

yielded a \$20,000 settlement, the *New York Times* reports. She initially had sought \$10 million in compensatory and punitive damages.

The deal was struck in September, and the terms were kept secret. But a federal judge in Manhattan made the records public Oct. 12 after requests were submitted by the *New York Times*, the *Daily News* and the *New York Post*.

Bryant said other officers and her supervisors mocked her after she exchanged vows with a colleague, Marilyn Trapanotto, in 1997 in Central Park. She had been assigned to the 42nd Precinct station house in the Bronx.

Bryant complained to the department's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, which didn't follow up on her claims, according to the testimony of investigator Sandra Williams. Judge Lewis A. Kaplan sharply criticized the agency for failing to look into the matter adequately.

Bryant's lawyers also will receive \$30,000 in fees, which brings the total value of the settlement to \$50,000. The records also show she resigned immediately from the department as part of the deal.

A school district is being sued for \$10 million for failing to prevent years of torment aimed at a gay student, *The Associated Press* reports Oct. 18.

The Shenendehowa school board since has rewritten its anti-harassment code to address sexual orientation along with race, gender and religion. But because the alleged incidents occurred before the policy change, the civil rights lawsuit contends the district is liable.

Will Kehrig and his parents have turned down media interviews, saying they don't want publicity, but attorney Michael Weisberg said legal action—and financial penalty—could be a wake-up call for other districts as they draw these policies up. "Aside from a matter of principle, there is the issue that because of the school district's mishandling of the event, this family was damaged."

Weisberg said a 1996 case set this precedent. A Wisconsin school district paid Jamie Nabozny \$900,000 after a federal jury found three administrators liable for anti-gay violence against him.

According to the Kehrig lawsuit, he suffered from the time he admitted he was gay as a junior high school student in 1997 through 1999, when he left for private school. Classmates allegedly sneered, shoved him and shouted increasingly obscene and graphic epithets, even within plain view of hall monitors.

It escalated during Kehrig's first month of high school, when he retaliated against the harassment by hitting a student with a stick. He was suspended for four months, a punishment the lawsuit claims was unfair.

"School districts have basically let the boys fend for themselves, and then when boys respond the way they know how to, they get in trouble for it," Weisberg said. He added that if Kehrig was black or female, the punishments would have been doled out differently.

CALIFORNIA

A demonstration at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation has led to battery charges being filed against two members of

ACT UP San Francisco, the *San Francisco Examiner* reports.

According to police spokesman Sherman Ackerson, the pair entered the offices about noon Oct. 23, then began throwing furniture and scattering files "like autumn leaves." A security guard tried to intervene, he said, and was assaulted.

Betty Best, 40, and Ronnie Burk, 45, were protesting an advertisement the foundation placed about the recent rise in new HIV infections among gay men, according to ACT UP/SF member David Pasquarelli. The chapter does not think HIV causes AIDS.

Burk and other members of ACT UP/SF also are facing criminal and civil charges stemming from an April disruption of an AIDS education meeting. Battery charges against Pasquarelli and another man also are pending in connection with objects thrown at the city's health director in August.



A boy abducted by his grandfather who accused the 10-year-old's caretakers of promoting a gay lifestyle has been returned to the couple, *The Associated Press* reports.

Relatives in Pennsylvania surrendered Miguel Washington to authorities Oct. 20 after a two-week search. The boy returned to the home of his uncle, Paul Washington Jr., and Timothy Forrester on Oct. 22.

"Right now, he's really happy to be home," Washington Jr. said. "We're absolutely elated. Our family is united again."

An attorney for Paul Washington Sr. and Sandra Washington, Miguel's grandparents and Washington Jr.'s parents, said his clients intend to pursue custody. A hearing was scheduled for December.

"My clients don't feel that's the best home for him," Bill Hence Jr. said. "I'm very disappointed in the agencies that were supposed to be protecting the rights of the child."

Miguel was born to Angelena Washington, the younger Washington's mentally disabled sister, who was impregnated while living in an assisted-care facility. At the time, family members informally agreed to have him raised by Washington Jr., a hardware store salesman, and Forrester, a teacher.

Riverside County Deputy District Attorney Tex Ritter said his office had not decided whether charges will be filed in the abduction. The elder Washington picked up Miguel for an overnight fishing trip Oct. 6 and never brought him back, his son said.

Instead, Washington and Forrester received a letter from a Los Angeles law firm Oct. 7 stating that Miguel had been removed from their home and accusing the pair of "actively promoting or influencing a gay lifestyle for the minor." The correspondence cited the boy's participation in ballet and a "gay art class" instead of baseball as one reason for the abduction.

Compiled by Copy Editor JIM RADOSTA, who can be reached at jim@justout.com.

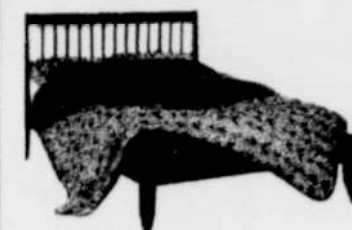
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