

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA
INDIANAPOLIS DIVISION**

KRISTINE ESSER SLENTZ,)	
)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	
v.)	CAUSE NO: 1:16-cv-2568
)	
EMMIS COMMUNICATIONS)	
CORPORATION,)	
)	
Defendant.)	

COMPLAINT AND DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

1. Plaintiff, Kristine Esser Slentz (“Slentz”), brings this action against Defendant, Emmis Communications Corporation (“Defendant”), alleging that Defendant subjected her to sexual harassment in violation of her rights as secured by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (“Title VII”), 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.

PARTIES

- 2. Slentz has resided within the Southern District of Indiana at all relevant times.
- 3. Defendant is an Indiana corporation doing business within the Southern District of Indiana.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 4. This Court has jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-5(f)(3).
- 5. Slentz is an “employee” within the meaning of 42 U.S.C. § 2000e(b).
- 6. Defendant is an “employer” within the meaning of 42 U.S.C. § 2000e(b).
- 7. Slentz has satisfied her obligation to exhaust administrative remedies, having timely filed

a Charge of Discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on March 28, 2016. The EEOC issued a right-to-sue notice to Slentz on July 21, 2016. Slentz now timely files this Complaint.

8. Venue is proper in this Court because Slentz's cause of action arose in Indianapolis, Indiana, which is located in the Southern District of Indiana, Indianapolis Division.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

9. Defendant hired Slentz in or around October 2014 as a Digital Media Brand Manager.
10. In May 2015, Slentz was promoted to Digital Content Manager.
11. Slentz's work performance met Defendant's reasonable expectations at all relevant times.
12. Slentz's job responsibilities included running social media accounts, and creating branding content and website material for Defendant's sports radio station, "1070 the Fan."
13. In March 2015, one of Defendant's radio producers with the Fan, Tony Donahue ("Donahue"), a 26 or 27 year-old male, told Slentz that he googled her name and found an article that she had published two years prior on the website "Huffington Post" about bi-sexual orientation.
14. Donahue told Slentz that he found the article "really interesting."
15. Donahue talked about the article with almost everyone else who worked on their floor, and made many jokes and comments about it, many of which were derogatory.
16. Slentz learned that Donahue was publicizing the article around the office when another female co-worker told her that Donahue was making gay jokes and that she (the co-worker) was offended by his behavior.

17. Both before and after finding Slentz's article, Donahue sent text messages to Slentz after hours, sometimes after midnight, complaining about her work performance, but the frequency increased considerably afterward.
18. Slentz reported Donahue's conduct to her supervisor, Larry Downes ("Downes"), who discussed the complaint with a Human Resources representative, Brooke Gross ("Gross").
19. Donahue was given a written reprimand, and was instructed to stop discussing Slentz's sexual orientation and to stop complaining about Slentz's work performance and texting her at night.
20. In May 2015, Downes was laid off, after which Donahue again began complaining about Slentz's work performance.
21. Donahue's complaints about Slentz increased in frequency during June and July.
22. Donahue's criticisms included calling Slentz "stupid" and a "bitch."
23. Donahue criticized Slentz's performance to most of the office.
24. Slentz complained about Donahue's behavior with Gross again in August 2015.
25. After this meeting, Gross spoke with other employees, confirmed Slentz's allegations, and met with Donahue and his superiors to instruct him to stop.
26. Donahue admitted the allegations and agreed to stop, but he was not written up.
27. In May 2015 at the Indianapolis 500, another of Defendant's radio producers for the Fan, Kyle Knezevich, made sexual advances toward Slentz, telling her that he was "not a homewrecker" (he knew that Slentz was in a long-term relationship), but "he would," and that she was "really sexy."

28. Slentz declined Knezevich's advances.
29. After Slentz declined his advances, Knezevich joined Donahue in complaining about her performance, and escalated the tone and frequency of his complaints with Donahue.
30. Slentz complained to her supervisor, Jordyn Byington ("Byington") about Knezevich's conduct.
31. In October 2015, Slentz collaborated with Byington and Donahue on an article about the Indianapolis Colts for the Fan's website, which Donahue promoted on his Twitter account.
32. Despite Donahue's input on and promotion of the article, the station's three producers, including Donahue and Knezevich, soon began complaining about the article.
33. Not long after this incident, in mid-November 2015, Slentz believed she could no longer perform her job responsibilities due to the frequent harassment and criticism, primarily from Donahue and Knezevich, and tendered her resignation.
34. Slentz was asked to stay on until the end of the year, which she agreed to and left on December 30, 2015.
35. From March 2015 through December 2015, Defendant's employees, including Donahue and Knezevich, created a hostile work environment for Slentz based on her sex.
36. The harassment was unwelcome and offensive to Slentz.
37. The harassing conduct was severe and pervasive and sufficiently altered the terms and conditions of Slentz's employment.
38. Slentz reported the discriminatory conduct to Defendant's management on multiple occasions, but Defendant failed to take adequate steps to respond to her complaints.

39. Slentz has been and continues to be harmed by the actions of Defendant and its employees.
40. Defendant's actions were intentional, willful, and done in reckless disregard of her rights as protected by Title VII.

REQUESTED RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff Kristine Esser Slentz, by counsel, respectfully request that this Court find for her and Order that Defendant:

1. Pay compensatory and punitive damages to Slentz;
2. Pay pre- and post-judgment interest to Slentz;
3. Pay Slentz's attorney fees and costs in litigating this action; and
4. Provide to Slentz any and all other legal and equitable remedies this Court find appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,

s/ John H. Haskin

John H. Haskin, Attorney No. 7576-49

s/ Samuel M. Adams

Samuel M. Adams, Attorney No. 24387-49

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff, Kristine Esser Slentz, by counsel, respectfully requests a jury trial for all issues deemed triable.

Respectfully submitted,

s/ John H. Haskin

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