Gay Civil Rights Official Sues State for $5 Million

Gerry Gomez, a gay man formerly employed as the Civil Rights Manager for the California Department of Health Services, has filed a $5 million claim against Health Services for "deprivation of his civil rights." Gomez' multi-million dollar claim was filed last week with the State Board of Control to compensate Gomez for denial of his civil rights, damage to his professional reputation and stress.

The lawsuit, filed under the U.S. Civil Rights Acts of 1866 and 1871, seeks an unspecified amount of monetary damages and demands that Health Services officials stop violating an agreement they signed in 1984 when the same agency was charged with illegal discrimination against Gomez.

Gomez' attorney appeared before the State Personnel Board to argue that Gomez' recent demotion was unjustified retaliation.

Until November, he was the Civil Rights Manager for the Department of Health Services. He was demoted to an analyst position.

Gomez is represented by Car­oly Langenkamp, a Sacramento civil rights attorney.

The California State Employees Association, a local of Service Employees International Union, has hired Langenkamp to represent Gomez.

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"We are committed to seeking justice for Gerry Gomez," said Patrick J. Monahan, president of CSEA.

This is one of the most outrageous examples of prejudice and unlawful behavior by state officials this union has seen in a long time," added Monahan.

The Board of Control claim names several Health Services officials including Dr. Kenneth Kizer, department director; Stanley Sabanski, chief deputy director; and others.

According to Langenkamp, Gomez' recent demotion was the latest in a long series of discriminatory actions taken against him by Health Services managers since they hired him in September of 1982.

Immediately after hiring him, they tried to recind the job offer. One manager told Gomez to "get down on your knees and pray with me," about Gomez' homosexuality.

Top department officials told him to put a report about discrimination problems in the department in a different format to paint a more positive picture of the department's personnel situation.

Department investigators have followed him, watched his home and even searched through his trash to find evidence against him.

Gomez' case has raised questions about the purposes of Health Services officials in dismissing him from the Civil Rights Manager job.

For the next several months, Corrections officials questioned him, investigated him, laughed at him, and finally threatened to terminate him.

Langenkamp charged Corrections officials with illegal discrimination against Gomez and won a settlement involving $25,000 and a promise of changes at Correction.

In the fall of 1982, Gomez left Correction for a job as a supervisor of fraud investigators with Health Services.

Gomez' four years with Health Services have been filled with numerous incidents, some obvious and some covert, which demonstrate a continuing pattern of harassment related to his orientation.

When he was demoted this past November, his supervisor gave him no work assignments and no work. He was told to sit in an empty conference room.

For 10 weeks he was given no work to do. Ironically, Gomez' performance record during his 10 years of state employment has been satisfactory, often exemplary.

Through all the harassment and discrimination of the past five years, no punitive actions had ever been taken against him.

Then Health Services demoted him in November.

"That was a mistake," said Langenkamp.

A leading Gay Republican group has asked Gov. Deukmejian if Gomez was demoted to put an end to his documentation of discrimination against gay and lesbian state employees.

We concluded that by 1991, there will be a total of 3,400 AIDS cases and 22,000 cases of ARC diagnosed within the county. The medical costs to care for these individuals in 1991 will be approximately $144 million. Cumulative costs are much greater.

Over the last three years, there has been a two-fold annual increase in the number of reported AIDS cases. However, in developing our projection of 3,400 AIDS cases by 1991, we compared our data with other estimates used around the country and decided to use an annual factor of 1.8. This factor may be low for a number of reasons, including the possible increased rate of conversion from subclinical infection to AIDS, and the Centers for Disease Control's expected broadening of the clinical definition of AIDS.

Our estimates of medical costs are based on 23 hospital days/year, with the average AIDS patient living two years after diagnosis. In addition to hospital days, AIDS patients are estimated to require 20 outpatient visits/year. We estimated that ARC patients will require the same amount of outpatient care. Although we know that ARC patients are hospitalized, we did not include their hospital costs as hospital data is not available for them.

Using a two year estimate of the life expectancy of AIDS patients and assuming a 5 percent rate of hospitalization costs in the year 1991 are estimated to be $86 million. Outpatient medical costs for AIDS and ARC patients in 1991 are estimated to be $38 million, for a total of $124 million.

The Task Force estimated that approximately one-third of the county's AIDS patients may seek care at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (SCVMC). As of 1/16/87, 22 percent of the AIDS patients reported to the County Health Services.
Physicians oppose proposed mandatory HIV antibody testing

The San Francisco Federal proposals calling for mandatory HIV testing have met with vigorous opposition by a national organization of physicians and a consortium of patients with AIDS and HIV infection.

Moreover, the proposal do not appear to meet any reasonable standard of efficacy in controlling the spread of HIV infection.

Among the major points of opposition stressed by Dr. Ostrow were:

1. The mandatory testing proposal was based on the assumption that persons seeking medical care have been adequately informed of all aspects of their medical condition. However, there are no studies to support this assumption.

2. The proposal imposes a form of population screening and counseling on all medical and counseling services and on those individuals. This will mandate that medical offices inform all patients of their HIV status and require them to be counseled.

3. The proposal may encourage discrimination against AIDS and HIV seropositive individuals seeking medical care.

4. The proposal is not only ethically and legally unsound but also unfunded and impractical.

5. The proposal is poorly funded and would not cover the costs of the testing.

6. The proposal does not provide for adequate training of personnel to carry out the testing.

7. The proposal does not provide for adequate counseling of persons who test positive.

8. The proposal does not provide for adequate confidentiality of test results.

9. The proposal does not provide for adequate access to medical care and counseling services for persons who test positive.

10. The proposal does not provide for adequate funding of the testing.

Kovalich shuns HTG meeting

by Bob Carras

Jean Kovalich, the controversial lesbian who is suing the Department of Defense for anti-gay discrimination, was the guest speaker at the February 11 meeting of the High Tech Gays (HTG). After accepting an invitation to speak, she changed her mind and canceled the meeting the next day.

Tish Carras, a public advocate for AIDS groups, participated in the discussion that followed the cancellation. In advance of the meeting, Dr. Ostrow, the director of the AIDS Mode,
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Dear Reader:

On a Sunday afternoon at the Lake Lounge in Oakland’s Lake Merritt District, the topic of a presidential address to the United States in the era of conversations centered around President’s Day holiday.

Dear Editor:

I write to you, as a member of the American Psychological Association, to express my concern about the recent cautious language used in discussions regarding mental health and anxiety disorders.

President’s Day

Dear Editor:

On President’s Day, I want to express my gratitude for the opportunity to write about the importance of mental health awareness.

Spaghetti Feed

by Ted Sahl

A spaghetti feed at the Landmark on February 15 fed lots of hungry people. The food was really 

"Sucker for a Benefit"

by Ted Sahl

Although we have been in love and have been helping others, there is so much work to be done. It is important for each of us to contribute to the fight against poverty and inequality worldwide. We should focus on the needs of those who are most marginalized and vulnerable, ensuring that our efforts are guided by justice and compassion. Let us come together to make a difference.

Counselor’s Corner

Anxiety

by Maia Hint, PAD

Anxiety is a feeling of dread and apprehension. It is different from simple worry in that the symptoms are more extreme, and sometimes have no apparent cause. Everyone is subject to some anxiety, but certain individuals develop persistent, painful feelings of anxiety which cause great discomfort. Anxiety can be acute or chronic. Today, in the fast-paced, stressful environment of Silicon Valley, I am seeing an increase of acute anxiety, or ‘anxiety attacks’ in my clients.

An anxiety attack may occur “out of the blue” with no apparent precipitating event. A person may be climbing along 5 o’clock traffic, or awaking from a sound sleep, and suddenly experience extreme anxiety for known reason. Symptoms often include pounding of the heart, difficulty breathing, hyperventilating, perspiring, trembling, and dizziness. At the peak of the anxiety attack, the person feels as if they are thrown into a full-scale panic, and may experience feelings of suffocation and the feeling that ‘s/he is going to die’ or that some horrible disaster is going to descend upon him or her. Left alone, an anxiety attack generally subsides in a few minutes. However, the person often becomes so afraid of what is happening that s/he rushes to the hospital, there to be told that nothing is wrong.

There is so much warmth and love overflowing, words just can’t describe it. It was a Community Awareness Week, and the theme was the importance of the American Foundation Against Suicide (AFAS). The group of over 100 volunteers, women, men, and children, gave up their time to provide support, food, rides, even helping out. The person has failed to learn the necessary skills for coping with life’s problems, such as appropriate assertiveness and stress reduction skills.

This is little consolation to the sufferer, but the fact is that the individual’s illness may have an impact on those around them, and simply allows the unpleasantness to pass through one’s body until the Mole.

Last Chance to Join Local Women’s Group in Willow

by Dotty Calabrese

Right after the deadline for this column, Dotty Calabrese announced that the Slightly Older Lesbians (SOL) is now accepting new members. They plan to have their first meeting May 1-10. For more information, call Dotty immediately 411-968-1961

Happy Anniversary

by Ted Sahl

The celebration of their second anniversary, Michael and Jeffrey held a party at the Landmark on February 10. Lots of people joined in the celebration - presents ranged from the pans from their special friends and a great time was had by all. You should’ve been there! Photo by Ted Sahl
AIDS education is provided primarily through the Santa Clara County AIDS Project. As the community’s awareness of AIDS has increased, so have services provided. The Health Department is unable to meet the needs of the community due to the lack of adequate funding for the Health Department’s services and to pay for sufficient staff.

AIDS education is required that services not be denied individuals with AIDS (AIDS patients). This is consistent with the San Francisco Department of Health’s report, "AIDS and the need for education and prevention: Educational planning in the workplace. We recommend that additional youth education, women and AIDS, clinic services, and AIDS

Contract agencies will increase. We investigated programs and needs.

To meet the needs of County and the community, the Health Department has also been advocating that more services be provided to AIDS (AIDS patients). This includes providing services that require that services not be denied individuals with AIDS (AIDS patients). This is consistent with the San Francisco Department of Health’s report, "AIDS and the need for education and prevention: Educational planning in the workplace. We recommend that additional youth education, women and AIDS, clinic services, and AIDS

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Oscar Contest!

The nominations have been made and on March 30th, 1987 the coveted statues will be presented. Which ones are winners? Our Projects, Incorporated.

1. All entries must be on original form; photo copies will not be accepted.
2. One entry per reader.
3. Entries must be postmarked by midnight, Friday, March 27.
4. Winners will be announced in the April 8th Issue of our paper.

Love Story

The Sacramento Union, the city's conservative newspaper, has been criticized in a controversy over AIDS education and services. They were told they would not get any AIDS education or services. When they were told they would get none, they were told to get AIDS education or services. Finally, they were told that they would get AIDS education or services, which was agreed to by the Sacramento City Council.

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Silver Fox's Peachy Night

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SOUTH BAY AREA
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**NOTE:** All telephone numbers are Code 408, except as noted.

### Nonprofit Organizations

**Fire deFrank Lesbian/Gay Community Center:**
- 1040 Park Ave, San Jose, CA 95126. Next deadline: March 4

**Nonprofit Organizations / Area Code 408**:
- Nonprofit leases / calendar listings to *Our Paper*, 973 Park Avenue, San Jose, CA 95112.
- Next deadline: March 12, 20: 600 words or less; calendar deadlines: 45 days before event.

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### Areas of Interest

- **February 19:**
  - **Support Group:** Jan 26th: Free Support Group for Men and Women. Call 293-AGAY for further information. Call 293-9372.
  - **Support Group:** Jan 29th: Nonprofit Group General Meeting and Discussion Group. Meet at 7:30 pm at the Billy DeFrank Lesbian/Gay Community Center, 1040 Park Ave, San Jose, CA 95112. For additional information, call 293-9372.
  - **Support Group:** Feb 2nd: 87 Dance Company presents **A Little Broadway Showcase** at 8 pm. The show includes solo acts and refreshments. 5-8 pm, 2953 Lincoln Ave, San Jose. For further information call 293-9372.
  - **Support Group:** Feb 2nd: 87 Dance Company: Showcasing the choreography of the Village. 6-8 pm at the Santa Cruz Mountains near the Hunter Museum. Reservations 866-1408.
  - **Support Group:** Feb 2nd: National AIDS Foundation at the Museum University. For reservations call 293-9372.

- **February 20:**
  - **Support Group:** 87 Dance Company: Showcasing the choreography of the Village. 5-8 pm, 2953 Lincoln Ave, San Jose. For further information call 293-9372.

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### Local Events

**TICKETS**
- **Ticket Information:** Contact the Fire deFrank Lesbian/Gay Community Center, 1040 Park Ave, San Jose, CA 95112. For information call 293-9372.

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### Artists

- **March 6:** San Jose Poetry Center: Meets 2 pm every Sunday at 305 San Carlos St, Palo Alto. For more information call Nancy or Mitzi 293-9372.

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### Clubs

- **March 6:** San Jose Poetry Center: Meets 2 pm every Sunday at 305 San Carlos St, Palo Alto. For more information call Nancy or Mitzi 293-9372.

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### Theater

- **March 6:** San Jose Poetry Center: Meets 2 pm every Sunday at 305 San Carlos St, Palo Alto. For more information call Nancy or Mitzi 293-9372.
Call (415) 976-RODS
FIND DOLLARS PLUS TOLL IF NO CALLERS MUST BE 18 YEARS OLD.

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at other than peak hours, we will refund the $2.00 charge. Just send
us a copy of your phone bill with the call underlined to:
Network, P.O. Box 1336, San Francisco, CA 94101.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Randy West