
DEA Settles Employment Discrimination Lawsuit with WilmerHale Client

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WilmerHale reached an agreement with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to settle an employment discrimination and retaliation lawsuit on behalf of pro bono client, Mary Buckley. This case arose out of the longstanding Segar litigation, in which a class of African-American DEA agents, represented by WilmerHale, challenged racial discrimination in several aspects of their employment.

Ms. Buckley, a member of the *Segar* class, alleged the DEA denied her promotions, lowered her annual performance evaluation, and transferred her from headquarters to a field office because of her race and gender, and in retaliation for engaging in protected activities as a member of the Segar class. In 2006, the firm represented Ms. Buckley at a five-day trial before Judge Ellis in the Eastern District of Virginia. At trial, the district court granted the DEA's Rule 50 motion in part, dismissing two of Ms. Buckley's retaliation claims. The jury returned a verdict for the DEA on all remaining claims. WilmerHale appealed, arguing to the Fourth Circuit, and on August 20, 2008, in a unanimous opinion authored by Judge King, the court ruled in our favor, vacating the district court's judgment and remanding the case for a new trial. After the issuance of the opinion, the DEA agreed to settle the lawsuit with Ms. Buckley.

Paul Wolfson and Danielle Conley represented Ms. Buckley in the pro bono case.