

Former Hospital Behavioral Health Director and Immediate Action Group President Files Suit Against RMCHCS

*Former Chief Engineer/Plant Director Destroys Truck,
Fired For Drunken Behavior*

GALLUP, NEW MEXICO, UNITED STATES, August 12, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Former Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services' (RMCHCS) Behavioral Health Director [William Camarota](#)

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William Madaras

has filed a three-count lawsuit against RMCHCS charging Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) Felicia Adams and her husband Dean Adams, former director of plant operations, with breach of confidentiality/invasion of privacy, retaliatory discharge and defamation of character. Dean Adams was fired by the hospital in May for destroying a company truck while drunk.

The charges have been filed in McKinley County District Court by the plaintiff's Attorney David Jordan, P.C. who is planning a jury trial against the defendants. This is the second lawsuit filed against RMCHCS for retaliation firings which stemmed from hospital protests led by Board Chair Laura Hammons, Chief Medical Officer Valory Wangler and CNO Felicia Adams amidst the raging COVID-19 pandemic. Wagner and Adams are also defendants in a six count lawsuit filed recently by Luis Robles, a partner in Robles, Rael and Any of Albuquerque who is representing plaintiff David Conejo, the hospital's former CEO.

“William Camarota unfortunately contracted COVID-19 while employed at RMCH,” said Jordan. “Like every other employee and patient, the [HIPAA](#) law is supposed to provide him with medical information confidentiality. However, that law was violated by the Adams’ who spread details of his illness across the hospital staff causing him embarrassment and robbing his right to privacy. We will show the jury our evidence of how this was done purposely to retaliate against him for his close relationship with former CEO Conejo.”

Jordan explained that Camarota specifically did not want the fact that he was diagnosed with COVID-19 released so his substance abuse clients would not be afraid to counsel with him when his 14 day quarantine was ended. He also didn't want the community to fear that the WellSpring Recovery Center was a COVID-19 hot zone.

Welcome to The Club Nobody Wants To Join
However, on April 26 Jordan explained that Camarota learned he tested positive for COVID-19. He contacted his director to inform her, but could not reach her and contacted Conejo to advise him of his virus condition and requested confidentiality. Despite his HIPAA request, CNO Adam's sent him a text welcoming Camarota to the club "nobody wanted to join". He again requested confidentiality, but shortly afterward he called people who needed to know to advise them and he reiterated his request for non-disclosure.

"To confirm my client's suspicions, by April 28, he received a call from an employee of Dean Adams inquiring about Bill's infection," said Jordan. "This guy heard about it from Adams, who heard about it from his wife Felicia who was not allowed to disclose it."

A plant operations maintenance man who worked for Dean Adams, called Camarota to advise him that Adams disclosed to him that Camarota had COVID-19. He also noted that he overheard Dean Adams say 'Who does [RMCH CEO] David [Conejo] think he is. He thinks he can do whatever he wants around here, that's why the board doesn't like him and that's why [RMCH Board Member] David Dallago doesn't like him.' This comment was made by Adams to him, proving that this leak was intentional and motivated by retaliation.

Camarota then filed a HIPAA complaint against RMCHCS and an investigation was conducted by the hospital's privacy/HIPAA officer Dr. Phyllis Miller Ph.D., RHIA, RHIT, CHPS, Lean Six Sigma Green Belt, AHIMA ICD-10-CM/PCS Trainer and an independent panel of credentialed hospital employees. The investigation concluded that Dean Adams should be fired for a Level 4 violation.

Miller presented the case to the hospital board's attorney and RMCHCS's attorney who also concluded that Dean Adams overheard a private conversation that Felicia Adams had with RMCHCS officials and did not violate HIPAA laws, but Dean Adams did maliciously spread word about Camarota's illness and both investigations recommended he be terminated for it.

However, the hospital's board conducted yet a third investigation with and found there were grounds for termination. Dean Adams even admitted to violating Camarota HIPAA rights but was never fired for it. "Despite two investigations that concluded Dean Adams be fired, a third investigation by the board agreed he should be fired, but wasn't. Furthermore, the board never



William Camarota holds up plaque in front of trophy case.

provided my client with any results of the investigation to this day,” said Jordan.

Community Accolades

Camarota received RMCHCS’s Dragon Slayer Award in 2018 for overcoming a life of substance abuse in his early years. He is also president of the Immediate Action Group (IAG) that serves the homeless of Gallup and McKinley County. He also serves on the Board of Directors of Gallup’s Community Food Pantry and is a core leader in pastoral mentoring at the Lighthouse International Ministries Church in Gallup, and the DUI Planning Council for McKinley County. Camarota was honored with the “Housing For All” award bestowed by the New Mexican Coalition to End Homelessness last year. He was named “Volunteer of the Year” by the New Mexican Coalition to End Homelessness in a ceremony at the organization’s headquarters in Santa Fe New Mexico. The award was bestowed upon Camarota by NMCEH Executive Director Hank Hughes.

He also received a Certificate of Appreciation citation by the City of Gallup for his efforts in removing debris around the St. Joseph’s Shelter and Soup Kitchen in partnership with District 1 Councilor Linda Garcia. “Bill and his crew did an excellent job. It took them 3 days, but they endured and got the job done,” Garcia noted.

William Madaras

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