

Ypsilanti Courier > News

Mobile home community in Ypsilanti Township faces race discrimination lawsuit over family's eviction

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YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP - The Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan has aided in the filing of a new race discrimination lawsuit against Swan Creek Mobile Home Community in Ypsilanti.

In April 2014, the center took a complaint from Paula Scott. She reported that her family received an eviction notice after her 17-year-old African-American daughter, Zakara Scott, was pushed to the ground and physically assaulted by Amanda Cadreau, a white tenant at Swan Creek.

According to the lawsuit, "Ms. Cadreau assaulted and battered plaintiff Zakara Scott as Zakara exited a school bus at the defendant's manufactured home park community ... the police report was filed immediately thereafter, listing Zakara Scott as victim of Amanda Cadreau's assault and battery." Swan Creek requested and obtained written statements regarding the incident, but only from the family of Amanda Cadreau, according to the Fair Housing Center. Two days after the assault and battery incident, Swan Creek served the Scotts with an eviction notice.

"Swan Creek treated the African-American victim like the perpetrator and the white perpetrator like the victim; and we are talking about an African-American teenager assaulted by a white adult," said Ann Routt, board president of the Fair Housing Center.

Amanda Cadreau was criminally convicted and sentenced for the March 5, 2014, assault of Zakara Scott.

The case was referred to the Fair Housing Center by Legal Services of South Central Michigan (LSSCM). Legal Services attorneys successfully stopped the eviction of the Scott family. Fair Housing Center Cooperating Attorney Steve Tomkowiak assisted LSSCM on the eviction and agreed to continue with the civil rights portion of the case. On Dec. 19, Tomkowiak filed suit on behalf of the Scott family in U.S. Federal District Court. LSSCM plan to act as co-counsel. The case is assigned to the Honorable Bernard A. Friedman.

The Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan, founded in 1992, actively protects the civil rights of those who are discriminated against in the rental, sale, or financing of housing through investigation, education, advocacy, and legal action. The Fair Housing Center takes an average of 150 complaints each year from its eight-county service area - Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, Jackson, Lenawee, Livingston, Monroe, and Washtenaw counties.

Source: Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan

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