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Ousted College of DuPage Finance Team Fires Back

by [Yvette Shields](#)

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CHICAGO – The Illinois-based College of DuPage's former treasurer Thomas Glaser and controller Lynn Sapyta filed a federal lawsuit Tuesday accusing their former employer of wrongful termination for their opposition to a board member's political agenda.

The two were fired by the current board in September, accused of mismanagement and violations of college investment practices and other internal rules. The two said at the time they planned to file a lawsuit. At the time, their lawyers said the board unfairly targeted them for decisions that the former board had full knowledge of as part of the board's efforts to oust the school's former president Robert Breuder.

The lawsuit names the college, board chairwoman Kathy Hamilton, and interim President Joseph Collins as defendants.

The complaint accuses Hamilton of pushing to fire the two in retaliation for their opposition to her agenda in the last election by opposing candidates she endorsed and supporting those who were against her agenda.

Voters in the spring election ousted several board members who had supported Breuder. Hamilton, who frequently questioned his decisions, won majority support and was elevated to chairwoman.

"Defendant Hamilton developed a political animus against" Glaser and Sapyta because they "failed to support Hamilton's political agenda for COD, which she was pursuing, in significant part, to further her own political career," the lawsuit asserts. The two say their constitutional rights of free speech were violated.

Glaser and Sapyta want their positions back and are seeking unspecified damages. School spokesman Randall Samborn said the college did not have a comment at this time.

The complaint counters allegations of mismanagement citing their superior annual performance reviews, contract extensions, and efforts to update and correct financial systems.

The lawsuit also takes issue with Hamilton's references to Glaser's position as Cook County chief financial officer and chief operating officer for the Cook County treasurer and Sapyta's position on the finance team at the Chicago Transit Authority. The lawsuit alleges the references

were aimed at portraying the two as Democratic "hacks." Cook, which includes Chicago, is predominantly Democratic while the college is located in staunchly Republican territory far west of Chicago.

"They have not only unfairly lost their jobs, but they have had their long-standing and hard-earned professional reputations wrongly destroyed" by accusations made by the college in the firings, attorneys for the two said.

A financial services firm has been managing finances at the triple-A rated Glen Ellyn-based school since Glaser and Sapyta were ousted.

The college's top ratings have remained intact during the controversy as the fiscal issues haven't impacted the overall health of its balance sheet and healthy reserves.

The college, formally known as Community College District 502, has \$340 million of outstanding general obligation debt and most recently issued \$84 million in 2013 to finance a wide range of capital improvements.



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