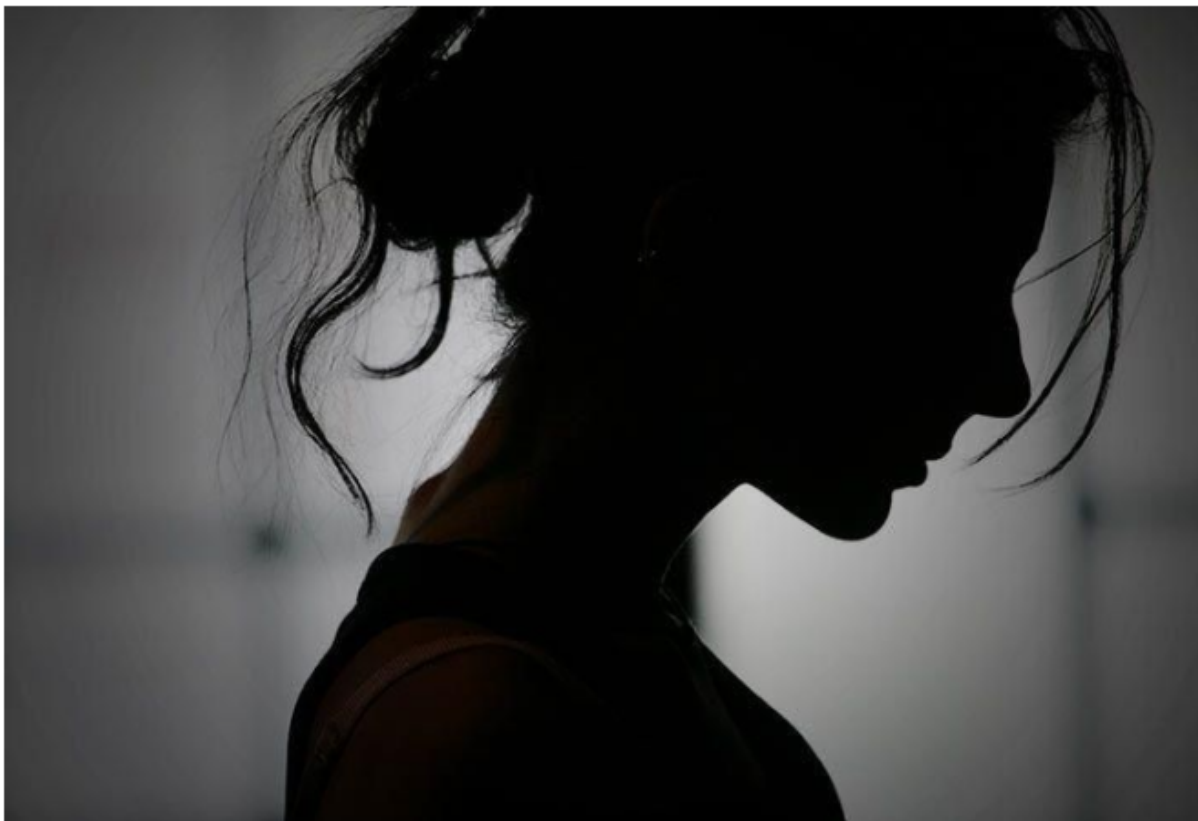


# JLL Hit With Discrimination Lawsuit Accusing Former Exec Of Fostering Toxic ‘Boys Club’

August 11, 2020 | Miriam Hall and Kelsey Neubauer

A former associate in JLL’s New York Capital Markets Group is suing the company, saying she was denied bonuses because she was a woman, had to put up with a sexist work culture and was fired for complaining about it.



*Bisnow*

In a federal lawsuit filed Tuesday in the Southern District of New York, Tiffany Catalini accused the brokerage of violating federal and state labor and human rights laws by discriminating against her, creating a hostile work environment and retaliating when she brought her complaints to her superiors.

The bulk of the allegations in her complaint center around Mo Beler, who was hired to lead JLL's New York City investment sales division in 2017. Beler, who is now a [senior managing director at Walker & Dunlop](#), was promoted to [vice chairman](#) in 2018.

Catalini, 46, said she had happily worked at JLL for eight years, but her career began "a rapid descent" when Beler joined the firm from Innovo Property Group. Catalini, who said she was the only woman in a pool of 15 production associates, claims JLL allowed Beler to turn the male-dominated workplace into a "boys club" that was toxic and oppressive.

Beler, whose age could not be verified, but who graduated from the University of Michigan in 2004, eventually began to manage Catalini's working group, directly overseeing her supervisors, Glenn Tolchin, Anthony Ledesma and Yoav Oelsner, all of whom have since left JLL.

Tolchin and Oelsner declined to comment on the complaint to *Bisnow*, while Ledesma could not be immediately reached.

Catalini said Beler forced her to collect lunch and bring him clean clothes, duties she said were beneath her pay grade. He allegedly complained about the amount of money she earned, refused her a salary increase and gave her a low bonus while male colleagues scored raises.

"Beler routinely engaged in sexist, 'locker room' banter with his male colleagues, such as calling his coworkers — and ridiculing his clients as — 'cocksuckers,' shouting at his coworkers to 'suck his dick,' and making constant reference to 'blow jobs' and masturbation," Catalini alleges in the complaint.

Beler denied the allegations in the complaint and declined to comment further.

Catalini said she joined the firm in 2012 as a project coordinator in capital markets, which has investment sales and the debt team under its umbrella. She had previously worked at CBRE and Cushman & Wakefield, [according to her LinkedIn profile](#). After working in the institutional group for some time, she and her team were offered new positions at other companies, she claimed.

To keep her in 2016, per the complaint, JLL promised her a \$100K bonus paid in two separate chunks over two years. But JLL allegedly failed to pay her the retention bonus in 2018, cutting back the \$50K down to a performance bonus of \$25K. Her performance bonus in 2019 was \$10K, she said, lower than her male peers after Beler overruled a request from supervisors that she be awarded more.

Though Beler left in 2019, Catalini claims her career was irreparably damaged and the sexist culture continued to pervade the workforce. She said she tried to speak to various members of the capital markets group about her treatment, but she was then offered a job as an administrative assistant in the debt team, which she said was beneath her experience.

She was also offered a role in multiple other groups, she said in her complaint, but requested a performance evaluation before accepting. Instead, she alleges human resources didn't run the performance review and fired her in early March and without paying her a bonus for 2019. JLL eventually offered her a severance package if she agreed to waive any further claims against the firm, per the suit. She declined to sign it.

"JLL does not comment on existing litigation but we take such allegations very seriously," a spokesperson for the brokerage said in a statement. "JLL has a recognized track record for its integrity and ethical approach to business and supporting its employees."

Catalini declined to comment through her attorney, Veronica Jung.

"It is especially egregious for a global company like JLL to engage in this type of retaliatory conduct all the while representing itself to the marketplace as a model corporate citizen," Jung wrote in an email.

A representative for Walker & Dunlop said the company wasn't aware of the allegations but takes them very seriously.

"We will handle this matter accordingly and in compliance with our personnel and HR policies," a spokesperson said in an email.

Catalini is seeking damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus attorneys' fees. Multiple real estate companies have been hit with gender discrimination and sexual harassment lawsuits in recent years, including JLL's top competitors, [CBRE](#) and [Cushman & Wakefield](#), as women continue to face challenges [navigating the male-dominated industry](#).

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