

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

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CONTACT: Katherine Bissell
(212) 748-8512
Larry Pincus
(212) 748-8406
TTY: (212) 748-8399

EEOC SETTLES "GLASS CEILING" SUIT FOR \$782,000 AGAINST LANDIS PLASTICS, INC.

SYRACUSE, NY -- The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) today announced a \$782,000 settlement of a sex discrimination lawsuit against Landis Plastics, Inc. (LPI), an industrial manufacturer with plants in New York, Illinois and Indiana, on behalf of a class of 30 female employees who were denied jobs or promotions at the company's operating plant in Solvay, N.Y.

"This important settlement opens doors to women by shattering an illegal glass ceiling which for years prevented promotional opportunities to female workers due to their gender," said EEOC Chairwoman Ida L. Castro. "Women in the workplace must be judged strictly on their ability to do the job, and not on ill-founded stereotypes that block their upward mobility."

The lawsuit and Consent Decree were filed simultaneously in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of New York under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The suit charged LPI with discriminating against women on the basis of gender in the assignment of jobs, in promotions and in other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. The complaint was based upon charges filed by Beverly Martin and Kathy Saumier, who alleged that women who sought entry level jobs were excluded from higher paying Material Handler positions and instead placed in lower paid Packer jobs. They also alleged that women were denied promotional opportunities because of their sex.

In addition to providing monetary relief to the two charging parties, the Consent Decree provides for the establishment of a monetary claim fund to compensate other victims of discrimination. All potential claimants will be notified of the settlement and given an opportunity to apply for monetary relief. All money in the claims fund will be allocated to victims of discrimination. Eligible claimants are those individuals who were employed by Landis between December 1994 and the Court's approval of the Consent Decree, and who submit credible evidence that, subsequent to December 1994, they were subjected to sex discrimination.

"This is a significant resolution because of the amount of the compensation to victims of discrimination and because the terms of the settlement ensure that women who work at Landis Plastics will be given greater opportunities in the future," said Spencer H. Lewis, Director of EEOC's New York District Office.

In addition to enforcing Title VII, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin, EEOC enforces the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; the Equal Pay Act; Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits employment discrimination against people with disabilities in the private sector and state and local governments; prohibitions against discrimination affecting individuals with disabilities in the federal government; and sections of the Civil Rights Act of 1991. Further information about the Commission is available on the agency's Web site at www.eeoc.gov.

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