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The Portland Observer

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LOCAL NEWS

“Shopping While Black”

Largest Race Discrimination Verdict in Oregon History

AP-DDA Multnomah County grand jury has ordered Walmart to pay \$4.4 million in damages to a man who sued the store, saying he was racially profiled and harassed by a Walmart employee at a Portland, Oregon, area store in 2020.

Michael Mangum, who was 59 at the time, visited the Walmart in Wood Village on March 26, 2020, to buy a light bulb for his refrigerator. After Mangum arrived, he noticed store employee Joe Williams watching him as he shopped. Williams told Mangum to leave the store, but Mangum refused, saying he'd done nothing wrong.

According to Mangum's lawyers, deputies from the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office responded and "refused to take action against Mangum." The lawyers said deputies made that decision based on Williams' "shifting explanations" for the reason he called and because of his "reputation for making false



Michael Mangum and his lawyer, Greg Kafoury

reports to police."

Sheriff's Sergeant Bryan White and another deputy met with the director of the Walmart and the assistant manager and explained that deputies had noticed a "pattern of behavior" in which Williams would call police to report "dangerous active situations, such as customers physically assaulting him or other employees," that were not happening.

Mangum filed the lawsuit against Walmart for negligent retention and action against person who summons police with im-

proper intent.

"He lives the same message of self-respect that he teaches to young people, 'stand up for yourself when you know you're right,'" Mangum's trial lawyer, Greg Kafoury, said in a statement. "Because of his courage, we were able to show the jury an unconscionable failure of responsibility by the world's largest corporation."

Walmart spokesperson Randy Hargrove called into question some of the claims and said Walmart considers the verdict "excessive."

Make a Difference in the Life of a Child

Foster parents in need in the Portland Metro Area

Boys & Girls Aid is seeking new foster parents in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties to serve youth in our care. The COVID-19 pandemic affected the number of families available to provide foster care, the results of which Boys & Girls Aid is still recovering from. Existing foster parents were strained with providing extra supervision and assisting with virtual schooling, and potential foster parents were hesitant to start during the pandemic.

Statewide, anywhere from 100-200 children each night do not have a long-term placement.

Now, Boys & Girls Aid needs 15 more families to provide full-time foster care across its three programs, in addition to families who can serve as relief care a few days a month.

Boys & Girls Aid foster parents receive comprehensive training and certification, access to a 24/7 support helpline and a generous monthly stipend of \$1,200-\$3,500



PHOTO COURTESY OF BOYS&GIRLSAID.COM

per month. Anyone who is passionate about helping youth and who has empathy for the challenges they've been through can be a foster parent.

"If you have the heart for kids who've had a tough start in their lives and want to provide a stable and loving environment for a child to grow, thrive, and learn, we need you," said Katie Matten, Outreach & Certification Specialist. "Your kindness, compassion, and motivation to make a difference can change the life of a youth in foster care. They need you."

Foster parents must be at least

21 years old, be able to pass a background check and have a separate bedroom in the home for foster youth. Single providers are eligible to foster, and do not need to be part of a couple. Additional minimum qualifications to foster with Boys & Girls Aid can be found at www.boysandgirlsaid.org/faq.

Interested parties can attend an online information session to learn more about fostering. Boys & Girls Aid is hosting sessions Tuesday, September 13 at 12:00 pm and Wednesday, September 28 at 5:00 pm.