

Chairman Chaffetz, Ranking member, Cummings and other distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit my written testimony.

My name is Deborah Lamberty and I was hired in 1991 by USEPA, Region 5 under Superior Academic Achievement as a Program Analyst for the Policy Coordination and Communications Branch (PCCB) in the Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO). I began training to work on the GLNPO's inaugural web sites in 1995. Web site development and graphic design became my primary work from approximately that time through 2011. I currently work in the Office of External Communications in the Office of the Regional Administrator. I am a Public Affairs Specialist, supposedly working on web development and editing, with collateral duties as an EEO counselor.

Prelude

It was in March of 2011 that I became involved in the exposure of a sexual harassment cover-up within the GLNPO. At that time, I had been working in the Monitoring Indicators and Reporting Branch (MIRB), reporting to the MIRB Chief, Paul Horvatin. I firmly believe I am continuously being punished for my role in exposing a long-standing practice of sexual harassment on the part of an older male scientist that had gone on for the better part of a decade with the full knowledge of the managers of the division and involved many young female interns in their early to mid twenties. That punishment has included having my primary duties stripped away from me, effectively being marginalized and ignored by the managers who had permitted the sexual harassment to occur until they were confronted by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) through an investigation in which I was instrumental in initiating. The punitive radius resulting from bringing this outrageous matter to light is long, and, I fell within it

It was at that time that the Monitoring and Indicators Branch (MIRB) secretary told me that a young female intern was having an issue. She thought that because I was an American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), Local 704 Union steward, that I might be able to help the young intern with her issue. Although she didn't explain the details, she felt that it was important for me to visit with the young intern and offer her some help. I found her in her cubicle. As I sat down, I explained that our secretary was worried about her, but that she didn't tell me why. I went on to say that she thought, in my role as a union steward, I could help her. It was then that this tense and frustrated young woman explained that she was receiving unwanted sexual attention for some time from her mentor, an older male scientist named Paul Bertram. He began his harassment by physically touching her back, shoulder, or leg; he then escalated to hugging until one day he kissed her. At the time, he was 62 and she was 24. She became so uncomfortable and freaked out, that she decided to inform our supervisor, Paul Horvatin. Despite reporting the matter to him, both verbally and in writing, he did nothing, escalating the tension she felt. She continued to be required to work on the same floor with this scientist and to interact with him on a daily basis. His sexual harassment of her continued in the form of winks and blown kisses. She was upset and extremely frustrated. I was stunned. Although I had experienced Mr. Horvatin's chauvinist treatment firsthand, but I couldn't believe that this poor young woman was being put through this with his full knowledge and disregard. I told her not to worry. I would get back to her that day with some advice.

It was then that I ran into Ronald Harris, EEO Officer in Region 5.

I told him about the outrageous behavior to which this intern was exposed. I also explained that she was working with the Human Resources Branch on this matter of sexual harassment by Dr. Bertram. I told him how upset she was that nothing was being done because, despite Human Resources' awareness of the problem, she saw Dr. Bertram every day and continued to be harassed by him. Mr. Harris told me that the best thing she could do was to come see him. OCR addresses allegations of sexual harassment in the work place. Like me, I knew Mr. Harris would listen to her and do the right thing.

When I returned to GLNPO, I went to see the intern. I told her that the best place for her to go would be the OCR because this matter falls directly under their jurisdiction and they could take more aggressive action. I explained to her that I had known Mr. Harris for years and that he was extremely capable. At some point after this, on my recommendation, she made contact with OCR and they began an investigation.

It was then that the careers of many of those directly involved in exposing and addressing the sexual harassment allegation were changed and, in my case, ruined. I was taken to task and humiliated for my involvement in doing what was right and bringing this matter to light.

Many senior and mid-level managers made decisions that stopped the investigation from going forward and attempted to cover it up after it was reported to the OCR. In this investigation it became clear that Dr. Bertram had harassed many young woman in his career with USEPA and in his career before USEPA. It was also clear the Mr. Horvatin, Bharat Mathar, the Deputy Regional Administrator (DRA), and GLNPO management were complicit for those many years. The sexual harassment was simply condoned. The Regional Administrator, Dr. Susan Hedman, a woman who had the power to discipline those involved in the cover up of a sexual harassment scandal against other women and reward those of us who did what was right, turned a blind eye to the situation. Even worse, she is complicit in allowing the retaliation and the marginalization of those few of us directly involved in bringing the matter to the light of day. She is complicit in our harassment and our humiliation; she allowed us to be stripped of our future with the Agency. To this very day she has yet to make things right and she allows and encourages the retaliation to continue. Because she can.

This will be her legacy.

Background

Sometime in October of 2010, I requested of my supervisor, Paul Horvatin, his support in my going forward with an accretion-of-duties desk audit. It was with his approval that I made arrangements in approximately February of 2011 to begin the process.

Meantime, in January of 2011, I was told that I was to be realigned to the Immediate Office of the Great Lakes National Program Office with other Web Developers and Information Technology staff. This information came directly from Dr. Susan Hedman.

Then in March 2011, I did the right thing and helped a woman find peace in the workplace.

Punishment, Part 1

The following information will reflect the continuous retaliation inflicted upon me for the past 4 years, whenever I made a move to resuscitate a career that was struck from my work

life. Retaliation isn't always loud and full of itself; it can be quiet and chilling, the soul-crushing kind, the kind that leaves you alone in your cubicle in tears in the middle of the day.

Sometime between April and May 2011 I discovered that, without my knowledge, I was being excluded from meetings on a SharePoint web site project that I was co-leading. Pranas Pranckevicius, a web site colleague and former mentor, was now acting in a lead role, my role, and the role that I had performed for the last year or so. In May 2011 I reported this to Ms. Carney, showing her an email sent out by the project's contractor which reduced me to a supporting role, hoping she would intervene and restore me to the leadership role listed in my PARS agreement. Instead, she allowed Louis Blume and Pranas Prackevicius to continue to exclude me from my lead role, which would have offered me advancement. I was also excluded as a member of the Steering Committee for the Annual GLRI Quality Assurance Technical Conference of which I was a member in the prior year.

I went to Ms. Carney for help but instead she was in on the reprisal, part of the syndicate that "leads" Region 5. Another grade controlling factor stripped. My career was disappearing with each passing month.

I decided to see Ross Tuttle, Human Capital Officer, about what was going on with the GLNPO realignment. In the course of our conversation we discussed the sexual harassment investigation within GLNPO. I explained to him that I was the person who got OCR involved by suggesting the young intern speak with Mr. Harris.

We also discussed career opportunities and he said he was looking for a Program Analyst. Later, after seeing my qualifications, he spoke with Wendy Carney, Deputy Director in GLNPO and David Cowgill, then acting Director of GLNPO, in approximately June 2011, about offering me a developmental detail to his branch. Mr. Tuttle testified in his EEO deposition for my EEO complaint that while he was speaking with Cyndi Colantoni, Associate Director, Resource Management Division (RMD), and Walter Kovalik, Assistant Regional Administrator, regarding a detail for me to the Human Resource Branch (HRB), Ms. Colantoni proclaimed to Mr. Tuttle "I can't believe you would consider using an activist." Also Mr. Kovalik thought that the "optics" had to be considered.

In June 2011 I remember Mr. Horvatin coming into my cubicle and bragging to me that he was the person behind Mr. Harris' reassignment. He had seen Mr. Harris and me commiserating near my cubicle during the sexual harassment investigation and knew we had a working relationship many years before. Because Mr. Horvatin rarely interacts with me, I found this revelation on his part to be a veiled threat to my own standing within the Division and the Agency.

In July 2011 two Program Analyst Grade 13 positions were posted for OCR. Since I was classified as a Program Analyst, and wanted a chance at a promotion, I applied for one of the positions but was found "not qualified." Yet, the person who was promoted to this Program Analyst position was hired when Ms. Vasquez removed the qualifications.

In September of 2011, with the support of Mr. Tuttle, Mary Ann LaFaire, Supervisor, Workforce Development Team (WDT), Human Resource Branch and I agreed that I would officially request a 120-day developmental detail of my managers, to Ms. LaFaire's Workforce Development team.

On October 4, 2012 in an email from Ross Tuttle, I was denied the chance to participate in the detail. Mr. Tuttle told me that he did not agree with this but had been directed to do this by his superiors, Mr. Kovalik and Ms. Colantoni, the same individuals who had earlier called me an activist and a troublemaker. Clearly reprisal.

It was more important for the senior staff to keep "an 'activist' and 'troublemaker,'" in my place rather than give me an opportunity to utilize my time constructively in the HRB, WDT.

An important indicator of this twisted way to manage human capital and "preserve resources" is that at that point I was without assignments. During the time period of the 120-day detail, beginning on October 8, 2011 and ending on approximately February 4, 2012, I was Idle, without work, unoccupied. I was given no new work to do until the end of January, and then only more basic grant administrative stuff. The 4 grants that I was assigned in 2010 only required basic administrative work. The cost to the taxpayers for me to be idled and preserve USEPA Region 5 syndicate's power was approximately \$25,000.

During this period, Susan Hedman, Bharat Mathur, and Elissa Speizman, Senior Policy Program Advisor, ORA had been working behind the scenes with Human Resources to create a Web Group, which would report directly to the ORA. This was to be a new organization within the ORA. Mr. Tuttle believed this should be done as a reorganization. ORA, specifically Elissa Speizman, Senior Policy Program Advisor, and Cyndi Colantoni, Associate Director of the Resource Management Division said it was realignment. Those who were to be in the Web group were John Jeffrey Kelley on a detail from Superfund to ORA, Yvette Pina, recently reassigned from the Superfund Division to ORA, Karen Reshkin, who was to be realigned from Office of Public Affairs to ORA and Jennifer Ostermeier, Public Affairs Specialist in the Water Division, who was to be reassigned to ORA. Shared Service Center (SSC) in Cincinnati pronounced this to be reorganization.

As it was told to me by Mr. Tuttle, Cyndi Colantoni, Elissa Speizman, and Nancy Chicarello, Acting Director, Human Resource Management Division, of the Shared Service Center, made sure that in November of 2011 the formation of an illegal web group, regardless of that ruling and without the benefit of a reorganization, would go forward, made up of details and reassignments.

I was stripped of my career due to illegal actions on the part of primarily Dr. Hedman, Mr. Mathur, Ms. Colantoni, Ms. Chicarello, Ms. Speizman, Mr. Horvatin, and Mr. Kelley.

Before there was an approved ORA realignment or reorganization, I received written notification of a change in my critical elements of my 2012 Performance Appraisal and Recognition System (PARS): the removal of my web duties, the removal of my lead role in the Quality Assurance SharePoint site, and no longer being in any national workgroups that were part of those two elements. These web duties represented 95% of my duties at that time, which were then lined out from my Position Description (PD) with a pen and a ruler, signed by Paul Horvatin and Christopher Korleski, but never classified. (In my EEO ROI, there are two copies of this PD one without a signature and one with a signature; someone is HR signed and backdated the PD cover sheet). In his deposition for my EEOC, Mr. Horvatin admitted that he had removed major duties from no other employee's position description in his thirty-three years of supervisory experience.

This deliberate action removed 95% of my duties and has devastated my career. Since this Position Description (PD) was never classified, it is not my legally classified PD and my web duties remain in my legal position description. I was to be a full time Project officer, something that I had never done before in my (then) 20-year career with the US EPA, and had very little training to perform.

The removal of my primary duties and grade controlling functions would no longer allow me to seek a promotion based on accretion of duties. Without my web duties, without the SharePoint web site lead, and without membership in two national workgroups, I would no longer qualify for a promotion, which amounted to a constructive demotion. In fact, a desk audit done then, due to my lack of experience as a Project Officer, would have adversely affected my grade level. I was told by a colleague who was on a panel that selected PO as Program Analysts that I would not have qualified for a Program Analyst job posting at the GS 12 level. The absence of the grade controlling functions necessary to maintain my current grade level had been struck from my position.

What is curious is that there was an abundance of various kinds of web work being performed in GLNPO by those without these duties in the PD or the experience that I possess. This work is intentionally kept from me. For others who worked on this work has led to high profile assignments; greater chance for advancements; greater award amounts.

After I had filed a formal EEO complaint in February 2012, coincidentally a yearlong detail position (this detail had the potential to become permanent) of GS-13 Public Affairs Specialist within the Office of Regional Administrator was posted for competition. (This was the position that Jennifer Ostermeier was to be reassigned to before my complaint was filed). Ms. Ostermeier was included in web meetings with others who would make up the new Web Communications Section, tasked with the Region 5 Facebook page before the realignment/reorganization was to take place (an email that announced a Great Lakes Facebook page was distributed widely in GLNPO with the exception of me).

An ORA reorganization creating an External Communications Branch without the input of Human Resources was submitted to Human Resources for signature in July of 2012. Again, it shows favoritism and preferential treatment and neglected to mention those whose careers were adversely affected. It had been approved and signed by Dr. Hedman, the Regional Administrator. Mr. Tuttle testified in a deposition that he refused to sign what he saw as an illegal reorganization. Furthermore, he testified that a meeting between his supervisor, Cheryl Newton, Assistant Regional Administrator, Cyndi Colantoni, Associate Director of RMD, and Eric Cohen, Attorney, Office of Regional Council (ORC) was held in Cheryl's office regarding his refusal to sign. The reorganization was sent on to Headquarters for approval without the signature of the Human Capital Officer.

EEO and OSC

In November of 2011, I filed an informal EEO discrimination complaint based on several factors including retaliation.

This complaint became formal in February 2012. The investigation took almost 9 months longer than the law allows. This report was completed without benefit of my complete rebuttal. This treatment of my complaint has generated a faulty investigation.

After three-and-a-half years, I have no resolution. My opposition response to the Agency

motion for seeking findings and conclusions without a hearing is languishing on an Administrative judge's desk for over a year. The handling of my case in this manner will only cause more delays, be more costly to both the taxpayer and me, and further extend my suffering at work.

In my mid-year review in April of 2012, Mr. Horvatin made several references to my EEO complaint. He even mentioned the sexual harassment investigation, wanting to know if I had linked it to my complaint. This is against protocol. Mr. Michael Mikula, an AFGE Local 704 union steward, was also present as my representation, and he pointed out that my PD was never classified and therefore illegal.

Another noteworthy fact is that some agency managers got free legal advice while involved in the investigation of my complaint. This is against government protocol.

In October 2013, I filed a whistleblower complaint with the Office of Special Counsel (OSC). It was accepted for investigation and assigned an attorney. It too is languishing on someone's desk. After more than 18 months had passed with no action, I asked the case attorney if the Agency had even been offered to consider Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). They had not. The case was then moved to the ADR unit, and one of their representatives contacted the Agency to offer ADR. Without even a discussion, Region 5 flatly refused. The case is back in limbo, a place called the "Investigation and Prosecution Division." I again spoke with the attorney for OSC and she told me within the next two weeks (this was on 5/26/2015) they would begin conducting the investigation and interviewing witnesses. It is now July 21, 2015, and I am unaware of any kind action in this investigation.

As the saying goes, justice delayed is justice denied.

Wanting to be heard, I am now submitting testimony to the Congressional Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. I believe that this is as high as I can go.

Punishment, Part 2

Mr. Horvatin used 3 Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Full Time Equivalents (FTE) to hire three new employees. Their position descriptions have their organizational titles as "Project Officer" which requires that they perform 25-50% Project Officer duties. Yet, in 2011 -2013, they did as little as 10% to none of project officer work. This is one example of disparate treatment of me by GLNPO management.

I consistently asked for work other than Project Officer work and Mr. Horvatin tells me that he has nothing for me, there is no web work being done in the division, and he has no work that is listed in my PD. He refuses to distribute work within the Branch to me in a fair and equitable way. However, Ms. Hinchey Malloy performed some of the very duties in my PD that are going to get her a grade increase. I am not afforded the same opportunities or career development as anyone within the MIRB, GLNPO, or Region 5

I was told by Cynthia Colquitt, Program Analyst, ORC, that John Piper, Environmental Protection Specialist, GLNPO, was doing the Division's intranet web site. They chose to give this job to someone without ANY web experience over giving it to me.

An issue accepted for investigation in my EEO case concerns my exclusion from work on a

packet prepared relative to a research vessel, the Lake Guardian, managed by GLNPO. The document was a welcome packet. As much as anything, the issue represents Mr. Horvatin's motivation to isolate and idle me. The packet itself serves to demonstrate that Mr. Horvatin cannot be believed about anything.

The packet was created at a time when I had no work and continuously asked for it. I previously had prepared videos relative to the vessel and created the Lake Guardian web site. It would make sense that I would contribute to a welcome packet. When asked at his deposition why he did not seek to include me in the preparation of the packet, Mr. Horvatin's initial explanation was galling: he said he hadn't the faintest idea the I would have wanted to participate. He then altered course and explained that the document was highly technical. He testified that due to the highly technical nature of the document, he assigned a scientist with a PhD in chemistry to prepare it. Even a cursory review reveals that it is anything but "technical." No PhD is necessary to describe when meals are served or what combination of bells signal that a passenger has fallen overboard. The actual document, which the parties did not have present at Mr. Horvatin's deposition, represents compelling evidence that Mr. Horvatin lacks credibility.

At this time in GLNPO, 2011 through 2013, there were at least 7 workgroups or teams. I was a member of not one. Before March 2011, I was on at least 2 teams within the division, 1 regional workgroup, and 2 national workgroups. The change is significant and again points to disparate treatment and retaliation.

Having been stripped of my career and advancement, I have asked Ms. Cheryl Newton, Assistant Regional Administrator, to be reassigned and detailed at least 5 times, have applied for details and collateral opportunities for which I am qualified to better utilize my many skills. I have either been ignored or denied these opportunities by the influence of the syndicate members: Bharat Mathur, Susan Hedman, Cyndi Colantoni, Cheryl Newton, Wendy Carney, Karen Vasquez, Elissa Speizman and Walter Kovalik and their cronies: Paul Horvatin, Christopher Korleski, David Cowgill.

In January of 2012 I was invited to participate in several Workforce Development Team (WDT) workgroups. When I told Mr. Horvatin I would like to participate, he replied, "I am not aware what this effort is nor have you briefed me on what your involvement will entail and time commitments. Please schedule a meeting with me as soon as possible to brief me on this. Thanks." I scheduled a meeting for 1/23/2012 also including MaryAnn LaFaire, the supervisor of the WDT. After our meeting, Mr. Hovatin made a visit to Ms. Colantoni, syndicate kingpin. According to Mr. Tuttle, Ms. Colantoni pulled him and MaryAnn LaFaire into a meeting where she told him that Mr. Horvatin had contacted her because of the meeting that took place the previous week in with Maryann Lafaire and me.

In Mr. Tuttle's affidavit for the investigation into my EEO, he states that, "Mr. Horvatin had sent an e-mail to Ms. Colantoni in which he stated that he felt that the meeting he attended was a "set up" or word to that effect. Given that Ms. Colantoni had already directed me to deny a developmental detail to Ms. Lamberty some four months previous to this because she believed, and so stated, that Ms. Lamberty was a "trouble maker," a "Union activist," ...Ms. Colantoni was very agitated during this meeting with Maryann and me. She stated that she was "sick" of this (Mr. Horvatin calling her and complaining about being "set up", etc.) and stated that if she heard or received "one more incident" involving Deborah Lamberty that there would be significant trouble. We were

specifically told to NOT include her on any workgroups, teams, projects, etc. When I left her office, I was so upset that I was shaking. I genuinely feared that Ms. Colantoni would initiate some kind of action to remove me from federal service (I was career-conditional at this time)(and I had done nothing illegal or violated any regulations). The severe trepidation lasted for almost seven (7) more months until I crossed over to career-permanent status. I was being treated by a doctor for depression, anxiety, and taking prescription medication to keep me calm and focused on my job.” I was now officially being excluded from workgroups of any kind.

I became a certified coach, paying for this certification myself. This enabled me to become a member of the Agency’s “Coaching Cadre.” The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recognizes coaching as a valuable tool for improving employee productivity and morale. I have asked that the Coaching Cadre be included in the monthly newsletter that Ms. Newton edits and issues. This would alert staff to this free benefit of their employment. Every time I have submitted this information, it has been struck out. As recently as 4/2015, I was denied having this information posted on the regional intranet site via the Region’s intranet suggestion box (see “Now”).

I have had to endure the hostile work environment in which I find myself ostracized and vilified by colleagues, with managers and staff conspiring to keep work of consequence away from me. This has left me alone, isolated and sometimes in tears. This is humiliating, disheartening, and detrimental to my health and well being,

I was told by another staff person in my branch that she overheard a colleague asking our branch secretary, whom she sits directly behind, if she would help her “get Deborah.” She also overheard this same colleague state that she refused to come into the office until she was moved to a cubicle far away from where I sat.

When working on reviewing new grants, it is beneficial to work on them at home, in solitude. This is pretty standard for POs within GLNPO. But Mr. Hovatin couldn’t resist another chance to harass me by disapproving my request to review grants from my home in August of 2012. I elevated it to Ms. Carney, and Paul backed off.

While working at home on 8/7/2012, I was blind copied on an email from Valorie Vigilant. The salutation is “GLNPO,” giving the appearance that it had gone to the whole division. The MIME Stream shows it went only to me, Deborah Lamberty.

The MIME stream indicates that there were others involved in the distribution of this harassment because there is the note in the MIME stream that reads:

“tell paul that I will bring that up in our initial meeting and get back to him”

This MIME stream message was from Valorie Vigilant to someone who knew about this fake email and knew to look in the MIME stream for messages. Paul Horvatin was my supervisor, so that is the Paul to whom Valorie is referring in the MIME stream. It is safe to assume that Mr. Horvatin had contacted Ms. Cyndi Colantoni and Mr. Ken Tindall, Information Management Branch Chief, about doing this kind of harassing message. This shows that Mr. Tindall, Valorie’s supervisor, and Ms. Colantoni, Mr. Tindall’s supervisor, were all complicit in this harassment of me.

When I first saw this message tucked into the MIME stream, it sent a chill up my spine. This

brought home that these senior people were undaunted in their continued harassment of me in subtle ways.

When I checked my VM that day, 8/7/2012, Mr. Horvatin had left me a message, and he was aware that I had not activated the EC500.

I applied to the Mentoring Program, a benefit and privilege allowed to all US EPA employees. My supervisor and other Regional managers were unwilling to approve this privilege for me until I elevated it to the AFGE Union Steward, Jeffrey Bratko. Mr. Horvatin waited until the very last minute to let me know that I was accepted into the mentoring program 4:17 PM on 9/18/2012. This behavior on his part is appalling and Wendy Carney, Chris Korleski, Cheryl Newton, senior managers, cooperated in this mistreatment of me.

Mr. Tuttle was pulled into a meeting with Cheryl Newton, Assistant Regional Administrator, Cyndi Colantoni, Associate Director of the RMD, and Mary Ann LaFaire, Supervisor, WDT, HRB. He was questioned as to why I was being allowed to participate. This illustrates their vengeful treatment of me not only in GLNPO but also throughout the Region.

On July 24, 2013 I received a letter from Ms. Cynthia Darden, Assistant Director, Office of Civil Rights, advising me that I was not selected for the EEO collateral-duty counselor, an opportunity for which I applied for in January 2013. The original announcement in EPA@Work Newsletter states that "While no prior counseling experience is required, previous counseling or mediation experience is helpful." As a certified Life/Career Coach, a member of the US EPA's Coaching Cadre, and a former AFGE Local 704 Union steward, I possess this experience. There was no clear explanation given as to why I was passed over for this collateral-duty position. Ronald Harris can testify that the selecting official on this type of position is the Director of OCR, Karen Vasquez.

It wasn't until 11/2014 that I got another opportunity to apply. Florine Matthews is the new EEO officer in the region. She was awarded this position through an EEO complaint against Ms. Vasquez. Ms. Vasquez was retiring so she had no more influence over the situation.

Not that she didn't try.

Ms. Matthews wanted me to know that when my application came to her for her perspective, she expressed to Ms. Vasquez that I would be a fine candidate. "But she has an EEO complaint in the system," Ms. Vasquez pointed out. Ms. Matthews has told me that she would sign a sworn affidavit stating that this occurred.

In August of 2013 awards were given out. For the first time in my USEPA career, I was passed over for a performance award. The continuing retaliation, marginalization, and disenfranchisement were escalating.

Something else that is noteworthy is that during that fiscal year, 7 or more staff from different branches within GLNPO were creating a SharePoint site, a type of web site. They all received large awards for this work. Being that I was constantly told that there was no web work in our division, I sent Paul an email asking why I wasn't involved in this. He emailed me that it was a SharePoint site, not a web site. This from a man who doesn't know what he is talking about but thinks he knows it all.

This is the incident on which the OSC decided to investigate my claims.

Now

Not much has changed with my new position. I was hired by Jeff Kelley to be an Editor-in-Chief for the Web Communications Section (WCS) in 12/2013. During my interview, there was a panel. This is highly unusual for a GS 12 position. It is standard for the higher graded positions but not for anything below GS 13. In addition to Mr. Kelley was Karen Reshkin, (at the time) Acting Section Chief, and Anne Rowan, Chief of Public Affairs. They explained that the duties would involve redesigning web sites for the new OneEPA web site, be mostly content coordination and writing. I was told that computer work would be minimal. It sounded great. I had done writing professionally before, had a writing degree, and would like to get away from all the computer work. Mostly I wanted to get out of the hell I was mired in the GLNPO. Even though this was another lateral position and I had experience going back to 1995, I accepted the position, not before making sure Mr. Kelley understood that I wanted growth opportunities (It is noteworthy to mention that the other woman was hired to the same position at the same level without any experience in web development or web computer software).

I am still being marginalized in many ways. I have no voice in any decision-making or new career opportunities. In fact, the suggestions I make seem to be ignored until they become assignments for other staff.

I have minimally used my writing skills, mostly receiving assignments that require nothing more than computer skills. Instead, I am often idle or working on clerical-type web duties such as updating current web sites with new reports or materials. Others in this section are required to write daily. It is more of the same.

For fiscal year 2015, Mr. Kelley gave me a lower award than the previous year even though I received an enthusiastic recommendation by the EEO Officer for my work on a difficult and complex case as an EEO counselor. A few weeks later he sent an email saying he "had made an error on my award" and was giving me a cash award. Someone must've reminded him about my OSC complaint.

I was volunteered by my supervisor to be a coordinator for the Office of the Regional Administrator on the annual Awards ceremony. When I began coordinating the others involved, my supervisor made it clear to me that he was to carry out this coordination. I asked for clarification via email but received none. As per usual, I was given no assignments. It is extremely humiliating and awkward for me to sit in meetings with nothing to say or contribute. Same old song.

In an Office of External Communication meeting we were told by Ms. Rowan of an opportunity to work DIRECTLY with the DRA, Robert Kaplan, This project was the redesign of the employee intranet. Mr. Kelley announced that Resource Management Division was still going to be responsible for doing the maintenance and we would be responsible to redo the content. I was the only person at the meeting to volunteer. Ms. Rowan looked scared. Later, I asked my supervisor if I could lead the team, using the recent management training as a good reason. Also, Mr. Kelley told me in my mid-year review that I should have a project to work on, anything I wanted. Instead of even considering this, Mr. Kelley said he had given the lead to Mike Rogers, a writer who has no experience in web design. Opportunity for

others. Mr. Rogers intends on retiring in a few months and isn't looking for career advancement.

Instead of getting to work directly with the DRA, Mr. Kelley told me NOT to talk with the DRA on this project. I was stunned. Mr. Kaplan also happens to be my second line supervisor. In an all hands meeting, the DRA wanted to make it clear that ALL are welcome to talk with him, that he has an open door policy. I find this to be more evidence of a hostile work environment when it would be considered insubordination to talk to the DRA. Apparently, the door is only open for some.

One day an emergency web site needed to be created for a train wreck that had happened in Galena Illinois, posing an environmental emergency. The day before, all web developers were trained in the new software used for the new web pages. One individual called in sick, so didn't receive the training. On the day of the train wreck, Ms. Reshkin and I were in the office. Instead of giving me an opportunity to create this site, Mr. Kelley gave the assignment to the woman who didn't attend the training and didn't know the software. She was working at home that day, which can sometime affects direct communication, whereas I was right there in the office and easily accessible.

Mr. Kelley had no problem when the other GS 12 EIC suggested that she attend an important conference and "tweet" the highlights from the conference on Twitter. She wasn't given an invisible role but instead was lauded for this idea. I think this is great for her. I would like the same consideration and respect.

The Region had recently spent \$4k to train me for leadership. The "give a dog a bone" strategy. Each of the trainee's supervisors was to do a 360 review of the trainee, assessing their strengths and weaknesses. I was the only person in the training without a 360 review. I was again humiliated.

Yes, I am a graduate of the Mid-level Leadership Development Program. Too bad no one has any intention on letting me use it because they don't really want leaders, they want followers. To me, this is cruel, leaving me feeling worthless and invisible.

As I am a certified coach and am recognized by the agency as such, when I try to get this information out to regional staff, my efforts are blocked.

On the new intranet there is a suggestion box. I thought I would suggest that the Region make use of my experience in this area: "The 2/15 Federal Employee News Digest's top story was about the cost savings of federal internal coaching. Wouldn't it be great if Region 5 knew that it has an internal certified coach (Deborah Lamberty, OEC)? Coaching information could be disseminated in the HR newsletter and intranet site."

There answer was that "The Human Capital Branch lists employees who have self-identified as a facilitator at (web site link)... Anyone who would like to be added as a coach should contact Pat Easley. Please note, the Region does not monitor or endorse specific facilitators or coaches."

Since I am not a facilitator, listing me with other facilitators is the same as not listing me at all. And the fact that they name individuals separately as facilitators is the same as endorsing them.

Another example that I am being targeted is that when I *lowered* my transit subsidy due to a change in seasonal transit needs, I was sent a threatening email from the comptroller, Dale Meyer. In addition, the HCO, Amy Sanders, thought this issue was important enough to email Mr. Kelley, my supervisor, over the weekend of 3/8 - 03/9/2015 with the hopes that this reduction was due to a disciplinary action (no email copy but Mr. Kelley did show it to me). I believe this action by Ms. Sanders is an example of my being in the crosshairs.

After more than 18 months of asking for some of the Great Lakes National Program web site work with which I am familiar, I was recently given some of those assignments. I have contacted Mr. Horvatin and his staff 3 times to begin the transformation of the material but have received only silence. This web transformation has a deadline of 9/15/2015.

As recently as Tuesday, 7/21/2015, I was receiving email notifications from Lynn Calvin, who is retired. These were email receipts. Someone is watching me and it isn't the retired Lynn Calvin.

Also noteworthy is the Mr. Horvatin was nominated for 3 awards by Dr. Hedman this past year and received them on 7/23/2015. His career is flourishing!

Conclusion

Although I thought I had a better opportunity in the WCS that has to not been the case. It is almost as if Mr. Kelley is following orders from his superiors. No doubt he is. He works very closely with Dr. Hedman and I am sure when I was hired, there were discussions on how I was to be "handled," or, more accurately, mishandled.

I live with this dire situation every day of my work life. I am grateful that I have been given the privilege of Flexiplace. It removes me from the reminder that, to my managers and staff, I am worthless and a troublemaker.

If given the choice to help out an upset intern, or anyone else in need of help, I would still do the same thing, the right thing.