Chief Callahan then said to me that he wasn't going to listen to my complaint because he had another meeting to attend. The day after this, Mr. Brian Clemens called me into his office, closed the door, and told me that I was not to go to Chief Callahan unless he (Clemens) set up the appointment. Mr. Clemens said that the Chief doesn't have the time to talk about "nonsense".

In June, 2004, I wrote a letter of complaint about the mistreatment by Mr. Brian Clemens, including the change in hours of work and the theft of my personal papers, to Ms. Leigh Julian at the Human Resources Department of the Judicial Branch. Ms. Julian did not appropriately investigate this complaint. I later learned that she is the mother of a Judicial Marshal who worked as a subordinate to Mr. Clemens at that time and she never disclosed this conflict of interest to me. Even though Mr. Clemens received "supervisory counseling" for making an inappropriate and ethnically offensive statement, my complaint was not properly addressed. Mr. Clemens was retained in his supervisory position, and was promoted soon after this "supervisory counseling".

In July 2004, after Ms. Leigh Julian failed to address the ongoing problems, I wrote to Judge Joseph Pellegrino, Chief Court Administrator, asking him to look into the same issues that I brought to Ms. Julian's attention. Judge Pellegrino wrote to me and acknowledged receipt of my letter and informed me that he had directed Robert D. Coffey, Director of Human Resource Management Unit, and Richard L. Zaharek, Deputy Director of the Judicial Marshal Services, to investigate my complaint. I was never contacted by Mr. Coffey, Mr. Zaharek or anyone acting on their behalf.

In September, 2004, Mr. Brian Clemens involuntarily transferred me from the Juvenile Court assignment where I had worked for eight years and assigned me to work at the Superior Court at 95 Washington Street in Hartford. I tried to speak to Mr. Brian Clemens to ask him to reconsider the transfer order and he responded by ordering me not to talk to him about that matter any more. He also ordered me not to contact Chief Callahan about the transfer. He often referred to Chief Callahan as his personal friend.

I again wrote to Judge Pellegrino complaining about this involuntary change in my work assignment and notifying him that I had not been contacted by Mr. Coffey, Mr. Zaharek or anyone acting on their behalf. I received no reply to this letter.

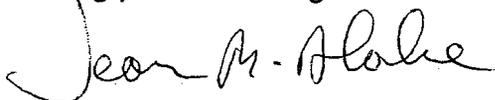
At this time, it became clear to me that nobody in the Judicial Branch was going to address this unfair treatment. I then filed a complaint with CHRO. Mr. Brian Clemens, now a Deputy Chief, has continued to harass me and treat me unfairly. He frequently changes my work assignments and hours of work.

On one occasion, I filed a union grievance alleging a long history of discriminatory treatment. On the very day that Chief Lawrence Callahan received my grievance, he denied it without any investigation. It is widely known among Judicial Marshals that in his prior position as an Executive Officer of the State Capital Police Department, Chief Callahan was disciplined for his involvement in allowing a discriminatory work environment. The public disclosure of the details of discrimination at the State Capital Police Department led to a reorganization of that police department.

I have filed a lawsuit against Deputy Chief Clemens, Chief Callahan and the Judicial Branch. That lawsuit is pending in federal court.

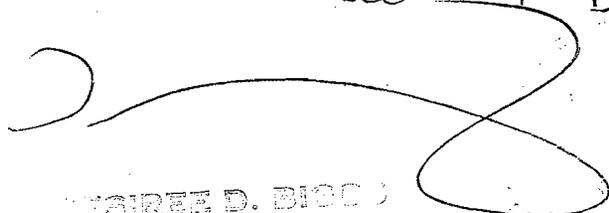
While the recent "Eboneesha" email incident might have been a surprise to some, it was not a surprise to me. Over the years, I have spoken frequently to minority Judicial employees who complain about unfair treatment like I have experienced. Most are afraid to speak out because they fear retaliation. Many minority Judicial Marshals are now complaining about the failure to promote minority marshals. I have since learned that Deputy Chief Clemens was one of the many supervisory officials who received this "Eboneesha" email that resulted in the resignation of Program Director Dennis Covini. It is worth noting that I wrote to Dennis Covini in the past applying to become a Field Training Officer once again and he never replied to my application.

Thank you for this opportunity to present these concerns. I hope that your efforts can bring positive changes to the working conditions in the Judicial Branch.



Jean Alabre  
Judicial Marshal  
March 16, 2007

Subscribed And Swore to before me on: 3-14-2007



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