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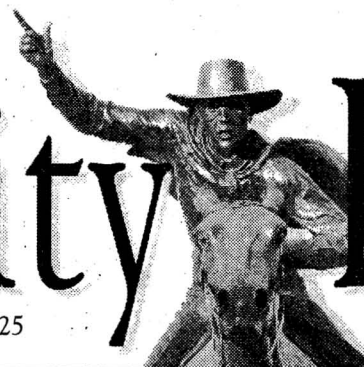
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Floyd drops latest lawsuit against law school

THROWN OUT: Former Associate Dean Daisy Floyd decides to withdraw suit against Law School Dean Huffman.

By Michael Castellon/*The University Daily*

A former associate dean of Texas Tech's School of Law announced plans late Tuesday to voluntarily withdraw a lawsuit that alleged the university engaged in system-wide practices of discrimination, and then retaliated against her for speaking out against it.

In a lawsuit filed in May 2002, Tech law professor and former associate dean Daisy Floyd alleged the university retaliated against her in the form of salary-withholdings and constructively terminated her from her posi-

tion as associate dean following a botched search for former Dean Frank Newton's replacement in 2001.

Also among the evidence of alleged sexual discrimination at the university, according to the suit, is a dismal record of administrative appointments that have gone primarily to white males.

Mark Perlmutter, Floyd's attorney, said the pair planned to file a notice of non-suit late Tuesday, which would withdrawal the lawsuit,

but stressed that the university has not done anything to address Floyd's allegations.

"The university hasn't addressed anything," he said. "Texas Tech could still profit by looking at its integrity, particularly as it relates to (administrative) appointments and diversity."

Floyd did not immediately respond to requests seeking comment on the suit.

Perlmutter said Floyd's decision to withdraw the suit was based in part on a decision to resign from the university and accept an appointment to Mercer University's School of Law, where she will serve as dean after the spring semester. Her appointment will begin this summer.

"At this point, Daisy doesn't have any

more concerns other than doing her job at Mercer," he said. "All her energy needs to be devoted to that."

The suit also alleged current Dean of Tech's School of Law Gen. Walter Huffman subsequently retaliated against her after her initial complaint was made public. Floyd alleged "Huffman's visible actions and attitudes against (Floyd) have chilled the discussion of issues related to discrimination and diversity by faculty, students and staff within the law school and created a climate of fear."

Tech General Counsel Pat Campbell said the university maintains Floyd's allegations

are without merit, and that discrimination was not a factor in the 2001 dean selection process, and stopped short of calling the withdrawal of the suit a victory for the university.

"We didn't get to try our case in front of a judge or jury, and that's what I would have considered a victory," he said.

Floyd's suit claims Huffman failed to nominate her for the Chancellor Excellence in Teaching Award in 2002, despite qualifications and experience that qualified her. Floyd also alleges she failed to receive an endowed



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professorship for which she was nominated as the result of Huffman's repeated criticism of her.

Following Floyd's initial complaints, Huffman publicly committed to hire an outside consultant to investigate claims of a hostile environment toward women and minorities at Tech.

The lawsuit, which sought unspecified damages, alleged that the consultant was "deeply connected to the university" and that "there was no protection offered to untenured faculty members or staff against possible retaliation as a result of speaking to the consultant."

When reached early Tuesday before news of the suits dismissal was

announced, Huffman declined to comment on the allegations. He did not return phone calls late Tuesday seeking comment on the withdrawal of the suit.

In her lawsuit, Floyd alleged Huffman has since caused damage to her personal and professional reputation by engaging "in gender stereotyping in response to her allegations, stating that she is acting out of irrational emotional reaction rather than in response to rational analysis of facts indicating discrimination."

The suit also called to attention the university's failure "to acknowledge the need for improvement not address the institutional factors that perpetuate the disparity in public statement and its conduct."

Floyd did not seek contract negotiations with Tech after learning of the offer at Mercer, Perlmutter said.