

## RACE HARASSMENT CASE AGAINST COMCAST SETTLES

Class Counsel, who represent approximately three hundred and eighty-five current and former African-American employees of Comcast's facility located at 721 E. 112<sup>th</sup> Street, in Chicago, Illinois, announce that the parties have reached a settlement resolving the ongoing race discrimination litigation, *Brand et al. v. Comcast*, 11-cv-8471. The class action, which was originally filed on November 28, 2011, claimed that Comcast discriminated against African-American employees based on their race by allegedly maintaining a hostile work environment at its 112<sup>th</sup> Street facility. Judge Matthew F. Kennelly of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division granted class certification on July 5, 2014, and appointed as Class Counsel Noelle Brennan and Leah M. Farmer of Noelle Brennan & Associates, Ltd., and Randall D. Schmidt of the Edwin F. Mandel Legal Aid Clinic of the University of Chicago Law School. The Court certified a hostile work environment class that included all current and former African-American employees employed by Comcast at its 112<sup>th</sup> Street facility at any time on or after January 1, 2005, excluding some supervisors and managers.

In the case, Plaintiffs alleged that Comcast created a hostile work environment by referring to African-American employees in a racially derogatory manner, forcing 112<sup>th</sup> Street employees to work in a substandard facility, and denying 112<sup>th</sup> Street employees the same quality of equipment and tools afforded to Comcast facilities that do not have majority African-American employees. Plaintiffs also claimed that the company did not adequately respond to repeated complaints by African-American

employees about the workplace. Comcast's 112<sup>th</sup> Street facility services Comcast's customers on the South side of Chicago. Comcast denied those allegations.

In an effort to avoid protracted litigation, the parties agreed to a settlement which is set for a preliminary approval hearing on March 3, 2016. Under the terms of the proposed settlement Comcast has agreed to pay \$7.21 million to resolve the racially hostile work environment claims of class members. In addition to the monetary relief, Comcast has agreed to programmatic relief including providing additional training to supervisors and managers at the 112<sup>th</sup> Street facility regarding the handling of discrimination complaints.

Class Counsel are satisfied with the settlement. They believe that the settlement is in the best interest of Comcast's African-American workers at the 112<sup>th</sup> Street facility and Comcast.

As part of the settlement agreement, Comcast admitted no wrongdoing in the matter. Comcast settled the case in an effort to avoid the expense and uncertainty of continued litigation and put the matter behind it so that it could focus on its business and employees.

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